



MESSAGES OF THE PRESIDENT

CORAZON C. AQUINO

1986-1992

BOOK 11 | VOLUME 3

Historical Papers and Documents

ADDRESSES AND SPEECHES

Inaugural Speech of President Corazon C. Aquino

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On her Inauguration as President of the Philippines**

[Delivered at Club Filipino, San Juan on February 25, 1986]

My brothers and sisters:

I am grateful for the authority you have given me today. And I promise to offer all that I can do to serve you.

It is fitting and proper that, as our people lost their rights and liberties at midnight fourteen years ago, the people should formally recover those lost rights and liberties in the full light of day.

Ninoy believed that only the united strength of the Filipino people would suffice to overturn a tyranny so evil and so well-organized. The brutal murder of Ninoy created that unity in strength that has come to be known as “Lakas ng Bayan”—people power.

People power shattered the dictatorship, protected those in the military that chose freedom, and today, has established a government dedicated to this protection and meaningful fulfillment of our rights and liberties.

We became exiles, we Filipinos who are at home only in freedom, when Marcos destroyed the Republic fourteen years ago.

Now, by God’s grace and the power of the people, we are free again.

We want to make a special appeal to those who have not yet joined us. Do not engage in any further action against the people and instead, be among those who will lend a hand to rebuild the country.

Source: Javante-De Dios, Daroy, Kalaw-Tirol (1988). *Dictatorship and Revolution*. Conspectus Foundation Inc.; pp. 761-762.

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Graduation Rites

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Graduation Rites

[Delivered on March 22, 1986]

At graduation exercises of the Philippine Military Academy, President Aquino shares her thoughts on the proper relationship between army and state: A soldier's role is not in politics. He is the guarantor of the people's security and the protector of the people's government. But that role can only be properly exercised under the supervision of a government the people have chosen and recognized.

She also pledged, as Commander-in-Chief, that the Armed Forces will never again be misused the way it was by former President Marcos.

You, the finest of our military youth, have reason to be the proudest graduating class in PMA history. By your actions in the final days of the people's revolution, you went through a graduation ceremony of far greater importance than any held on this field.

Your defection made you the first graduating class of the people's army. This new army was forged in a moment of national crisis when every Filipino had to search his and her heart for the courage to face death. Our institutions, such as the Armed Forces, had to decide: Were they for a man or for a people? Were they for a small clique of crooks clinging to power, or for country? Would they open fire on the people, or finally add their strength to the near unanimous resolve of our people to end 14 years of shame?

You, this graduating class, made the same choice as some of your brothers in the military, including your new Chief of Staff and the Minister of Defense: You opted for the people, and the President the people had chosen and the Batasan had ignored. You opted to be a part of the people's revolution.

In the classrooms of this academy you were lectured on the proper relationship between army and state. The life of a democracy depends on civilian supremacy over the military. It requires that the military stay out of politics yet in February you faced a dilemma that no textbook prepared you for: What do you do when the civilian authority is itself the threat to democracy? Where lies the loyalty of the officer corps and the troops? With nations and state or with the government of the day?

As you prepare for a life of military service let me share with you my thoughts on the proper relationship between army and state. A soldier's role is not in politics. He is the guarantor of the people's security and the protector of the people's government. But that role can only be properly exercised under the supervision of a government the people have chosen and recognize. During the long years of the Marcos regime, our armed forces shared the agony of every Filipino. The shame and dismay of having at the head of our proud nation a man whose greed humbled our pride and whose cruelty put Filipino at war with Filipino.

Just as we owe it to every Filipino to restore a government they can be proud of, so we owe it to our young soldiers to restore a government they can be proud to defend. Military honor and pride in service of the state cannot be separated from the kind of government that a soldier is required to serve.

But it is not soldiers who can make a government fit for themselves and the people. It is only the people that can do that. For the soldier must serve the people's government; not the people a soldier's government. Your strength lies in having a Commander-in-Chief who is the people's choice and not yours. Your honor lies in the fact that she was your choice as well.

You and many of your colleagues rose not to overthrow a President but to protect one: the President the people had elected and that the Batasan had cheated of her proclamation. Your actions were not a revolt against, but a restoration of legitimate government. And you did it with the people and not against them. That is what validated what you did.

There, in the streets around Crame and Aguinaldo, we saw the rebirth of the proper partnership of trust and respect between army and people. As the Marcos generals poised their confused and wavering troops to strike at the soldiers with Messrs. Ramos and Enrile, we saw the yellow shirts of our followers, the white frocks of our priests, and the grey habits of our nuns mingle their colors with the khaki green of your colleagues. As we emerged from the dark night of dictatorship, there was a new rainbow of colors across our land: the yellow of courage, the grey of faith, and the green of duty united in the willingness to work together, bury past conflicts, and begin the healing of our nation's wounds.

The Armed Forces had begun to resume its proper place in the service of a government that belonged to the people. The reward for that lay, not just in the physical protection those nuns and yellow legions gave your colleagues but in the new respect for you that their decision to do so represented. When Cardinal Sin called on the people to go to Aguinaldo and Crame and when the people responded in their hundreds of thousands, a vast act of reconciliation had begun. You, who had seen your noble profession brought low by those who commanded it, were being welcomed back into the fold of the nation.

Peace and reconciliation are now the most powerful weapons in our nation's armory. But, just as they were the strength of our revolution, so will they be the basis of our government. We came to power through peace and I mean to govern in peace. After years of brutal repression, the craving of our people is for peace and dignity. Our government and our army must hold out their hands to our opponents as citizens and nuns did outside Crame, in friendship and peace.

We must seek an end to the divisions that have threatened to pull our nation apart. An army ordered to wage war on its own people is an army betrayed. A war can only be just if it is waged under a leadership representative of the people, and a leadership, moreover, that had earnestly sought peace through honest political means before trying to impose order through force. The former government turned its back on reconciliation and was, through its goons, warlords, and cronies, the most effective recruiter of the New People's Army. I will not have this again.

I, as your Commander-in-Chief pledge before you today that the Armed Forces will not again be misused in this way. This is because I mean to wage a campaign for peace. I wish to persuade those insurgents who went to the hills because of despair, rather than ideology to return because now there is hope: Hope that they can be a part of a society based on a respect for human rights, welfare, and dignity. And pride in taking part in the building of a new Philippines.

To our brothers and sisters in the hills and the underground I have this to say: You waged war against Mr. Marcos because he was the embodiment of the worst injustice, greed and cruelty. I fought Marcos for the same reasons. We had a common stand and an overriding purpose: the end of tyranny and shame and the beginning of hope and pride. This is why I ordered the immediate release of political prisoners.

Now that the evil has fled from the land, I shall soon call on you to come out and rejoin your people in rebuilding our country. There should be no more reason to continue fighting. Our other differences can be settled through participation in peaceful process.

Yet let nobody mistake the importance we attach building a strong and disciplined Armed Forces. These are times of national crisis. It is still too early to claim with any assurance how many of those in the hills will heed our call and return to us. Those who do not will face a reformed and reinvigorated fighting force, dedicated to the protection of democracy and the honor of our country.

As your President and Commander-in-Chief I shall have no hesitation in calling on you to protect your government and state from any threat, be it internal or external. Equally I shall ask of your generals that they be vigilant in

ensuring that our armed forces are well-led and well-armed. I should like to see a modern disciplined fighting force dedicated to the goals of a democratic state. As the Marcos maneuvers against the rebellion in EDSA demonstrated, a crook not only makes a corrupt general but a bad one too.

Too many good officers were held down by what was happening at the top of our Armed Forces. Now we have freed our army from that grip. Every member of the Armed Forces can now be judged by their qualities of bravery, integrity, competence and loyalty. Our Armed Forces, like the rest of our nation, has been liberated. Gone are the shackles on your performance, but gone too are the excuses. As your Commander-in-Chief I shall only be satisfied with the best. Yours will be an army that is as proud of itself as the nation is proud of it.

Let me be clear about one thing: I mean to fulfill my responsibility as Commander-in-Chief. My military staff, General Ramos and his service chiefs, will report directly to me. My Minister of Defense will monitor closely your performance. Neither errors of policy nor gross misconduct will long escape my attention and rebuke.

Like all our countrymen I have held my head high at the role played by the officers and members of the Reform Movement. Much credit for the renewal that is now underway goes to them. Indeed, today is the first anniversary of the We Belong Movement. It was founded in the hallowed grounds of this academy to reembody the ideal of professionalism and democratic commitment in the military. Those who took the brave step a year ago of forming the movement could not have guessed how much would have been achieved a year later. But their standards of professionalism and commitment are now the norm that I shall expect of everybody who is privileged to serve in our Armed Forces. You hold a sacred trust. It will not be abused.

What began in Crame and Aguinaldo must be taken much further. The general staff and I will work together to ensure this country has the armed services it deserves. We must purge our Armed Forces of all that has dishonored them in recent years. Your role in our nation's life is too great to allow us to overlook what happened in the final years of Marcos.

The army is the servant of its government and cannot be held accountable for the sins of the politicians, except for those who have illegally enriched themselves or have violated human rights. Let me be frank with you. The concept of a military elite draws its sense of purpose from its professionalism and the concept of service. This can only be nurtured when it enjoys the respect of the people. Without that, a military however great its self-regard is nothing.

You had a Commander-in-Chief who destroyed the very essence of responsible militarism. He was at the center of the corruption and repression. This man did you more harm than you even now may recognize. He and his associates destroyed the army's reputation as an impartial protector of the people's security and a stout defender of the nation's honor. Only by exposing the wrong-doing can we start the rebuilding. This revolution began with a bullet shot by a soldier into the head of my husband.

To all you young men, trained for lives of honor, sacrifice, and service, it must seem blindingly obvious that only through an honest explanation of the past can a clean start be made for the future.

I shall, as your Commander-in-Chief, make that clean start. Past abuses will be investigated and any officers and men guilty of crimes or serious misconduct will be dealt with appropriately. A new beginning requires a closing of the old chapter. But the people will not let the page be turned if crimes and human rights abuses lie unexplained.

Our Armed Forces was driven out of the people's hearts by the ignoble uses it was put to under the dictatorship. Now the people have embraced you and you, I know, wish to respect the spirit in which they did so. It was one of peace and reconciliation and it must not be stifled but be allowed to reach every corner nation in the pursuit of justice.

Healing the divisions that led to the growth of insurgency in our beloved country demands a special partnership between our nation's political leadership and our soldiers. General Ramos told me that he considers the chief concern of the Armed Forces of the Philippines to be, not just national security, but the people's security. You are now a people's army in the best sense of the word. That means that you serve the people.

That can only begin by addressing the insurgency. We must intensify our efforts for national reconciliation and re-integration of those who fought Marcos. We will not solve this problem just by sheathing our swords; we must also harness our ploughshares. Our countryside must be put back to work. Too many areas are devastated, not just by conflict but also by underdevelopment. The wealth of our countryside may not, like that of our industries, have ended up in American and Swiss bank accounts, but it was no less surely taken from us.

Now has come the time for rebuilding: the clinics, the schools, the roads, the wells, the farms, and above all, the will and hope of the people. The army is one organization that has the capacity to help do this. The church is another. The soldiers of the Republic and the soldiers of Christ have special roles in the effort of reconstruction. We are on the threshold of a great national mobilization of effort and resources to restore our bankrupt and battered country. Everyone has a vital part to play. It is a measure of how far we have come in the recent weeks that the first active operation you may be assigned to is building a school rather than a search and destroy mission against the NPA. To rebuild one nation we must have peace. Without peace we cannot have growth.

It may seem odd work for soldiers. Yet a central part in our reconstruction efforts is the noblest task you could hope for at this time. It affords the opportunity for soldiers to work side by side with villagers. This shared labor of rebuilding our infrastructure and economy after its brutal pillage does more than words can ever do to heal the wounds.

We need to build not just a passive peace where a ceasefire holds but an active peace where there is economic and social development to ease the deprivation of our people. The soldiers in this war, against poverty and economic injustice, will also be honored in the new Philippines. Indeed our military too have to cope with an appalling fall in their standard of living. The privilege of our military men is that there is a lead place for you in both wars: the peaceful containment of the insurgency and the offensive against poverty. Only if we move on both fronts will we banish the challenge of insurgency.

Such a push for peace will not leave us unprepared for war. An army must always be vigilant and in a high state of preparedness. The General Staff will ensure that the Armed Forces are returned to a peak of combat readiness after the years of professional decline.

Any group which considers undermining the stability of the country must understand that they will not be facing the demoralized forces of Marcos, rather they will be facing a national army, trained and ready to protect our sovereignty and the democratic government chosen by the people.

You leave this academy to play your part as officers in helping our nation back onto its feet after years of shameful prostration. You will be serving a government that faces huge challenges in rebuilding our society. Yet for the Armed Forces whether loyalist or rebel, who now stand behind the flag and the constitution, the worst is over. Whatever must be faced, we will face it together: you and I and the people. Once more you are back where you have longed to be: on the side of the people. Welcome home, my soldiers.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the University of the Philippines Graduation Rites

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the University of the Philippines Graduation Rites

[Delivered on April 20, 1986]

TOWARDS A CEASEFIRE

Standing before 1986 graduates of the University of the Philippines, President Aquino takes the opportunity to sound a call to insurgents for peace and reconciliation. She reveals the government's willingness to negotiate with leaders of the insurgents for peace and their reassimilation in a democratic society.

We are free at last. The tyrant sent his armored cavalry to the two rebel camps. The sea of people parted, and then closed over them. The forces of tyranny were overwhelmed in an outpouring of reconciliation. The Lord had thrown the horse and his rider into the sea. And we were delivered from the house of bondage. Now we stand on the edge of a new country, the frontier of tyranny behind us. A long and arduous journey lies ahead to the peace, progress and justice for which we longed and sacrificed.

I ran for the Presidency on the platform of the people's long denied desire for freedom, peace and progress. We have freedom. Now I aim to have peace. Peace for a nation worn out from oppression and war. Tranquility in which our people can heal the deep wounds inflicted by tyranny. A tranquil peace so our people can renew their strength for what should be a single-minded endeavor to recover from the devastation wrought by Marcos.

But it seems there are among us those who regret leaving Egypt. They are few, but vocal and violent. The alarm they are spreading is the price of freedom, and it is one we must pay, but it will not be at the cost of the democratic gains we fought so hard to attain.

The consolation of slavery is that one is spared the anxiety of being responsible for yourself and your country.

The reality of slavery is that you are always grateful for what you get. A little food with shame, if the tyrant so wishes. Or a respite from his scourging: You are always grateful for what you get or the whipping you are spared.

Freedom is different. The shackles are struck from your wrist and your hands are full of responsibilities. You have been freed to carry all the better the burden of citizenship and nation-building. And you have yourself chiefly to blame if you falter or fail.

This nation mobilized to be free and to march toward freedom, peace and progress under my leadership. Even as I pledged to lead you to that goal, so you pledged then not to fail yourselves in reaching for it. There will be no turning back.

Let the handful murmur, they are within their rights under your covenant of freedom. But let them not stand in the way of our passage to lasting peace. This government of peace is not unarmed.

When our people called on God to deliver them from bondage, they pledge implicitly to be always free and proud and worthy of deliverance. The Lord delivered; so must we on our promise. To the handful who would turn their backs on the pride and responsibilities of freedom, all I can say is that the cause for which they clamor is now halfway across the Pacific, fighting harder than they, but to enjoy the wealth he took from their country. I will respect their private grief, but my government will not tolerate its violent outpouring.

In the long struggle against tyranny, some of our brothers and sisters took to the hills in rebellion. Many of them were killed or captured. I mourn for those who died, as I mourn for those who fought fighting them. What a waste of virtue and strength on both sides. I have released those who were captured. And I have called on both sides in the war – the army and the rebels – to enlist their stern virtues of self-discipline, sacrifice and courage in the task of national recovery.

The army had already responded when I made the call– by an act of rebellion against those who had long misused their selfless qualities for selfish ends, and by an act of allegiance to the President-elect of the people. The Armed Forces had rededicated themselves to the Republic, the Constitution, and the Commander-in-Chief, and to the freedom they protect. Surely it will not be long before we have wiped off every stain from the sword of the nation.

Now I am sending out a message of peace and reconciliation to the Communist-led insurgents. Our people are weary of war. They want to explore the opportunities of freedom and savor the fruits of peace. Too many have been orphaned or widowed in the struggle to be free. The time for peace has come.

Some have already responded. I pray that more will, and that we shall see an end to the insurgency problem without further loss and suffering. But I have no illusions that peace will come easily.

For the Communist true believer, the road to victory bristles with arms and resounds with combat. Conflict hardens resolve, purifies intentions, and abolishes any alternative to the violent road to victory. It is a philosophy and a strategy created by the exigency of contending with dictatorships. But it is also a way of thinking that prides itself on its hard realism. The Communist ventures into frontal confrontation only when the balance of forces is clearly tilted in favor of its success. That is clearly not the case at present.

Under the Marcos regime, the balance was in the Communists' favor. The people had distanced themselves from a government they feared and despised. They gave it neither cooperation in its spurious programs nor intelligence about the movements of the insurgents. There was a tacit understanding: every blow struck at the dictatorship was a blow for freedom. Never mind whose hand delivered it. It went on like this for 14 years and it might, given time, have succeeded in replacing the dictatorship of private plunder with the dictatorship of the party. But it was not to be that way.

The people took another route to freedom. And they arrived-without bloodshed and without tears, except for those shed in joy when the army laid aside its weapons to return the people's embrace of reconciliation.

My government is willing to negotiate with the top leadership of the Communist Party to work out the mechanics" for the reassimilation of the insurgents in civil society and their participation in the democratic process. But I would also encourage the communities directly affected by the insurgency to take the initiative and reach out to their brothers and sisters who were not as patient for peaceful change as they were.

Tragic experience has made the Communist cautious. He has used front organizations to test his proposals because it gives him the option to disown them in the event of betrayal. I can understand – although that was not my way when I grappled with the dictatorship. I believe that openness is not weakness, if it is backed up by unshakeable resolve. I see no reason, in the circumstances, for the Communists to continue this way. Negotiations will be with the top leadership of the Communist Party or there will be none.

Whether negotiations will take place, or result in a lasting peace, I do not know. I know only that it is my duty as leader, of the country to explore every peaceful avenue to a resolution of the problem. I am hopeful there will be positive response. The balance of forces in our society today, at any rate, argue strongly against persisting in a military solution. The people have found a new hope as they taste their new freedom. I appeal to the compassion of the insurgent leadership, and to its reason, to join the people in giving democracy another chance.

When I was campaigning for the Presidency, I said that my victory would be celebrated with a ceasefire. It is to the credit of the Armed Forces that they honored that pledge. During this critical period, it is important that a climate of

truth and sobriety should prevail. Although I understand the exuberance of a newly liberated media, I hope they will hew as closely as they can to the truth.

Meanwhile, the insurgents continue to strike, hoping to recreate conditions conducive to successful armed struggle. I shall interpret this kindly to mean that the message of peace has not filtered down to all combatants. But I will not allow this state of affairs to continue for long. The soldiers of the Republic are under my wing. I have obligations to the security of the people, the stability of their new democracy, and the honor of the army. I will not renege on any.

I shall soon call formally for a ceasefire. It will be for a definite and *inextendible* period. Negotiations should take place during that period and, it is to be hoped, a just resolution found of the issues that divide the insurgents from the government. The Armed Forces will maintain their defensive posture. Outbreak of lawlessness will be dealt with by the constabulary and police forces. They should not expect me to leave my people and my soldiers defenseless against elements they cannot, or chose not, to control.

I am sure the Communist leadership can read my mind as well as I believe, I can read theirs. They will use the ceasefire to consolidate their positions, recruit, and recoup the losses they suffered as a result of the preemptive February Revolution. I suppose, to some extent, they could succeed. It will be some time before there is perceptible improvement in the economic conditions of the people. But I am willing to take the gamble to avoid any further waste of lives.

Even as I extend the hand of peace, the rebels know that I shall prepare for the eventuality that my offer will be rebuffed. If the peace initiative fails through no fault of the government, it will not be the old dispirited army of Marcos that the insurgents will face. It will be a new army, and as it is a new government that the insurgency must deal with now.

As Commander-in-Chief, I will not be satisfied with the Armed Forces as they were under Marcos. I know the conditions in which the Filipino soldier had to fight on orders of that callous regime. The inadequacy of his field rations made him forage among the civilian population. The almost complete lack of medicine accounted for the abnormally high ratio of killed-to-wounded among the troops. The lack of appropriate clothing for the environment in which he had to fight accounted for the high AFP casualties – from pneumonia and malaria. None of these conditions will obtain in the new army when it goes forth *if* it must.

There will be a radical change in military strategy, away from the reckless expenditure of force to a more discriminating and effective application of it – by better trained, better equipped, and more mobile units. The New AFP in the field will be as concerned about shielding the civilian population from the worst aspects of combat, as with meeting the armed threat to the security of the Republic.

Every offense against human dignity will be strictly prescribed under my government. I do not believe that the immediate advantage gained by torture can, in any way, offset the indelible disgrace it brings to our country, and the insidious effects it has on the morals of our people and, especially, on the morals of those whom we arm to protect them. A sympathetic people will be the eyes and ears of the armed forces.

I am offering the insurgents an honorable peace. One that will not ignore their just demands, but one also that will not detract in any way from the security of the people, the stability of the government, and the honor of the New Armed Forces. I know that the roots of insurgency are in the economic conditions of the people and the social structures that oppress them. We must address ourselves to these conditions vigorously if we are to hope reasonably for a lasting peace. But we can do this successfully only if we have peace in the first instance. And so I am calling for it.

I am not asking the Communists to give up their stern vision of a just society. I am asking them only to give our people a chance to work out their own version of a just and progressive society in peace. The Communists anyway claim that the triumph of their vision is inevitable. In that case time will surely vindicate them, as the attempts at peaceful reform unravel and end in failure. Then they will have their day.

But I have my own faith, the faith I share with the people today: that peace in our ways and fortitude in our hearts will work miracles, that there will be a deliverance from want, as surely as we have had a deliverance from slavery. Let us give peace a chance.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 19th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian Development Bank

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the 19th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian Development Bank**

[Delivered on April 30, 1986]

**THE
ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

NEXT

REVOLUTION:

Frugality, integrity and sincerity in Government is the style President Aquino has set for her regime. She has defined three broad economic goals: alleviation of mass poverty, generation of employment and provision for a just and equitable sharing of the fruits of development. President Aquino also tells the 19th Annual Meeting of the Asian Development Bank that a genuine private enterprise economy will be restored to foster competition, productivity and efficiency. She also will seek to renegotiate for fairer terms in the country's foreign debts. She reiterates the country's need for help in its short term fiscal position and for long term aid and investments if its economy is to recover.

Let me speak on behalf of my people when I say that it is our honor and privilege to host the 19th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian Development Bank. Perhaps you are surprised at the new and startling climate of political and economic freedom in my country today. Two months ago, this did not seem at all possible to you. You saw a nation resembling on the brink of civil war. A nation facing the prospect of a political dynasty whose beginning was Ferdinand Marcos, and whose end, decades into its ruin, would still be a Marcos — or a nation lacerated beyond healing by war. Sixty-seven days ago, the country seemed ripe for a military coup d'état by the well-placed and appointed forces of General Fabian Ver. Just so many weeks ago, were a people terrified, uncertain, and appearing to plunge headlong into polarization and disaster.

To the right of the center of gravity were Marcos, Imelda, Ver and their handful of cronies bulging with the fat of the land. To the left was a communist New People's Army swelled to nearly three times its potency and size since the assassination of my husband, Ninoy. At the center of this tug of war, veering more and more to the left, was the great mass of Filipinos made hungry, thirsty and very angry by 14 years of shame and frustration.

Over 67 days ago, we must have seemed to more developed countries of the world as just another Third World loser, stumbling in the night of ignorance and inexperience, to certain calamity. Sixty-seven days ago, by most predictions, we were an impending Nicaragua, an imminent Iran, the political and economic basket case of Southeast Asia, and a threat to the stability of the region.

So it seemed to you 67 days ago.

So how has it come to pass that I now stand before you holding the reins of a free republic? How did our nation escape the inexorable law of history that a people must pay a high price in blood for the privilege of freedom? Why, of all nations rocked by unrest, were we fated to a different, benign destiny?

I know that I speak to an audience of hardnosed realists, to minds steeped in rigorous systems of cause and effect. But I am not embarrassed to tell you that I believe in miracles. It is our Faith that saved our nation. It was our reliance on a power greater than history that plucked us from the edge of calamity and set us down in freedom at God's appointed time.

I speak to you of faith because it is our trust in God that restored our faith in ourselves and gave us the resolve to fight through, without blood or rancor, to freedom and a new beginning. I speak to you of faith also, because it is something you also understand. To recover from the years of Marcos, we will need an infusion of capital that only a renewal of your faith in my country can make possible.

Twenty years ago, we were the model country in Southeast Asia in terms of political and economic progress. Our country was one of the most devastated by the second world war. And yet, in less than a decade, we managed to bind our wounds, rebuild from the ruins, and stand tall as the leading economy in Southeast Asia. In the fifties, we had the most vibrant growth rate in the region. We also had one of the highest per capita incomes, and the highest literacy rate.

Throughout this period, we elected five responsible presidents, each of whom honored our democracy and nurtured our remarkable economic growth. And then Marcos happened, and we stumbled headlong into backwardness.

What had we Filipinos done to deserve a Marcos? I honestly do not know. But what I can say is that the experience taught us humility, turned us to God, and drove home the valuable political lesson that liberty must be won every day. We need to have survived just one Marcos to insure that a Marcos will never happen again.

For one, we will not aim for the surface glitter of the Marcos regime, but will strive for the substantive progress and direction it did not give us. Faith tells us that we are nothing and will come to nothing unless we attend to the least of our brothers. After twenty years of plundering by the previous regime, the least among us now comprise the majority, or seventy percent of our population. Two thirds of all Filipinos now live below the poverty line. Of these poor, millions are unemployed and hence have no immediate means of lifting themselves out of their misery.

The coffers of our nation are nearly empty. We have inherited a national treasury left with a fraction of the national budget for the year. Most of the money went to buy the 1986 snap election. On top of that, we have been left with a staggering foreign debt of \$26 billion and nothing to show for it except some remarkable architecture in New York. Half of our much needed export revenues are required just to pay for the interest on that debt.

Indeed the country is nearly as ravaged today as it was immediately after the bombs and the plundering of the second world war. But as in those days of liberation, the taste of freedom is heady, and we are eager to rebuild.

And that is why I speak to you of faith. We Filipinos have a renewed faith in our capacity to overcome our massive poverty and the other problems Marcos has left us. But we also need your faith. We need the confidence of international banking institutions such as the ADB, our trading partner countries, and other entities that can help us revive our economy. We appreciate your cheering us through the revolution. We are grateful for the profuse compliments. Now we would appreciate your help.

In this regard, we are specially grateful to the Asian Development Bank for being the first to demonstrate its faith in our new government. Your \$100 million loan to our country will not only facilitate the launching of priority development projects. It should also serve as a signal to other banking institutions that our country is now a viable proposition.

Our new government has now been 64 days in office. We cannot pull off economic recovery as instantly as a rabbit out of a hat. But we have set the broad direction and taken significant steps. Last January 6, when freedom for our country was a beautiful but tentative dream, I outlined a general economic recovery program that I would implement in my first 100 days as President. First of all, I promised a leadership by example, government by consultation, and the political will for change and growth.

It is just two months since we took over, but I believe we have set a style for frugality, integrity and sincerity in government. We have encouraged and listened to a plurality of voices, and dismantled much of Marcos' political and economic machinery. We have progressed far in the reform of the military, begun the overhaul of the judiciary, and given the media back to the people. All this has cleared the air and set the necessary climate for the revival of our strangled economy.

As an agenda for action, our government has set three broad economic goals for the short and the long term. The first and most urgent is immediate provision for the least of our brothers, or the alleviation of mass poverty. The second goal is actually a means for reaching the first, and that is by the generation of employment. The third goal is to provide a just and equitable sharing of the fruits of development. The key here is rural development and the structuring of an economy where the benefits reach quickly and regularly to those on the lowest socio-economic levels. For an agricultural country that too is a means to easing mass poverty.

Toward the achievement of these broad goals we have set more specific objectives and courses of action.

The first, which is the fulfillment of a promise I made repeatedly during my campaign, is to have less government in the economy. Unlike Marcos style doublespeak, this regime means business when it says it will not meddle in private business. Government will provide the usual public services and facilities, preserve order, vindicate rights and protect liberties. But the private sector shall be the main propeller of the economy. I believe that the restoration of a genuine private enterprise economy will foster competition, productivity and efficiency. But we will also expect the private sector to practice self-regulation and keep a sense of social responsibility.

Corollary to the attainment of this objective is the fulfillment of another promise I made during my campaign. I promised to trim the government to an efficient and responsive size. And the first step is to dismantle Marcos Incorporated. We are already unravelling those structures of privilege — the public agencies and quasi-public corporations that had little or nothing to contribute to the priority needs of our people. We are also working to recover the assets of the previous incumbent of my office, and of his friends, that we can legally prove are illegally owned. Already we have abolished, and are presently dismantling, the vast propaganda machine of Marcos and the equally vast spending apparatus of his wife's Metro Manila Commission. To restore the people's faith in representative institutions, we abolished the National Assembly that had made a mockery of its mission. The previous regime accumulated 330 corporations with total liabilities in the billions of dollars. A few of these entities are profitable; most are an intolerable burden on our government budget. We plan to commence their selective rehabilitation and sale, specially those companies which cannot cover their own operating costs and are in competition with the private sector. We likewise plan to reorganize those strongholds of Marcos state capitalism, the Philippine National Bank and the Development Bank of the Philippines in order to restore viability and efficiency. This will result in the liberation of assets from the paralyzing and wasteful effects of state control. We assure the independence of the Central Bank, and shall defend its mission to safeguard the integrity of the financial system and our currency.

Even as government dwindles to its proper size, its role in the development of the countryside shall increase. We are postponing capital-intensive, urban-based industrial projects which cannot generate their own foreign exchange requirements. We are also decentralizing the formulation of programs so that the benefits of development will redound to local communities. This brings us to the most crucial component, the very core of our recovery and development strategy.

Seventy percent of the population live in the countryside. To allow the nation's wealth and resources to reach these people, we must give full attention to the strengthening and uplift of the rural and agricultural sector. This can be achieved through agrarian reform and a package of credit, marketing and technological support. This means providing a support system that will enable farmer cultivators to move from subsistence agriculture into the market economy, as both producers and consumers. Most immediately, we must provide post-harvest facilities to hasten delivery and consumption of farm products. The objective is to develop the purchasing power of the rural population, achieve self-sufficiency in food production, and establish a sound foundation for industrial growth.

To this end, we have begun the process of dismantling the purchasing monopolies for such commodities as sugar, coconuts, flour, meat and other products cornered by the Marcos cronies.

We are also seeking long-term financing for the diversification from traditional crops to more potentially profitable non-traditional crops.

Finally, I promised during the campaign to vigorously seek to renegotiate for more liberal terms on our foreign debt. It is on this platform that I wish to sound an appeal to international institutions of banking and finance and to the more developed countries who are our trading partners. We ask you to look beyond the crisis stage of our external debt problem and focus on our current needs for fresh finance. And that is how we can generate the desired amount of funds. And how the quality of capital flow can be improved to avoid the problem of excessive reliance on short-term bank credits.

Our ability to pay our debts is dependent on our ability to generate export earnings. This hinges on our access to developed country markets. Hence we are concerned with the increasing protectionism of developed countries. This development undermines an open world trading system. And contrasts with the efforts of our country toward taking the difficult step of restructuring industries by lowering trade barriers unilaterally.

On the domestic side we face a deficit which is substantially larger than originally anticipated.

We ask you to have faith in us and our capacity to reclaim our place as one of the more progressive countries of Southeast Asia. We have all the ingredients for prosperity in our midst. We have rich, arable lands; we have a large, skilled, English-speaking work force; we have a manufacturing capacity that is only half utilised; we are committed by our historical orientation to democracy, and by our Faith, to peace. With these in our favor, and the prospect of a revived tyranny withering half an ocean away from us, we mean to achieve positive growth in our gross national product this year, after a 10 percent fall in our GNP in the last 2 years. And this will only be the beginning. With our back, to the wall, we have nowhere to go but forward. That was our condition when we faced the prospect of perpetual tyranny 67 days ago. We went forward and fought through. We will do it again on another front, and we will not forget those who helped us take our first, tentative, steps toward recovery.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the occasion of Labor Day

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the occasion of Labor Day**

[Delivered on May 1, 1986]

UNSHACKLING THE LABOR FORCE

In the February revolution the Filipino people stood as one – united in fighting the dictatorship. There was no laborer or employer, no rich or poor, no Pampangueno or Tagalog, only one single labor force working together for freedom.

Now, President Aquino says, the revolution for freedom is over and another revolution is to start – that is the economic revolution, wherein, the power of a united people can make it succeed.

She lists down a number of measures to help the work force of the country such as: honoring the commitment to ILO Convention 87 or Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, ILO Convention 141 on Rural Worker's Organization; repeal of LOI 1458; automatic certification election during the freedom period of collective bargaining agreements; removal of the 13th month pay ceilings; revision of the apprenticeship program, repeal of some requirements for valid strikes and calling of a National Tripartite Conference.

She promises to work for the lowering of prices of commodities, energy and gasoline, undertake massive low-income housing programs, and to provide more funds for loans to worker's cooperatives.

My fellow workers in the work of national reconstruction, I greet you on the occasion of Labor Day.

You in the labor force and we of the former Marcos opposition have been marching side by side for longer than we realize.

From the hundreds of thousands at Ninoy's wake, through the millions at his funeral, to democracy's triumph last February, we were one. We prayed as one. We struggled patiently and peacefully as one. We dreamed, as one, of becoming a freed nation. There were no rich or poor among us in the struggle. No Pampanguenos, Tagalog, Ilocanos, Visayanos. No workers and no employers. We were all then one single labor force laboring for freedom and a fresh start. We worked together and we were victorious together. We were people's power. We were Filipinos without distinctions to divide our resolve. As a result, we were distinguished from all the world by our unprecedented peaceful revolution.

Now the country is back in our hands. The revolution of freedom is over. Another revolution is about to begin. The economic revolution that will lift us from poverty, underdevelopment and economic injustice. And again, only the power of a united people can make it succeed.

There will be no flags, no speeches, no marching in this revolution. It will be a quiet revolution. One that will take place inside factories and offices, in government offices and private enterprises, on the farm and in the city. It will be a nation of Filipinos going back to work but fired with the zeal of one victory and confident of the next. Once again, it will require that we forget our differences and work as one. We must forget again whether we are workers or employers, provincianos or city people. We must work to increase productivity and efficiency so we can feed and educate ourselves and raise a stronger race of Filipinos. We must work so we can pay the \$27 billion debt left by Marcos and his wife, and their cronies, and so we can hold our heads higher still in the community of nations.

I made a promise to you during the campaign and I repeat that promise. I shall ask for no greater sacrifice than I myself am prepared to make. I shall impose no heavier burden on our people than they are willing to carry. But sacrifices and burdens there will be, as I warned, but shared equitably by all for we shall be rebuilding from the ruins left by Marcos.

I ask you to respond now as you responded when I called on you to defy Marcos and win our freedom – without fighting, without envy, and with shared purpose and sacrifice. People's power can put our economy back on its feet, put food on our tables, shirts on our backs, roofs over our heads, and pride in our hearts. We must now work hard to regain or rebuild what Marcos stole or destroyed. We must prove that, while he stole our patrimony, he did not break our will, that all the sufferings he inflicted has only made us stronger.

During the campaign I promised to provide for the welfare of labor in three ways. These were: to revise or rescind the laws that repress the rights of workers and their trade unions; to ensure that labor shall equitably share in the benefits of our developments efforts; and to create the conditions for the full human development of the labor poor.

Today, I come before you on this day of celebration for labor to redeem my pledges. I have also come to plead for your patience, understanding and support for specific policies and programs which may not immediately benefit your sector but will in the long run give us a country and an economy strong enough to fulfill the cherished dreams of labor.

My administration shall honor our commitment to ILO Convention 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize and to ILO Convention 141 on Rural Workers' Organization.

My government shall promote and protect the rights of workers and employees to establish and form organizations and unions of their own choosing, with a minimum of government interference. Security guards in the private sector, employees of government corporations organized under the Corporation Code are hereby allowed to unionize and bargain collectively with their respective employers.

I now repeal LOI 1458 that allows management to replace striking workers who defy return to work orders. Your government will not pursue the "one-union one-industry" policy that has caused so much dissension in your ranks. I leave to you completely the discretion to combine as you may deem fit and necessary.

In representation issues, we shall now pursue a policy of automatic certification election during the freedom period of collective bargaining agreements, where the majority status of the incumbent union is questioned.

In cases of non-unionized establishments, a petition for certification election or to register a union supported by 20 percent of all employees will be enough.

I hereby remove the 13th month pay ceiling for all rank and file employees.

The apprenticeship program was used under Marcos to exploit the Filipino workers. I hereby direct the Minister of Labor to immediately review the existing list of apprenticeable jobs and limit them strictly to highly technical industries. In no case shall the period of apprenticeship exceed six months.

I am today repealing the following requirements for valid strikes:

- The 2/3 strike vote requirements under BP 130 is hereby revised to a simple majority vote.
- In case of dismissal of union officers, constituting union busting, where the existence of the union is threatened the union can ignore the 15 day cooling off period and take action immediately. In all other respects, however, violations of collective bargaining agreements will still be dealt with in accordance with the existing laws and procedures.
- Unless actual violence or other criminal acts occur in the picketlines. I am ordering the police forces to keep out of the picketlines.

Under this government there will be justice for the workers under the laws, and the laws will be just. But I hope that labor and management will respect the final adjudications of their disputes. We must cooperate to reduce the uncertain ties that have paralyzed economic activity in our country.

It is part of my minimum program of government to assure labor's meaningful participation in decision-making at all levels of our society. I shall soon appoint representatives of your unions in all policy-making bodies of government. I ask you to submit your recommendations to these positions.

As my machinery for consultation with workers and employers groups and to boost collective bargaining as the primary means of promoting your economic interest and settling disputes, I hereby direct the Ministry of Labor to call a National Tripartite Conference consistent with the agreement signed last Monday by the Labor Advisory Consultative Council and the Employers Confederation of the Philippines to negotiate a Code of Industrial Harmony. This code will be the policy framework of my government in pursuing programs and projects beneficial to all sectors.

In this forum I shall propose to the three sectors to agree on the following:

- Amendments to BP 130 and 227 to sanitize them of their restrictive and oppressive provisions.
- Removal of exemptions from present wage decrees and the integration of COLA into the basic pay.
- Explore all mechanisms for profit sharing consistent with my policy of equitable distribution of wealth.

To speed the resolution of cases in order to minimize causes for strikes and facilitate their right to seek redress for legitimate grievances, the Ministry of Labor shall professionalize the dispute settlement machinery. The NLRC shall be cleansed of sectoral interests by appointing men of probity, honesty, and integrity into the Commission.

I know the plight of the worker and that his or her basic needs cannot be delayed. I shall therefore continue to work for lowering the prices of commodities, energy, and gasoline. I hereby suspend contributions to PAG-IBIG. My government shall explore other means to undertake a massive low-income housing program. We shall also give serious thought to the rechanneling of a substantial amount of government loans to existing workers' and peasants' cooperatives and those yet to be formed.

I shall continue to redeem all my pledges to you. And now I issue a challenge to you.

Purify your ranks of racketeers, kingpins and minidictators. You are not only the backbone of industry but the vanguard of democracy as well. Freedom and dignity for our nation starts with you. How can we be strong, if you are weak? How can we be proud as a free nation if you will not stand up for your rights within your own sector.

Assert our independence and show to one and all that you are not mere transmission belts of politicians and political forces.

You are the elite 10 percent of the labor force. You are the privileged by your organized strength. It is your obligation to spread the benefits of organizations to farmers, fishermen and other workers.

Finally, I appeal to you, in this period while the country is trying to recover from the tyranny and theft of the Marcos regime, to exercise restraints in exercising your right to strike. Use it as a last resort and only after exhausting all other means of resolving your disputes with management.

Make me prouder, my workers, of this second revolution to make our country free, not only of a tyrant in the palace but of tyranny everywhere: the tyranny of poverty and underdevelopment, as of the tyranny of political power. Make the world wonder again at how a country reduced to beggary by reckless debts and a people reduced to penury lifted themselves and their country from humiliation to the greatest pride.

Let the second revolution start now.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 50th Anniversary of the Philippine Air Force

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the 50th Anniversary of the Philippine Air Force**

[Delivered on May 2, 1986]

GIVING PEACE A CHANCE

The Philippine Air Force on its 50th anniversary should be honored for the things it did in December 1941 against the superior forces of Japan and for defying the orders to attack the rebel camps in February 1986. Because of their sense of high duty and honor, they were instrumental in tapping the balance in favor of democracy.

The Republic honored the Philippine Air Force by calling this base “Villamor” for what the air force did on December 10, 1941. Captain Jesus Villamor and 5 other Filipino pilots took off in their P-26’s from the flaming wreckage of their base and engaged the overwhelmingly superior forces of the Empire of Japan.

Today we honor the Philippine Air Force for what it did not do during those fateful days in February when the life of this nation hung in the balance and the air force tipped the scale in its favor. Ordered to attack the rebel camps on EDSA and the people who had massed to protect it, the helicopter gunships under the command of Colonel Sotelo swooped down on the camps and landed. And declared for the rebellion and democracy. The rest of the Air Force followed suit.

In both instances, in December 1941 and in February 1986, the Air Force took the initiative to protect our people and their freedom. In both instances, it refused to accept the situation. In December 1941, the situation called for resignation to defeat. In February 1986, the situation called for obedience to orders. In both cases, the Air Force refused to accept the situation and acted on the promptings of its sense of higher duty and honor.

It seems that lately in our history the Filipino people have looked up at their skies for deliverance.

Ninoy came down from the bright noon sky in a China Airline flight with a message of reconciliation and peaceful transition to democracy. He arrived at martyrdom and thereby galvanized the nation to fight for freedom upon his unique terms of peace and reconciliation.

In the angry months that followed, the people marching in the streets to protest the latest shameless act of the dictatorship looked up at the tall buildings for those signs of solidarity, the yellow confetti.

And in February, the people massing around the rebel camps in EDSA watched anxiously as helicopter gunships made straight for them and then landed to join them. The Air Force had denied the sky to tyranny, just as the people had denied it the earth. The circle had closed. All the forces of Philippine society had joined in the cause of democracy.

Isolated, with nowhere to turn, the dictator and his wife, and their armed retainers and flunkies, took to the skies for exile.

Now democracy is covered on every side, and above, by the forces of peace. Now our people can devote themselves single-mindedly to the long delayed task of making this country as prosperous, just and progressive as it richly deserves to be.

The task requires that this nation has peace, as much as our pride as Filipinos demands that it shall always be democratic. Our new democracy has been criticized because it is tolerant of agitation. This is regarded by certain ignorant quarters as weakness. It is not. It is the clearest sign of our concrete, confidence in our strength. The pinpricks of bought and benighted loyalists will not provoke us to violate the basic principles for which we struggled and make us no better than the tyrant we deposed. The attacks of obstinate fanatics will not deflect us from our course to lasting peace. The Armed Forces know how to defend our people. And they will, but without jeopardizing the peace initiative we have made. No one loves peace more than the soldier who is the first and last to taste its horrors.

We shall give peace a chance. One more chance and we will give it our best effort. This nation cannot continue in its agony. I am glad to deliver this message that we shall persevere in our efforts to find a lasting peace before a branch of the Armed Forces that we honor specially today. It is among the men in uniform that we expect to find the steadfastness and courage to move inexorably toward a difficult, and at times, seemingly distant goal. The positive response of the Armed Forces to this repeated message of peace assures our people of the durability of the new democracy that they have established, the certainty of their security, and the imminence of peace.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the clergies of San Carlos Seminary

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the clergies of San Carlos Seminary

[Delivered on May 20, 1986/

INTERCESSORS FOR PEACE AND UNITY

The clergy played an important role in the February revolution according to President Aquino. Through the evangelization of the priests, the Filipino people became aware of the injustices prevalent in the society.

She appeals to the clergy again, this time to help her by rebuilding the spirits of the people — through example and by word.

She specifically requests the clergy's help in motivating the Marcos loyalists and the NPA's to join the mainstream of the Filipino society in the work of national reconstruction.

It is with great joy that I come and stand before you this morning. I know that practically all of you participated actively in the February revolution which toppled Marcos' dictatorial regime. Prior to the elections, during the elections and after the elections, you helped increase our people's awareness of the injustices prevalent then in our society. You helped form their consciences through unflagging and daring evangelisation. If our people in Metro Manila acted the way they did, it was due in no small measure to your priestly work of evangelisation. Hence, I wish my presence among you today to be an expression of my gratitude for your signal contribution in the transformation of our nation.

But I come before you today for another reason: I have come to enter into dialogue with you so that we may together carry forward the transformation which has been so boldly begun.

I wish to hear from you whatever comments, criticisms and suggestions you and the people under your pastoral J care are saying. From the beginning, I stated that I would consult the people and that my administration would exercise consultation. Let this "be an opportunity for such a consultation in friendly and fraternal atmosphere.

I dare to express before you my expectations of you in the great work of reconstruction of our country ravaged by the Marcos regime. I know that your contribution to this process is indispensable.

I know that you are not experts in politics and economics. Yes, it is not your role as priests and pastors to propose technical solutions to the many problems that beset our nation. But precisely as priests and *evangelisers* of our people you have a vital role to play. For what has to be built up in our people is, first of all, the spirit of our people. And who can better help towards the rebuilding of our people's *spirit* than you, our spiritual leaders?

You will recall what our bishops wrote in their draft pastoral letter on social transformation, "Man, Our Way." In describing our society under Marcos, they pointed out two outstanding characteristics: 1) the widespread poverty and deep suffering of our people, and 2) the demoralization, i.e., the sense of discouragement and the erosion of moral values in our people. These two, poverty-suffering on the one hand, and demoralization on the other, did not simply stand side by side. They stood, I believe, in a casual relationship. The majority of our people were poor because many in our society no longer lived by moral principles and had caused the demoralization, i.e., the loss of morale in the majority. We could make no progress because people no longer trusted the government and the institutions that were supposed to help them and protect their rights. When one looks back at the years under the Marcos regime, one cannot but be impressed and depressed by the slow descent into the depths of the Filipino spirit.

We seemed headed either towards national degeneration or violent confrontation. I believe in my heart of hearts that had God not allowed the murder of my late husband, Ninoy, as he returned to work non-violently for justice and national reconciliation, we might still be suffering today from the twofold demoralization our bishops have described or we might already be on the brink of a civil war.

But you all know how, that shot in the Manila International Airport awoke the failing spirit of our people.

From then on, that spirit refused to surrender to the evils in our society, until at last, the February revolution occurred — a magnificent triumph of the Filipino and Christian spirit in our land. We managed to overthrow the oppressive Marcos regime, in an almost completely bloodless manner. We succumbed neither to deadening apathy nor to the temptation to violence.

The February revolt was a magnificent climax — a true resurrection from the death. It was, however, only a beginning, as we are very painfully realizing now.

Two great tasks lie ahead of us. First, the renewal of the morals and morale of our people. This requires a change of heart, a change in our attitudes, a true conversion, the transformation of the Filipino as a person. I consider this primary. Unless we change within, the same demons that beset the Filipino people under the Marcos regime will return — and with a vengeance.

Herein, I believe, lies the field of your most urgent and most important contribution to the rebuilding of our nation. If you evangelise our people by example and by word regarding the centrality in God's plan of the human-person-in-community; if you teach our people about the universal destination of created goods, and the priority of labor over capital, and set the right to private property within the context of these two truths; if you counter the *kanya-kanya* tendency with a stress on the common good; if you inculcate in us all the idea of public service, and if you show us by example and by word the preferential option for the poor; if, in other words, you evangelise our people in the way the Pope and our own bishops have told you to, you shall have made the most urgent and most important contribution to the rebuilding of our country.

I must stress, however, the necessity of your example, more than your words in this work of reforming our internal structures. The great defect of the Marcos regime was precisely this — that it was a regime of words unmatched by deeds. Never in our history were so many beautiful speeches and books spoken and written as during the time of the deposed dictator. But never also had there been such a wider gap between profession and action.

Words are necessary, but they are so woefully inadequate. A proliferation of words if unmatched by actions, can result in a credibility gap.

Hence, I have myself resolved to exercise leadership by personal example. I have asked my cabinet ministers to do the same. Allow me to request the same from you so that the necessary change in our way of thinking and attitudes may be achieved effectively.

If I may be more specific: the cause of national reconstruction will be helped immensely if you, our priests showed the way to simplicity of life, justice in human transactions, the sharing of this world's goods, and the exercise of authority as service.

The change in internal structures of the Filipino needs to be matched and promoted by a corresponding change in our external structures, i.e., the economic, political and social structures of the land. I believe that this is primarily the work of lay persons like myself, and believe me, it is precisely as part of my Christian commitment as a lay person that I have assumed the burdens of the presidency.

But even here, you have your special role. In the postelection statement of the CBCP, a methodology was set forth: The bishops write, "In a creative imaginative way, under the guidance of Christ's Spirit, let us pray together, reason together, decide together, act together, always to the end that the truth prevails."

My dear fathers, who can better help bring about this coming together, praying together, reasoning together, deciding and acting together than you, our people's spiritual leaders for unity?

I was told that in the Archdiocese of Manila, there is a thrust for the building of basic ecclesiastical communities where the aforementioned methodology proposed by our bishops can be realized. You have also in your parishes the different mandated Catholic organizations which can be potent instruments of renewal. Will it be possible for you to motivate these and other church groups towards that constructive, critical collaboration, which seems to be firming up as the attitude of Philippine Church officialdom towards the present government?

Yes, I invite you to promote this constructive, critical collaboration. We need to collaborate – for the good of our people. I have repeatedly said to our people: “MAGTULUNGAN TAYO!” – not for the sake of Cory, but for the sake of the people we are all called to serve. I need your support, and I appeal for it. The time for rebuilding must be above all, a time for united effort. Ask your people to do their best, and give their all, for the sake of our country and its future. Ask them, and show them the way by your example.

I understand that this way mean a change in your leadership style. Just as the authoritarian style of Church leadership provided a spiritual climate favorable to martial rule, so also a more consultative and participative style of Church leadership will enable our people to be more participative also in the affairs of civil society.

With your help, perhaps we can bring into the collaborative effort of the Filipino people two groups: the first is the Marcos loyalists who, while clearly incapable of bringing back to power their discredited leader can, nevertheless, create annoying disturbances disruptive of peace and progress in our society. Is it possible to also influence this loyalist group towards the stance of active non-violence? If dissent they must, can they not be helped to express dissent relying only on the force of truth? Will it be possible for you to go even further and persuade them to join the mainstream of Filipino society in the work of national reconstruction?

The second are the NPA's most of whom were driven to the hills by the excesses of the previous regime. Can you assure those who may come to you that the period of oppression is over and they are needed for the march towards the progress of our country?

I do not fail to note that the word “critical” has been inserted between “constructive” and “collaboration.” I welcome that too. Never again should our people be simply cowed or bribed to do certain things. Never again should they be robotized. The present government needs the collaboration of thinking and free persons. Let your voices and that of your people be heard — in dialogue and not in angry confrontation. I claim neither perfection nor infallibility. I understand that the Church cannot identify itself unreservedly with any government, no matter how good. It has to preserve a certain distance which will leave it freedom to exercise its prophetic role. I welcome criticism, provided it be honest and made as part of our search for unity. In fact, I have only recently dialogued with members of the CBCP on pressing problems of our country.

However, I appeal also for patience. Rome was not built in a day. The Philippines will not be rebuilt in a few months. There are long days of toil and sacrifices ahead of us. We are saddled by the misdeeds of a profligate regime. We are handicapped by the evil effects in our persons and in our structures of this discredited rule. We must be patient and learn to undo step by step the sad legacy of twenty years of Marcos' misrule.

This will demand sacrifices and the spirit of sacrifice from all of us. My dear bishops, monsignori and fathers, challenge our people to make the necessary sacrifices. Show yourselves to be men of sacrifice as well.

But it is not on that note that I want to end. Hope must be the order of the day. The Filipino people is capable of great things. We produced in February another wonder of the world. A new Philippines is already being born in the hearts of our countrymen. Indeed, what can we not do with the help of God? How shall we fail when Mary stands by our side? I wish to ask you, my dear fathers, to give our people reasons for hoping and loving, for living and dying. The future beckons. Let us heed its call to greatness! No one of us can be blamed for not accomplishing everything. But we will be responsible before God and our people if we refuse to give all we can in this historical moment.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the people of Davao

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines Before the people of Davao

[Delivered in Davao City, May 23, 1986]

KEEPING PROMISES IN THE LAND OF PROMISE

As she promised, President Aquino came back to Davao now as the President of the Philippines, to once again appeal to the people of Davao and the whole Mindanao to help her government in the harder task of national recovery.

She believes that the best way to achieve the government's goal is consultations with the people on their problems and working out with them the solutions.

She tells the people of Davao to resort to people power again in order to achieve the goals of the new nation.

It is three months to the day when I should have arrived here to fulfill my promise to the people of Davao to visit again this land of promise and blighted performance. I was to come here to start, from the South, my northward campaign to bring the power of the people to bear upon the dictatorship that stole the election of their President and destroyed their democratic expectations. I was to tell you and the rest of the people of Mindanao to steel yourselves for a protracted struggle with an uncertain outcome. I was to ask you to cultivate the virtues of patience, perseverance, courage and self-reliance, for we would need them in the extreme.

Now I have arrived: already your President and in a land to which democracy has been restored. But my message has not changed. I have come to ask you still to call up those virtues for the longest task of national recovery, a task made only lighter by the freedom and justice in which it shall be carried out.

I said during the campaign that mine shall be a government of consultation. I have come to consult with you about your problems and to work out with you its solutions. I said during the campaign that consultation is necessary because no one can know better than the people directly affected what their problems are and how they should be solved. This is especially true when the main burden of the solutions must be borne by them. As you know, we have inherited a bankrupt government. But while that government is poor in material provision, it is rich in the strength of its will to recovery and in the power of the people who support and identify with it.

I have come to call on that power once more. The world stood amazed as we pulled off an unprecedented revolution. And it has been unstinting in its praise. The Filipinos swelled with pride as they stepped a little forward of the front rank of freedom-loving people because of the way they achieved their freedom.

For the world's praise and for its moral during the dark days of our struggle we are truly grateful. Now the world is intent on being amazed again to see us pull off another miracle: recovery, from near total devastation with no resources and a multitude of debts.

We are alone again in this second struggle to rebuild. We shall be cheered on by the rest of the world and helped a little by special friends. But we alone will bear the burden of recovery. This is fine with us. We are never better, as we recently demonstrated, than when we have our backs to the wall and with nowhere to go but forward.

I like it this way. This is how it was when I campaigned for the freedom and the Presidency of the people. This is again how it should be when our people, in their new freedom, march alone to progress. As in our struggle for freedom, we alone will pay the price but we alone will have the credit and the honor. From this second struggle we shall emerge a still prouder and truly independent nation.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Davao Military Camp

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Davao Military Camp**

[Delivered on May 23, 1986]

**TAPPING
OF THE PEOPLE**

THE

UNARMED

FORCES

President Aquino exhorts the members of the armed forces to help in the work of rehabilitating and rebuilding the country. Military might, she says, must be used for right. Her visit to Davao was the first outside Manila that she would undertake since assuming the presidency.

Soldiers of Davao, I have made it a point to visit you today to remind you how much our new government depends on you. I know that your numbers are small compared to the entire civilian population you are committed to defend and protect. I know that your military supplies run low and that your wages cannot fully compensate for the dangers and the risk to your lives that your service in the army entails. I know that though you have mastered the use of weapons, and that the sight of your troops in uniform inspires fear and respect, you suffer and struggle to earn your daily wage like the rest of us from day to day.

And yet, despite the limitations and difficulties you must bear with, so much of the future of your province, and the stability of your government and the entire country must rest on your shoulders.

You, our men in uniform have the task of keeping the peace, and upholding law and order in the province of Davao and the larger area of Southern Mindanao. As long as there is widespread poverty in your region, and as long as insurgents continue to terrorize your coastal towns and your hills and forests, it will always be a difficult battle.

And yet, I am cheered by the fact that there are factors in your favor today that were never there in the past decade. What you now uphold and defend is a government that enjoys a tremendous mandate and the confidence of the people. You have leaders that have pledged to rule by dialogue and consultation, that are sincere in their intentions to safeguard and redistribute the nation's wealth, that are committed to public service rather than to the pursuit of unlimited power and privilege. Most of all, you have a government that fears God more than the wiles and threats of ruthless men. And as we all know by now, when God is with us, who can prevail against us?

I would like you to recall, that during that fateful last week of February, a poorly armed and vastly outnumbered military contingent prevailed against the tanks, Sikorsky helicopters, planes and troops of Marcos. Their secret weapon, the answer to all our prayers, was a backup contingent of thousands of unarmed and peace-loving men, women and children. As these civilian volunteers surrounded the reformist troops staked out in Camps Crame and Aguinaldo, the missiles, machineguns, tear gas and bast-laid plans of General Ver and his cohorts were rendered useless. God was on the side of the reformists, and he had called on the people to their defense.

I must recall those four fateful days again and again because it reveals a strategy that you, the reformed military forces of Davao, can also use to your advantage. Your army may be small compared to the land area and size of the population you must patrol and protect. But remember that at any time, there is a vast reserve force that can immediately surround and support you. They are the people that live in your neighboring houses, the vendors in the public markets, the pedestrians, the farmers and the fishermen, your relatives and your friends. This is your hidden army. Your potential informers and field reconnaissance men. Your patrol and surveillance forces. Your living barricade against the guerilla and subversive tactics of the insurgent force that is in truth a minority. For if the ordinary, average and unarmed men, women and children of Davao and the rest of Southern Mindanao trust and

respect you, who can prevail against you? They are the secret weapon that I recommend. People's power and the guidance of God.

Soldiers of Davao, I urge you to maintain the utmost courtesy and regard for the rights and privileges of the civilians around you. I challenge you to be humble, polite and in your day to day dealings with them. I ask you to participate wholeheartedly in the less glamorous tasks of national reconstruction. To participate in such military assistance programs as the building of bridges and roads, the provision of emergency shelter, relief and transportation in times of natural calamity, in protecting the routes of trade, in the giving of emergency medical aid, in community programs of reforestation and irrigation. I urge you not only to be model soldiers but also model citizens. See that you consistently behave in a creditable manner in public. In your off-duty hours, remember to lay aside your firearms. Practice moderation in all your indulgences. Never threaten, never swagger, never display cruelty or arrogance. For by doing so, you will invite allegiance to your enemy. Remember always that the people you protect will one day protect you when you hang in the balance between life and death.

In return for such commendable and soldierly behavior, your government will exhaust all the means within its reach to improve the standard of living of the military. Government will also intensify its counter-insurgency campaign. At this date, we are speeding up the structuring of a credible amnesty and rehabilitation program for surrendering rebels. We are also continuing negotiations for an honorable ceasefire, one that will not result in treachery, or loss of lives on both the side of the insurgents and the military. We are also pursuing our reform and reorganization program within the armed forces of the Philippines to insure that the most deserving and brave of our soldiers get the rank and recognition that is due them. We are working towards rehabilitating and rebuilding a country that will be easier for you to protect, to uphold and to defend.

Soldiers of Davao, you must help us by proving everyday that the military arm of the new government are truly defenders and not the offenders of the people. You must impress upon our struggling populace that military might is not right just be itself. Might must be used for right.

Soldiers of Davao, your commander in chief, the highest ranking officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the people of our Republic are depending on you. And so far, the majority of you have not failed us. For in many instances I am told, the soldiers and officers of the Davao military have not only proven themselves warriors but also upright citizens and gentlemen.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Central Bank

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the Central Bank

[Delivered in Davao City, May 23, 1986]

AN EXPERIENCE IN GOVERNMENT BY CONSULTATION

President Aquino explains that her call for a ceasefire during which negotiations with insurgents will take place, is a cease-fire-in-place. Troops will not return to the barracks to leave a free zone where insurgents can operate with impunity. Since insurgent leaders are presumed to have complete control over their men in the field, any gross violation of the ceasefire will be taken as a deliberate act and a signal of failure of negotiations and resumption of hostilities.

President Aquino also announced that local elections will be held as soon as possible after the ratification of the new constitution.

I try always to keep my word and therefore I am circumspect in making commitments. But I made a commitment to visit you again. I pledged to govern by consultation. I said that in God's appointed time we shall be free again. Now we are. And I am here, your President, come to consult with you on the problems of this region as you see them and to work out with you the solutions you feel are the best and that you can bear.

I said that I believe in the power of prayer to work miracles. It has. For we prayed not for freedom, but for the strength to persevere in the fight for it without hate or rancor until freedom came without doing violence to our call for reconciliation. And we found the strength and the courage to face down a dictatorship. We prayed for wisdom in leadership even as we committed ourselves to genuine democratic government. And the miracle has happened. No sooner was democracy restored than the people of this region, taking the event at face value, assumed their own leadership as befits a democracy and convened to arrive at an understanding of their problems and work out the appropriate solutions in the proud spirit of self-reliance and people power that had carried the country through to freedom. Our prayers are answered in part: we have a democracy in its full sense and dignity in this region.

What am I saying? That we pray to God and then we work so that deliverance from our tribulations will come through our efforts and singularly to our honor.

The struggle of the Filipinos down the centuries has not been for independence, democracy and progress but for the dignity they confer upon the race that wins and keeps all three. We rejected the economic security of continued colonial servitude when we demanded independence in the midst of the ruins of World War II. We might have had an easier time of it if we had swallowed our pride and delayed. We rejected the irresponsible condition of citizenship in a dictatorship that offered to assume all the power and all the responsibility for our lives. We have occasionally strayed from the path of democratic pride that is native to us but inevitably we have returned to it. I applaud the people and the natural leadership of Davao for taking the leading step in this direction.

You, the people of Davao and Eastern Mindanao, farmers and workers, businessmen and professionals, teachers and students, churchpeople and urban poor have opened your hearts and minds. The experience has been enriching and leaves me so encouraged. The task of governance cannot be the task of one person or a few people if it is to be done well. We as a people made a revolution together. Am I not right to expect therefore that we as a people must now consolidate the gains of that revolution and work together to make it work for each one of us? You are the first to meet that expectation. You have truly earned the right to call this government your own and a true democracy. I therefore commend Minister Ramon Mitra for vindicating this right by appointing a deputy minister for agriculture

and food particularly for Mindanao. I shall ask my Cabinet to consider similar appointments in other pertinent ministries. I want nothing to stand between the Presidency and areas that have shown such political maturity in the appreciation of their problems.

The single deterrent to recovery and progress in Mindanao you are telling me is the peace and order problem. The problem encompasses not only the insurgency but, chiefly, common criminality abetted by warlords and even the military.

With regard to the insurgency, I have said that I shall call for a ceasefire for a definite and inextendible period during which I hope negotiations to take place that will result in an honorable and lasting peace that will address the legitimate demands of the insurgents without detracting from the security of the people, the stability of their new democracy or the honor of the New Armed Forces. This will be a ceasefire-in-place so that the armed forces shall be positioned to ward off any threats to the security of the people during the period of negotiations. Let me make myself clear on this point. There will be no ceasefire with return of the troops to the barracks that will leave the insurgents a free zone within which to operate with impunity. I shall assume that the insurgent leadership exercises complete control over their men in the field so that any gross violation of the ceasefire will be taken by my government as a deliberate act and a signal of the failure of negotiations and the resumption of hostilities. I am still waiting for the top leadership of the Communists to respond.

While I am considering the time when to call for a general ceasefire, taking the cue from this consultation I shall consult with the Minister of Defense on the feasibility of a regional ceasefire immediately for a period of 60 days during which regional leaders can establish contact with the insurgents in a particular region and negotiate, if not for the end of insurgent activity then for a longer truce during which greater trust might develop between the insurgent leadership and ranks and the government. A trust that can be the foundation of a permanent peace.

I met with 168 rebel returnees at the Carmelite convent this morning. I was struck by the extreme youth of these former insurgents and their obvious bravery and acute sense of justice. It is tragic that such youth and virtue have been wasted in fighting that could be harnessed for the greater good of our country. I assured them of their safety and declared General Magno personally responsible to me in that regard.

Knowing that poverty is a main cause of insurgency and that even the weary insurgent must believe he can have a start before he will consider returning to civil life, I shall consider the feasibility of an arms exchange program. Not cash for guns, but guns for rehabilitation and skills training to permit a smooth reintegration into society.

In this regard, I have learned here that there are 33,000 hectares of military reservations which could be used for land reform and rehabilitation.

All human rights abuses, whether committed by the Armed Forces or the Communists will be prosecuted equally vigorously. For, on a par with basic material needs, is the hunger for justice. Although I hope that with this new Beginning we have achieved, forgiveness will figure greatly when we calculate a better future for ourselves.

Because the peace and order problem is chiefly one of common criminality, I direct the Minister of Defense and the Chief of Staff to prepare and immediately implement a disarmament campaign against the warlords in the countryside and the criminal syndicates in the cities. I cannot believe that the main force of the Republic cannot eradicate this problem with dispatch. I do not want the warlords around to distort the democratic process that will take place soon after the ratification of a new Constitution.

Since criminality is a police problem, to which a police force that is not directly responsible to the community is a main contributor, I shall consider, in consultation with the Chief of Staff, devolving the authority over police forces back on to the local communities they serve. I shall test this proposition first in Metro Manila. I will not accept as an assumption that the CHDF are a necessary component of rural security in Mindanao and expect the Chief of Staff to submit to me a justification for its continued existence.

You raised the issue of political stability as it is affected by the insecurity of third level civil servants. You should know that, on my directive, the Civil Service Commission has already issued guidelines regarding these civil servants. We are allowed greater discretion in the retention or relief of civil servants on the first and second level who occupy positions of trust and confidence. I shall refer the matter of the Civil Service Commission for restudy and a report to me within 30 days from today.

Local elections will be held as soon as possible after the ratification of the new Constitution. I shall urge the members of the Constitutional Commission, whose full complement I shall have appointed this Sunday, to complete the drafting of a new constitution within three months.

On the issue of the appointments of OICs, we have tried to carefully evaluate all nominees. I ask you now to give them a chance to prove themselves. I have heard unreasonable comments about their lack of experience. I beg you to consider that if they had too much experience they would have been the men of Marcos, who has in power for the past 20 years. I had no experience. If I had had experience it would have been in Marcos politics and I would not have led you to freedom.

Just the same, I encourage those who feel aggrieved over the OIC process to bring your cases to my attention and these will be acted upon with dispatch.

I am in the process of fulfilling my pledge to dismantle the coconut monopoly. While the PCGG is working to unearth the anomalies and unravel the complex structure of that body, we shall reconstitute the various boards of the major instruments of the monopoly to restore public confidence in this major sector of our agricultural economy. These bodies are nowhere representative of the coconut farmers or industry. The elections in the Cocofed were rigged. The officers were elected in a manner repugnant to our new democratic ethic. I shall protect the coconut farmers from any scheme that stifles their enterprise or steals their rightful share of a major sector of our economy.

I have heard other more specific issues and have not had time to consider the solutions you propose. I shall seriously consider your proposals and respond to them as soon as I can.

Although we have not made decisions on all the issues you have raised with me, I think a great deal has been achieved already, not least the successful experiment at consultative government that has taken place here.

I beg you to recall that we fought the dictatorship, first and foremost, for democracy and its mature exercise is what you have demonstrated here today. The campaign and the revolution made me proud to be a Filipino. What I have seen here today has made me proud to be your President.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the alleged pro-labor stance of the Government Speech
of**

**Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the alleged pro-labor stance of the Government**

[Delivered at the Cebu Plaza, Chamber of Commerce, May 24, 1986]

**POST-REVOLUTION BATTLECRY:
INDUSTRIAL PEACE**

Answering critics on the alleged pro-labor stance of Government, President Aquino declares that in fact her government is pro-labor and pro-capital; in short, pro-Filipino. She aims at industrial peace to bring about a climate of stability, thus encouraging domestic and foreign investment to result in more jobs and better living standards for the masses.

President Aquino appeals to labor, to use their right to strike as a last resort and to capital, to give labor decent wages and desist from unfair labor practices.

It warms my heart to be here in Cebu today. Cebu will always be very special to me. Cebu gave me refuge, the day our revolution started. It was here on that day where I felt the vast reservoir of genuine Cebuano love and affection.

More than its special personal meaning to me, Cebu enjoys an equally special role for the nation. It is the hub of commerce and industry in this part of our country.

And Cebu is what it is largely because of the entrepreneurial drive and business acumen of many of you here today. It is indeed a distinct honor to address you, the businessmen of Cebu.

In a very real way, you wield a magic wand in your hands. By the stroke of that wand, enterprises rise, factories grind to life, jobs are created, and profits are hopefully realized.

You will quickly remind me, however, that it is not as simple as that. I fully agree. We are all aware of the numerous problems, we face, coming as we have from a dark age. The challenge is clear, we must boldly embark on a second revolution of economic development.

In this regard, I must confess a measure of dismay. It seems that following my Labor Day speech at the Luneta, many have seen my government as pro-labor and anti-capital. Ironically, others in the labor sector see government's stance to be exactly the opposite— that is, pro-capital and anti-labor. Truly, a glass is half empty or half full, depending on how thirsty you are.

I would like to assure all of you that my government – your government – is a government of the entire Filipino people and not of only one sector or interest group.

My government is both pro-labor and pro-capital; in short, it is pro-Filipino. The fundamental concern is for industrial peace. Industrial peace breeds a climate of stability. This encourages domestic and foreign investment, which results in more jobs and better living standards for the masses. And that leads, to a longer lasting industrial peace. We must all work together to begin this cycle – this process of growth and development. Magtutungan po tayo.

I gave to the labor sector only that which was denied them during the repressive Marcos years – their right to organize, to seek redress of grievances, to seek a better life for themselves. I also asked them to cooperate in the

stabilization process by using the right to strike only as a last resort. I have been assured by the major labor groups that they will abide by this request.

I reiterate this appeal to labor. Help keep industrial peace. Use the right to strike only as a last resort and not as your opening salvo in seeking better employment terms. I call on the labor sector, particularly in Cebu, to heed this call.

On the other hand, I call on you – the businessmen, the entrepreneurs, the owners of enterprises – to do your part. Give labor a decent wage and sufficient benefits that you are able to afford. Do not obstruct labor's right to organize and desist from unfair labor practices.

I appeal to both of you: Let us temper ourselves in these trying times when our collective battlecry, must be *stability* and *industrial peace*. Keep your communication lines to each other open. Talk to each other in the spirit of openness, dialogue, and consultation – in much the same way I have tried to govern the country. Yesterday, in Davao, we proved that a process of dialogue between seemingly divergent sectors and positions is possible if people are willing to listen to each other – to respect each other.

Together with the challenge to keep industrial peace is an equally important appeal – an appeal addressed specifically to you, the businessmen and entrepreneurs: It is the challenge to unleash the long-restrained Filipino entrepreneurial drive. We no longer have the time to wait and see. Waiting for better and more stable times is a less risky but equally uncertain posture. Better times are made by those that take the risk. Release your capital, your creativeness, your entrepreneurial spirit. Help us rebuild our ravaged country. While we seek the help of foreign countries, to help fund our growth, we must be prepared to do it ourselves. And if we have to, we will. And when we do, our new-found pride in ourselves as Filipinos will increase a hundred fold.

Government will do its part in trying to provide a climate conducive to investment and growth. We will mediate between disagreeing parties when we have to. We will set clear policies and enforce them without fear or favor. The tripartite approach will be pursued – with government, labor, and capital sitting together to set directions and resolve issues.

I would like the local governments to become more active in our drive to rebuild our nation. Consistent with my desire to decentralize the operations of government, I would like your local governments to take the active lead in their areas. While local officials must coordinate with the national government, initiative must, for the large part, come from local government. The local governments, for example, must deliver such public services to their constituents like water, drainage, electricity and many others. While I challenge your local officials to act expeditiously to address your needs, I ask you in turn to support their efforts to do so.

Lastly, Cebu has one of the largest potentials for tourism in our country. Do not waste the gifts that God has given you – the countless scenic spots of Cebu, your bountiful natural resources, and endearing cultural heritage. If you respond to the challenges I have just given you and the situation stabilizes, then Cebu can be one of the primary tourist destinations in our country. I will ask Minister Gonzalez and the Ministry of Tourism to help you to do this.

Truly Cebu and the Cebuanos have a wealth of resources that, if properly tapped, will make a significant contribution to our country's rebuilding.

I ask you not to hesitate to use these resources. Let us move forward boldly to make our future one that we can all be proud of.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the American Military Cemetery Memorial Day Service

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the American Military Cemetery Memorial Day Service

[Delivered on May 26, 1986]

WHAT PRICE FREEDOM?

President Aquino does not believe that the death of young men can justify even such noble cause as the attainment of freedom.

She feels that the men who have died for freedom could have been alive today and could be contributing more for the good of the world if only nations resorted to peaceful means in achieving their goals.

She is proud that at least here in the Philippines we have tried to have freedom through peaceful means, and we achieved it.

Others might be tempted to declaim, on an occasion like this, that an enduring friendship between two nations had flowered on the graves of these young men. I cannot. I have seen death at first hand and it cannot justify anything in my eyes. Even the attainment of freedom cannot justify the lives that had to be sacrificed for it. That many have had to die, like these young men, so that others might be free is not an argument for mortal sacrifices but an added condemnation of the unjust governments that made them necessary.

Looking at the rolling lawn around us, studded with crosses and stars of David, I don't see the price that had to be paid for a priceless freedom, but the loss of young men who might have been given us a better world than we have had since the end of the Second World War.

What I see here is not so much the glory of a nation but the tragedy of a world that will not let the ways of peace prevail. At least here in the Philippines we tried.

Perhaps our success will not be duplicated anywhere else in the world. Already political thinkers are looking for reasons to say that the success of non-violent struggle is unique to our time, place and race. These could be the same people who told us, during the dictatorship, that Filipinos are neither suited nor inclined to democracy. We proved them wrong, at least to the extent of showing that the Filipino was prepared without arms or hate, to lay down his or her life in peace for democracy. We also proved wrong the premise that you need violence to dislodge a violent dictatorship, that you simply cannot unravel it like a woman unravels a ball of yarn, patiently and relentlessly. You will never know what can be done until you've tried. Considering the alternative, I cannot see why the attempt has not been made more often.

But, for all my deep aversion to violence, I honor places like this, where the brave dead lie, as symbols of that second fatherland of courage to which Americans like these, and Filipinos like Ninoy, are united without the distinctions of nationality and political creed. I pay to them the respect that is due the willing sacrifice of the brave and express to them the gratitude of the nation they helped to liberate.

With the sad reluctance I share with the loved ones they left behind, I repeat the words that make children ardent for some desperate glory:

Dulce et decorum est, pro patria mori.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Educators Congress

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the Educators Congress

[Delivered in Baguio City, May 27, 1986]

PLACING GREATER VALUE ON VALUES

The role of the teachers in molding and guiding the total personality of the child cannot be underestimated. Uplift of the teaching profession is a major concern of the Aquino administration. The government has started by reducing the prices of oil and oil based products to trigger a lowering of basic commodities, improve the standard of living of the people.

Since I began my campaign for the Presidency, and since I took on that task of the highest office in the land, I have spoken to many audiences.

I have spoken to crowds in the rural areas. To the farmers and fishermen who work the soil and harvest the oceans to feed our nation.

I have spoken to international bankers and local businessmen who raise the capital to create the jobs we need to meet the basic needs of our people and get our economy moving.

I have spoken to the labor force, to the men who must take the yoke on their shoulders and pull with all their muscle and might to dislodge us from economic inertia.

I have spoken to our soldiers, to the men and women who are the shield and sword of the freedoms we fought so hard to attain.

I have spoken to a multiplicity of sectors, each with a pivotal role in the task of national reconstruction, but to none who are as crucial and influential in our total scheme of growth and equity as to this audience that I now address. For you, our teachers; you, the administrators of our schools, colleges, and universities are a class unto yourselves. For all of us have passed through your hands. All have been molded in your classrooms and laboratories. All have been guided by your words and example during our most impressionable ages. Our bankers and businessmen, farmers and laborers, soldiers and priests, our government officials and cabinet ministers, and I myself were once clay in your hands. We are what you made us. You, our teachers, one of the most neglected sectors of our society, are the sector that made all the other sectors what they are.

And I must also say, that in the same way, those who pillaged our economy, debased our institutions, perverted our laws, and corrupted the values of many Filipinos, were also highly educated men and women. They too were once clay in the hands of teachers. But I do not think it was the teaching profession's fault that they hardened into crooks. These people had the conceit of the half-educated. They knew quite well how to do things but never learned to what good purpose. That, at least, is the kindest thing we can say about them.

You more than any of us are keenly aware that knowledge must always be tempered by morals. That intellect without deep roots in sound conscience may indeed blossom for a brief season but leaves no seed for the next. Our nation was sorely misled, our values twisted, the public interest derided and public faith in government seriously undermined. These wounds on our morals, more than the economic devastation that cripples our ability to give our people the life they deserve, more than the pockets of insurgency, disturb and pre-occupy me the most. For the

problems of the economy and the insurgency, with their roots in greed and injustice, are only the effects of the more insidious cause — the corruption of our morals.

And so I say that the audience of educators to whom I now speak is instrumental in the making or breaking of our national destiny. For you must train and guide generation after new generation of Filipinos to be statesmen as well as politicians, gentlemen as well as soldiers, philanthropists as well as businessmen, christians as well as citizens. In other words, we need you to launch as sweeping a revolution in this country as that which swept the dictatorship. We need you to surround and protect the hearts and minds of young Filipinos, as the Filipinos last February surrounded and protected the last expression of the Filipino revolt. We need you to instill in our youth a love for peace, a keen sense of justice and civic duty, a belief in hard work, respect and caring for their fellow men, a jealousy for their rights and freedoms, and an absolute trust and faith in God.

But before we can ask this of you, our people and government should commit themselves to give you what is your due in the light of the high mission you are called to perform. We must restore the esteem and high priority the education sector enjoyed before Marcos. We must let your voices be heard more prominently in our consultations with the various sectors. We must prevent the indignities heaped on you by the previous government. Our teachers should never again be forced to endure threats and intimidation to distort the electoral process or teach the youth flattering lies about the government. And, when we have recovered to some degree from the devastation wrought by Marcos on the economy and the government, we must give you a share of the national budget commensurate with the high mission you are called to perform.

In the meantime, and for the sake of equity, my government has instituted measures that will improve the standard of living of the people, including the public sector. I have reduced the prices of oil products, which should trigger a lowering of the prices of commodities. Other measures along the same lines are being studied. I know your situation, even as I know the situation of others in the public sector. I ask for your patience and cooperation. We are all in the same boat.

In the meantime, this administration will rationalize and reform the country's educational system as well as the Ministry of Education and Culture itself. We will restructure the central office of the Ministry to achieve integration and a more efficient delivery of services. We have observed that the present setup has too many auxiliary and specialized units that make coordination difficult. The duplication of functions among the different offices has caused unnecessary expense and a wastage of human resources. The Reorganization Committee is well along in its study of these problems.

I have also asked our government reorganization commission to study the possibility of creating a National Commission of Arts and Culture under the MECS. This body will coordinate and integrate the cultural aspects of the Ministry, placing the National Library, the National Museum, the National Historical Institute, the Institute of National Language, a new Institute of Arts and Letters under its wing. But such changes shall not mean the discontinuance of any of the specialized programs of the Ministry. Nor will there be any mass layoffs of Ministry personnel except for true and reasonable cause.

A better organized, efficient and responsive ministry can then function as the spearhead of the drive to reform the educational system. Being a mother myself, I am acutely aware of how greatly the school environment determines the character of the child. The Church, the home, and the community are important influences, but the child spends the better part of his or her day in school. It is imperative therefore that we upgrade the quality of education at all stages, especially in the elementary and secondary levels.

As a first step, the elementary school curriculum should be fully implemented to give our children as well-rounded an understanding of the world and science as possible. The teachers that will impart his understanding must be trained well for the job. We must therefore intensify the training and retraining of some 325,000 teachers and their administrators in gradeschools throughout the country.

A serious inadequacy is the lack of books, facilities and other equipment. While we are looking for the funds to solve this problem, we must further systematize the distribution of books and other instructional materials to achieve

a fairer allocation of the scarce resources. We also need to continue with the Program for Decentralized Education Development. This program seeks to supplement the diet of basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic with sessions on the inculcation of discipline, self-reliance, resourcefulness, nationalism and love of God.

This supplementary values formation program will continue on the secondary level to insure that, in addition to the higher learning therein imparted, the high school student never loses his or her mooring in the fundamental values of our culture.

I am told that in the school year 1983 to 1984, only 64% of the total high school age population of 4,886,401 youths had access to secondary education. We shall endeavor to make high schooling a commitment of the national government along with elementary schooling. And we shall try to achieve this without sacrificing quality.

On the tertiary level, we see a need to rationalize our state colleges and universities, which have grown tremendously in number but declined seriously in the quality of the education they impart. They put a tremendous strain on our national budget without a commensurate benefit to the educational improvement of our people.

I understand that the Ministry of Education is studying, alongside an integrated approach to public and private education, a flagship system for higher education. For instance, in the area of agriculture, which is our thrust, the Ministry will identify, with the help of the Agriculture Ministry, one national agricultural university, three zonal agricultural universities, 13 regional agricultural colleges and one technical agricultural institute in each province. This in short means marking out the best schools toward which the bulk of educational funding will be directed. Scholarship programs in such a system will also be improved.

I hope you will share mine and the Ministry's enthusiasm for these programs. I know, however, that your chief preoccupation is your income. I must repeat my call for patience and cooperation. The previous government was liberal in its promises but it was also prodigal in the use of the funds that could have gone into the fulfillment of those promises. The future of better paid teaching was spent in the last election. I ask you now to join with me in recouping our losses, in gathering a new harvest of national resources so that many of your dreams and mine for better a country can be realized. We all suffered under Marcos. We must all sacrifice to recover from the experience. But if we persevere, we shall all, I believe, partake of the progress that lies our power to achieve.

This is our only country. The school youth in your charge are our only future. Stay the course with this government and our people and we shall have a country that we are not only proud of, but in which we shall enjoy the peace and fulfillment we have been long denied.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Outstanding Farmers of the Year and policy directions in agriculture

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Outstanding Farmers of the Year and policy directions in agriculture**

[Released on May 30, 1986]

LOOSENING AND LIFTING THE YOKE

Agriculture and the farmer are at the center of the government's recovery program.

Giving highest priority to the development of agriculture, President Aquino lists steps taken to implement a short-term recovery plan for the rural sector: land reform in tenanted rice and corn lands, rural infrastructure program, credit, extension support, and other forms of assistance to the small farmer, price support program for rice and corn, removal of P10-surcharge per bag of fertilizer and creation of a cabinet standing committee on rural development.

Let me congratulate our ten outstanding farmers whom we have just awarded in today's ceremonies. In giving them recognition, we pay homage to the millions of farmers throughout the countryside who are the backbone of our nation and the focus of our program for economic recovery.

Today, we also honor an entire community of farmers for their achievements in working together as one group. Their collective endeavors for a common purpose exemplify the spirit of oneness that is required of all sectors of our society if we are to see our nation through this time of crisis.

Let me likewise commend the twelve outstanding extension workers of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. They personify the standards of selfless dedication and professionalism that other extension workers and public servants in general should emulate. Indeed, "Kabalikat ng Magsasaka" is a phrase that captures the important role played by the government's 15,000-strong extension force. In bringing the fruits of research and technology to the farm, extension workers are truly the partners of farmers in their quest for a better life.

Your new government places agriculture and the farmer at the center of its recovery program. This commitment was set forth in a statement I made even before the presidential election in February. I said then:

- That highest priority would be given to the development of agriculture not only to realize the goal of equitable distribution of benefits and opportunities but also to enable the 70 percent of the population who live in the countryside to maximize their contributions to the economy;
- That we would implement a genuine land reform program that includes a package of credit, marketing, and technological support;
- That priority would be accorded and investments would be encouraged in labor-intensive, rural based small and medium-scale agricultural enterprises, particularly those engaged in food production for domestic consumption.

Although there remains much more to be done, today, I am happy to say that your government has acted to give substance to this commitment.

First of all, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food has completed its "Short-Term Recovery Plan for the Rural Sector." This plan defines your government's agenda for agricultural development over the next few years.

It is anchored on three major policy goals:

- First, to free the economy from unnecessary and costly government institutional and policy interventions;
- Second, to provide the farmer access to land, technology, credit, infrastructure, and market information, and to provide landless wage earners greater employment opportunities;
- Third, to increase the effectiveness of the various government agencies concerned in pursuing the new thrusts in agriculture and the rural sector. Decentralization is a key feature of this policy goal in order to ensure the full participation of farmers and landless workers in the development process.

Your government and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food have already taken several steps to implement this short-term plan.

As a first step in the decentralization of the Ministry's operations, we have appointed a Deputy Minister for Mindanao. Deputy Minister Rolando Marcial will be based in Davao. In this way, we are bringing the Ministry's services closer to the farmers while providing the mechanism for real participation of farmers in decision-making. The new Deputy Minister's main job is to serve as the link between farmers and the various local officials and private organizations serving the rural sector. For example, in deciding which farm-to-market roads should be repaired immediately, he would coordinate on behalf of farmers with the regional officers of the Ministry of Public Works and Highways as well as with barangay officials.

In the aspect of market liberalization, we have dismantled monopolies and restrictions which have dampened the farmer's incentive to produce and impeded the growth of the rural economy.

We have taken steps to make sure that the sugar and coconut monopolies are not revived.

We have lifted the ban on copra exports.

We are calling for the election of a new set of officers in Cocofed to help ensure that this body truly represents the best interests of coconut farmers. As I stated in Davao City only a few days ago, we shall continue to protect coconut farmers from any scheme that stifles their enterprise or steals their rightful share of a major sector of our economy.

We have withdrawn government's exclusive role in the importation of wheat and soybean meal.

We have disbanded the meat importation cartel.

We are in the process of liberalizing fertilizer importations.

In the credit aspect, the Central Bank has opened its rediscounting window to quedan loan papers under the National Food Authority's grain quedan financing program. We have done this to make more credit funds available to private traders for purchasing the produce of rice and corn farmers. In this way, we hope to induce greater competition among trade which result, hopefully, in higher prices paid to farmers.

In addition to these steps already completed, we are in the process of implementing other policy reforms and measures as part of our short-term recovery plan. Among the most important of these are the following:

- **One**, we are implementing land reform in the poorest areas, with first priority given to the completion of land reform in tenanted rice and corn lands, the distribution of portions of the public domain through resettlement programs, the lending of idle private lands to the landless, and the adoption of voluntary land-sharing schemes in sugar-lands withdrawn from sugar production;
- **Two**, we are developing and implementing a rural infrastructure program focused on irrigation, roads, ports, and flood control and drainage projects with the quickest pay off.

- **Three**, to remove the constraints that impede the flow of credit to agriculture, we are working on several schemes which would augment the supply of credit available, bring down the risks and costs of agricultural lending, and rehabilitate the rural credit delivery system;
- **Four**, we shall implement new policies to help improve the incomes of fishermen and aquaculture entrepreneurs. We shall provide credit and extension support for fishpond owners, work for the proper allocation of lake areas for aquaculture projects, and eliminate destructive fishing techniques in coastal fishing grounds;
- **Five**, we are working for the closer control of pesticide use, even as we disseminate integrated pest management techniques for the biological control of pests and disease of crops and livestock;
- **Six**, we are re-orienting the Agricultural Incentives Priorities Plan to make sure that the support given to big business will supplement the primary goal of assisting small farmers;
- **Seven**, we are mobilizing the research and extension system, including agricultural colleges and universities, private agribusiness firms, and farmer organizations;
- **Eight**, your government will continue to implement price support programs for rice and corn in order to guarantee fair prices for farmers at harvest time. As part of our program to support the Filipino farmer, we continue to implement policies discouraging importations of rice, corn, and feed ingredient substitutes that are produced locally.
- **Nine**, I will recommend to the Cabinet the reduction of export taxes on all agricultural products except logs and copra in order to induce more investments in agricultural exports.
- **Ten**, we shall likewise take up in the Cabinet the feasibility at the present time of reducing sales taxes and import duties on agricultural inputs like pesticides, fertilizer, feed ingredients, animal breeding stocks, and seeds in order to cut production costs for the farmer;
- **Eleven**, I will recommend to the Cabinet removal of the P10.00 per bag surcharge built into fertilizer prices and collected to support the rehabilitation of Planters Products. Farmers should not be made to bear the burden of paying Planters Products' debt;
- **Lastly**, we are creating a Cabinet Standing Committee on Rural Development which shall coordinate the activities of all government agencies concerned in the implementation of the Short-term Recovery Plan for the Rural Sector. This Committee shall be composed of the Ministers of Agriculture, Natural Resources, Agrarian Reform, Public Works and Highways, Transport and Communications, Local Governments, NEDA, Finance, and Budget.

Before I close, let me re-affirm that our goal is to encourage an environment in which farmers can improve their quality of life.

Two principles guide us in our planning to achieve this goal. First, we shall de-emphasize production per se in favor of policies affecting income and wealth creation. And second, we will pursue this goal in an environment of free enterprise and individual initiative.

Thus, where before the emphasis of the past administration was on increasing the production of certain food and export crops, the over-riding concern of this administration is to help increase farm incomes and employment opportunities rather than just production per se.

Where before the Marcos government subscribed to the practice of authoritarianism and excessive intervention, this government will not presume to direct the farmer's endeavors, nor will it interfere with the play of market forces. In short, we will merely clear the way for Filipino initiative and enterprise in farming to flourish.

Indeed, in the twenty years of the Marcos regime, the farmer was left out of the decision-making process. He had no voice as to what crops he should plant, what animals he should raise, or what farming systems he should adopt.

Your new government would like you to know that all that is a thing of the past.

I started out by saying that we are here to honor our farmers and farm workers — they who toil hardest to create new wealth for us all.

Our country stands at a crucial moment in its history. The future lies with agriculture, and it behooves us all to give farmers every help to bring it about. It is a long hard road before we settle the obligations we inherited from Marcos and achieve the progress we have longed for. For that journey, we shall need all the strength and self-reliance that a vibrant agriculture can give our people.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the members of the Constitutional Commission

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the members of the Constitutional Commission**

[Delivered on June 2, 1986]

NEW FRAMEWORK FOR A REAL DEMOCRACY

President Aquino exhorts the members of the Constitutional Commission to: 1) be quick about their work because the nation is eager to have a new constitution, and 2) limit themselves to their constitutional mission: to provide for a new legislature and let this legislature of elected representatives enact the laws.

You are here today vested with the full authority and the complete independence to write our country's new Constitution. Nobody, not even I your President, can interfere with, or overrule you, in this great task. Our nation has placed its trust in you. Do not let it down.

I join you today only to honor your beginning. What happens from here on is a matter for you and you alone.

Today, apart from wishing you well and saying the hopes and prayers of our whole nation are with you, I want only to make two points. The first is, please be quick. Nobody can impose a deadline on your deliberations but you know that our whole nation is eager for a new constitution, and the subsequent elections as soon as possible. The people expect a constitutional draft for their sovereign acceptance or rejection within three months, so eager are they to have, in the shortest time possible, a full-blown democratic republic.

Second limit yourselves to your constitutional mission. Your task is to design a constitution that will provide for a new legislature. Not to do that legislature's work for it. That is for the people's elected representatives to do.

You must define and protect our individual freedoms and rights; you must decide how our different institutions of state will relate to each other. Do not be distracted by political debates and matters of policy that do not belong within your constitution-making exercise. You are here appointed, by the people's wish, to write a constitution; you are not here as elected politicians.

Bear in mind that you shall be pondering, debating and writing a constitution not only for our contemporaries with their present concerns, but also for succeeding generations of Filipinos whose first concerns we cannot presume to know beforehand. Future Filipinos must always be free to decide how to address these concerns as they arise. Even the wisest cures for present maladies should not be imposed on succeeding generations that will have their own unique problems and priorities.

True and long-lived constitutions, a wise justice has told me, should be broad enough to be able to meet every exigency we cannot foretell and specific enough to stoutly protect the essentials of a true democracy; in short, open-ended documents that will always be relevant. Remember that constitutional changes are not safe or easy to come by. Our first attempt at constitutional revision was followed by a dictatorship. And this, our second endeavor, was preceded by a revolution.

Future Filipinos and their legislatures and Supreme Courts can best assess and address the challenges they will meet if they enjoy the widest latitude of thought and action. In writing a constitution have the fullest confidence that the wisdom of our race is exhausted in us. Our race has grown in wisdom over time. I believe it will continue to do so.

Yours is indeed no easy task. On the other hand, depending on the result, yours will be no small glory. Our people have suffered much.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the First One Hundred Days of Freedom

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the First One Hundred Days of Freedom**

[Delivered on June 4, 1986]

COUNTING

(Culled from a television panel discussion)

THE

FREEDOMS

Freedom regained is the government's greatest achievement in its first 100 days. But President Aquino warns that it might also be its greatest danger since some sectors are taking that freedom for granted. "Let us remain vigilant," she urges.

Minister Ramon Mitra of Agriculture cites liberalization of credit for small farmers as another achievement of Government. NEDA Chairman Solita Monsod cites the removal of export taxes on agricultural goods, an import liberalization program and an emergency employment scheme. Minister Augusto Sanchez of Labor states that the incidence of strikes in the industrial sector since he took over has decreased and these are of short duration. Minister Jaime Ongpin of Finance lists the 85% build up in foreign exchange reserves as a result of people selling their dollar holdings to the Central Bank, reflecting a return in confidence in Government; the stabilization of the peso at a P20.50 to \$1 exchange rate, the decrease in interest rates for loans, and the offers of foreign assistance.

During the election campaign, I gave a speech outlining what my government would do in the first 100 days. It was wildly applauded, even if not completely believed. How could there be a first 100 days of an Aquino Administration? That today we should be assessing what we have achieved in our first 100 days; that, far from being dreams, it has been a down-to-earth reality of how to deal with a legacy of debt, a bankrupt government, poverty, corruption and insurgency should not be forgotten. We have come a long way very quickly.

The first 100 days were entered into with so much expectation and with so much to be done, 14 long years of a seemingly irreversible slide to disaster had ended in a snap. Reversing it was the work of brave people committed to our freedom and whose example finally drew the millions to that cause. The events of February did not happen by magic and from nowhere. There is no instant revolution nor, I must tell you are there instant answers. We had a snap election; then, we had a snap revolution but I never promised you snap solutions.

Our country needs your hard work, your patriotism, and your faith more than ever. Your government can, and is, creating the conditions for recovery but that recovery can only be carried forward by your efforts. Our revolution taught us two truths: first, that what the Filipino people want they must seek on their own. Others are not going to save us. Second, People Power is exactly that: it is people acting together, not government alone, to press through change. Don't sit back and think that because there is now a People's Government the nation's problems are taken care of. That is a dangerous delusion. Now let us look *not* to government but to ourselves for the next step.

Are we prepared to put aside differences and commit ourselves to the common task: national revival? In this first 100 days you have rightly asked the question: "What has government done for you?" Today I shall try to answer that, but may I also put a question to you: "What are you going to do for your country in the second 100 days?"

My Presidency was an invitation to everybody to bury their differences and work together. I fear some have seen this new freedom, not as the privilege of a common commitment to rebuild the nation, but as a license to rake up old, or light up new, quarrels. Let us all be sure of the highest standards of honesty and accuracy in what we do and say. Perhaps the greatest achievement of the first 100 days is also its greatest danger: we are taking freedom for granted.

I am particularly anxious that there should be no abuse of our precious freedom because ours was no ordinary revolution. We rejected the revolutionary's normal course of change: violence, because that was not our way. Where others would have pointed a gun we held out our hand in peace and reconciliation. The price of that restraint is that we must remain vigilant.

The other price of a peaceful revolution is that it appears to raise questions about how far we mean to go. It is almost as though a revolution without violence is not to be taken seriously. The blood in the streets is the test of political determination. Well, let me give this assurance. We will go all the way it takes to build a society free from corruption, oppression and poverty, where every Filipino has the chance to fulfill his or her potential. There will no longer be one Philippines for the rich and one for the poor, one for the strong and another for the weak.

Let me turn to what we meek revolutionaries have already achieved: the record of the first 100 days. This has been a 100 days of freedom:

- * First, freedom under the law. We have freed our courts from political interference; restored habeas corpus, and released political prisoners. Under the present temporary Freedom Constitution, as it is known, we have guaranteed full protection of human rights and the authority of our courts.

- * Second, freedom of the press. In this short 100 days. We have seen the blooming of the freest press in our region. Amongst none of our neighbors does media enjoy the same unlimited free speech.

- * Third, freedom for our farmers. Seventy per cent of our people live in rural areas. They have been enslaved by government imposed cartels that have kept down the prices for what they grow at the same time that they have had to pay inflated prices for inputs such as fertilizer. We have dismantled the cartels and lowered the price of fertilizers. Above all we must free our farmers from the cycle of indebtedness, poverty, underemployment and landlessness that has been their lot. We are examining how to make more cheap credit available to the farmers themselves. The DBP is establishing a P500 million facility for small and medium-scale industries in the countryside and for agriculture. And we are implementing land reform in the poorest areas. The rural sector is the focus of our concern. It is where we must make our principal investment for recovery. The oil price cuts, amounting to one peso per liter, that I have ordered have had particular impact on the rural economy. This year the price of oil has been cut by 27 per cent.

- * Fourth, freedom of labor. I have repealed those aspects of the labor laws that are repressive and aggravate rather than enhance labor relations. I have sought to lay the foundations for a system of labor relations that is compatible with our people's vision of a just society and the imperative of a swift recovery before the justice in progress that we seek recedes completely beyond our reach.

- * Fifth, freedom of the military. We have freed the military to play their proper role of protector of the Filipino people. By the brave actions of their leaders in starting the revolt, the military began the process that is enabling them to recover the nation's respect. Both through the retirement of overstaying generals and through the extensive program of military reform that is being embarked on we are restoring our military to top fighting form.

- * Sixth, freedom from the hills. For those insurgents who now want to take advantage of it, there is the possibility of returning to normal life. When I was in Davao I met the 168 insurgents who had recently sought amnesty and rehabilitation there under the so-called Davao project. We will expand such regional initiatives and I still hope the insurgent leadership will respond at the national level to my offer of a negotiated amnesty.

- * Seventh, freedom of our economy. You know the magnitude of our debt problem and the bankruptcy of our government following the previous regime's election fraud but let me today tell you the good news. Our foreign exchange reserves have increased by 85 per cent since the revolution; the value of the peso has strengthened. Our inflation rate which was 50 per cent in 1984 and 23 per cent in 1985 has now come down to a rate of 2.1 per cent. Interest rates have fallen sharply. Our economic problems remain huge. Indeed one reason inflation is so low is because there is so little demand in our economy. One can only hope that private investors will soon take the initiative and show confidence in the power of the people, of which they are a part, to transform our country. It is clear that recovery will be through our own efforts or not at all. We must help ourselves. So our 1986 budget is a

budget for growth. It is aimed at job creation in the rural sector, particularly by an effort to use labor intensive methods in infrastructure programs. There is a 60 per cent increase in capital expenditures. This will allow large-socio job creation.

There are many further freedoms I could name. Those that come from the improvement in medical services; or from the revived tourist industry or our emphasis on protecting the natural environment. By stopping illegal logging and launching on June 6th a national reforestation scheme we are determined to preserve and restore our natural habitat.

I have kept until the last constitutional freedom because the writing of the constitution lies immediately before us. My part is done. After wide consultations I have named the members of the Con-Com and it has started work. We kept to the tight timetable to ensure that as soon as possible we would again have an elected legislature, and constitution we can all honor and respect. It alone can provide the permanent framework for our freedoms.

I have laid out today how your government has used the first 100 days to restore and guarantee freedoms and remove obstacles from our national progress. But a People's Government could not have done all this if the people had not, in the first instance, overthrown the dictatorship in its path. So much was achieved by the power of the people. And it is that power I wish to summon again in the revival of our economy and the establishment of peace. The freedom you have won requires unflagging responsibility. May I end by repeating my earlier question: What are you going to do for your country in the next 100 days?

And now I would like to ask the four ministers whom I invited here to tell you what their respective offices have accomplished during the first one hundred days. Since the main thrust of our economic recovery program is agriculture, I think it's fitting to ask Minister of Agriculture Ramon Mitra to start the discussion.

Mitra:	The farmer today enjoys more opportunities to earn. In the past there were In the past, farmers didn't know where to borrow money to buy, say, a caraba where they could bring their produce after harvest. In relation to the latter, the speed and ease.
President:	Perhaps Minister Monsod can elaborate on how we can help farmers by abolishing One of the major policy reforms that we have undertaken or agreed by the liberalization program that will be phased. Essentially this import liberalization it easier for exporters who use imported products for example. And these exports abroad. With respect to job creation itself the government is committed to launching half years, one million jobs. Now, is that realistic? And the answer is yes. maintenance and operating expenditure, increased our capital expenditure, in units. Four projects which are going to be chosen and identified on the local level volunteer organizations. This is the essence of consulting with the people and representatives from private organizations and non-government organizations to be formulated. They have gotten together and they're identifying projects on NEDA but also we have gotten commitment from the non-government organizations going to be used properly. All these budgetary allocations for projects which providing employment, 2) these projects themselves are going to increase the irrigation system, etc. So at the same time that you are creating jobs, you are also
Monsod:	
President:	Thank you Winnie. Now let's hear from our Minister of Labor and Employment May I clarify that the Ministry of Labor is not only concerned with labor but jobless. Labor relations includes strikes. You can see from statistics that the number these, 150 had been settled – 67 percent – in such a short period of time. What average rate. In the past years, the strikes would last up to 35 days on the average our POEA or overseas program, during the period since we got into office up to been able to do a lot in this area. In July, as Minister Monsod has revealed, we rural areas. Besides, we will be encouraging cooperatives and giving seed capital Filipino money. We will not be using foreign money. This will be a totally Filipino President:
Sanchez:	
President:	I would like to call on Minister Ongpin to tell our people what his ministry has Ongpin:
Ongpin:	I would like to focus on four major areas in the financial arena. Where I feel that

	explanation. The first major area has to do with the foreign exchange reserves. In the last few months we have built up our reserves from \$911 million to, as of last count, \$1.5 billion. Not only in terms of the statistics it may not seem like a lot. But an 85% increase is a significant surplus. This came about because many people have been selling their dollar bills. People have been steadily and consistently willing to give up their dollar bills for pesos. The second area has to do with the exchange rate and it is a natural result of the peso being as strong as 22 to 1. Presently it has strengthened to 20.50 to 1 and perhaps more significant when you count the cost of bank charges you will find that the official interbank rate just before the elections, interest rates rose very sharply and have risen to, in the last three months, these rates have been brought down to about half of what they were. The prime clients at 15 per cent and we feel this is a very significant improvement. It is equally important in terms of what we are trying to do in the countryside and in the cities. We have been able to bring down the cost of living. We just returned from Tokyo last week, and we had a meeting with the consuls and the governments of Japan, the US, Germany and Australia, and there we reviewed our progress. We are assured of at least 70% of our target of 1.1 billion dollars. In addition to the standby program with the IMF and complete the package of reforms in the area of the economy. They have pledged to us that they will at that point in time, approach their governments to help us last week when we were in Tokyo is that additional help will be forthcoming to enable the economy to recover and to be able to sustain that recovery so that it is not an aid to be strictly a transitional thing to help us during our crisis or for our budget. All of us don't want to forever be begging. All of us believe that we can become a self-sufficient nation. You have anything to add?
President:	
Mitra:	About foreign assistance: many other nations are eager to help us. But such as we have already touched on this in our talks with American representatives of the coconut oil mills. The mills should be in a position of buy copra at high prices. There has been some concern and there has been some progress in this area. I think you have also discussed this. Mrs. President, I think it should be noted that one of the most significant accomplishments of the very much needed structural reforms that are needed for economic recovery in the Philippines before in the previous government is that the policy measures were always taken into account. The net effect would be negative to the economy as a whole. And it is this structural package that is our own, based on what we know is necessary for us to grow and to develop. This it will serve already as the basic framework. It will give the guidelines for the future. We are now going to be all pulling together for the same objective – economic recovery. We should inform the people that when the economic recovery program was announced, it was for all sectors.
Monsod:	
Mitra:	Which is the reason it took some time to draw up the program. Whenever I was in the Philippines, I was whole and not sector by sector, unlike what the previous administration did.
President:	
Monsod:	Not only the ministries were involved. The private sector was also invited to give their opinions of the different sectors that were affected. Because we are trying to get the people to know by fiat, but rather consultation with the people who have essentially been the victims of the crisis. You know by fiat, but rather consultation with the people who have essentially been the victims of the crisis.
Mitra:	It is also probably important that people will know that while these policies are being implemented, we are forming this economic recovery program which the President announced today.
President:	Well, anyway, before we end this, I would just like again to invite our people to watch those who know they can watch it on television, and to participate in it. Well, you have heard some of our ministers on their work and plans. You realize that we need everybody's cooperation in solving them. Last February we were able to bring down the cost of living. Now and in the forthcoming days we should turn people power in the Philippines. Your government will exert all efforts to solve the problems we face. But I am

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Feast of Sacred Heart of Jesus

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On the Feast of Sacred Heart of Jesus

[Released on June 6, 1986]

PEOPLE POWER THROUGH PRAYER

Millions of Filipinos discovered freedom and truth at the point of despairing of ever crushing the dictatorship under which they had been suffering. People's power did it because there was prayer power behind it.

It was in the solitude of his cell, facing the prospects of summary execution or endless solitary confinement, that Ninoy discovered real freedom.

It was freedom from the weight of his cares and ambitions. In the absolute silence and emptiness of his cell, it was freedom to pray without distraction or interruption. It was the freedom to become like a child again. Absolutely trusting, absolutely believing that God held all the levers of his fate. He knew, because Christ had assured us, that the hairs of his head were numbered, even as no bird fell unnoticed and uncounted. And that certainly he, who had suffered so much, had lost nearly everything, who had prayed so hard and so fervently, had his purpose and would have his redemption.

Ninoy, I am certain, must be smiling today because million of Filipinos had discovered the same freedom and the same truth under the crushing weight of a dictatorship. Filipinos had discovered freedom and the strength to act only when they had lost all hope of easy freedom and effective action. The dictator had betrayed a clear intention to win the election by every means, fair and mostly foul, at his command. It was at this hopeless juncture that the Filipinos felt the weight of helplessness lifted from their breasts and were galvanized into action.

Why is it that the Filipino is moved to action when there is no pragmatic reason for it anymore? Because that is when the Filipino believes in the power of prayers and finds the strength of faith. That is when the Filipino believes with all his or her heart that God will finally work a miracle, in His appointed time, of course, but always through his or her effort. God moves in mysterious ways but always through His people.

When the Filipinos therefore had done everything in their power and brought the dictatorship to its knees they brought out the images of Christ and His loving mother so there would be no mistake to whom the credit should go. For Christ and His mother had moved us mightily, using the strength of our prayers and faith. "People's Power," a phrase that is popular and seems apt, is more the result than the moving force of our revolution. The better term is "Prayer Power," Didn't Saint Paul say: "If Christ is with us, who can prevail against us?"

And so Ninoy is smiling today. For years back, when he sat in his cell, baffled by events, all he could be sure of as he held the rosary, that direct line to our Holy Mother, and through her to Christ, that he was being heard and would be answered. God would let His people go, I can almost hear my husband saying, "I told you so,"

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the launching of a National Reforestation Program

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the launching of a National Reforestation Program**

[Delivered on June 6, 1986]

AFTER THE PLUNDER

Under a National Forestation Program, the government intends to establish 600,000 hectares of forest plantations by 1992 and 1.4 million hectares by year 2000.

This land which should be green and lush is brown and dry when seen from an airplane. There was a time when the world looked to us for its timber needs. Southeast Asian timber was known by the name Philippine mahogany. It is well known but it is a fact that wealth of our forests was the foundation of Philippine agriculture, commerce and industry. It is a little better known that the wealth of our forests also served, and continues to serve, as the capital base of many a political fortune. Is it any wonder then that our lands are denuded and our people suffer radical alternations of drought and flood? But we could have had all the gifts that our bountiful forests contain indefinitely, even if we had wasted them, if we had the prudence to provide for the renewal of our forests. It is here that the lack of political will, combined with public corruption, conspired with private sector greed to deprive our nation of one of its most important natural advantages: rich forest lands.

I hope the private sector will cooperate with this government in preserving and renewing our forest resources, but one thing I can assure you, the political will is finally here. This government gives its fullest support to those natural resource managers who share our deep concern about the state of our forests.

We are launching today a National Forestation Program which will be the framework for our forest conservation efforts. We intend, under this program, to establish 600 thousand hectares of forest plantations until 1992, and we intend that by the year 2000 we should have 1.4 million hectares of protected reforested lands.

This objective cannot be achieved by the government alone. We shall need the cooperation and support of Filipinos, acting individually or in concerted efforts through organizations and communities. I think we shall have that cooperation. Our people have come through again and again in more desperate and perilous cases. They will in this case also. We have only to bring to them the problem of our forests and they will respond. I am hereby instructing the Minister of Natural Resources to immediately prepare a plan to increase public awareness of the plight of our forests and the means whereby the government hopes to alleviate it with the public's cooperation.

The old government stripped us of much of our resources and the world is in no position to extend its assistance, despite its liberal compliments. But we have one last resource that nothing and no one can take away from us: and that is the power of the people and the will and confidence of this government to call it forth in the face of any challenge that may arise. To the people of the Ministry of Natural Resources, your frustrations are over. We shall succeed in our objective, you will have the satisfaction of serving a government and a people who will give to the effort to rescue and restore our forest wealth, their all.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the celebration of Independence Day [English]

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On the celebration of Independence Day (English Version)

[Delivered on June 12, 1986]

INDEPENDENCE, AT LAST

Free and hopeful sum up the state of the nation as of Independence Day in 1986. Despite lack of funds and firepower, Filipinos were able to stand up to a dictatorship of 14 years and liberate their country once again. Hard resolve and unbelievable courage gave them strength.

A week ago, I delivered my Hundred Days address that described how far we've gone, how much farther we must go, and again reminding you how hard the journey will be. But I can still sum up the state of the nation in two words: free and hopeful. Today we celebrate meaningfully our freedom and independence as we have not been able to for the past 14 years. But what is more important is that today, tomorrow, and in the months and years to come, we shall be able to exercise our freedom and independence as we were never able to. The Philippine independence of 1896 was too brief. Our independence of 1946 was quickly misused and finally betrayed by our leaders. But today we have another chance, our third try, to make something of the freedom and independence for which so many Filipinos have sacrificed and died.

This time independence has come purely by Filipino effort. Not just the effort of a handful of noble and courageous individuals but of a whole people spontaneously rising, and peacefully but inexorably moving to win their freedom. The sad and difficult part, of course, is that independence had to be won from fellow Filipinos. Each of you out there is a hero of this struggle. You are not here to thank anyone but yourselves for what our nation achieved before an astonished and admiring world.

Looking back on the events of February, we wonder now why the ignominy of the Marcos regime had lasted so long. I remember during the dark days of shameful servitude hearing Filipinos say that the only way to be free again is for the Filipinos to be organized, to be armed, to be well-led and well-funded for a frontal confrontation with the dictatorship. You would think that those who were saying this were talking about race, and not about themselves. And so Filipinos waited for this separate race of Filipinos to materialize and liberate them. They did not think that the handful of determined and unflagging oppositionists were this race, not even Ninoy Aquino in his cell. And so they sat and waited and despaired.

Now we are free and the fate of our country is back in our hands. That long-awaited race of Filipino freedom fighters suddenly appeared and faced down the dictatorship. It was even better than we had expected. For what this race lacked in funds and firepower, they more than made up in hard resolve and unbelievable courage. Where did these freedom fighters come from? They came from within ourselves. When Cory Aquino accepted the challenge to fight Marcos for the Presidency, millions of ordinary Filipinos stepped out of their resignation and despair and threw the weight of their energy and numbers behind her. Without any direction from my campaign headquarters, Filipino men, women and children organized themselves, pooled their resources, and campaigned for their Presidency. Their courage, determination and numbers stunned the dictatorship into surrender.

It is this race of Filipinos that now stands here and throughout our land to celebrate independence today. I ask you now not to fall back into complacency and slip back into despair as though the fate of our country were not in your hands, as though you did not collectively have the power to make of it what you want. Every waking moment of your lives can be a reaffirmation of our independence by your continuing determination to be free and responsible for our future and our freedom.

I shall make no policy pronouncements today. No policy or program for recovery that my government can announce today can give you as much hope for the progress of our country than the realization of the power that you who stand before me represent. I said that I can sum up the state of the nation in two words, free and hopeful. We are free because we decided collectively to be free. Nothing could stand in the way of our freedom thereafter. And we have reason to be hopeful because now we realize that united we have the power to accomplish what we wish.

I want today to be a day of celebration. A celebration commemorating the past sacrifices and noble achievements of the Filipino people in the cause of freedom and independence. But more importantly, I want it to be a celebration of the People Power, power that can assure that freedom and independence for all time. To celebrate that power, I do not want you to look in the direction of this grandstand but into yourselves. Because that is where it lies. Let us go from here therefore and celebrate among ourselves our independence.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino to the League of Mayors and Governors

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the League of Mayors and Governors**

[Delivered on June 13, 1986]

BETTER THAN GUNS, GOONS AND GOLD

A true leader is one who can solve the problems of his constituency without having to run to Malacanang for even the minor problems. We should try and reconcile with our enemies so we can go on with rebuilding the country.

Actually I had a prepared speech for today but my good friend and Executive Secretary Joker Arroyo said: “Huwag ka nang magbasa ng iyong speech. (Don’t read your speech anymore) Just talk to them from the heart.” And that is what I want to do.

Many times I have been asked, Cory, what is the problem with Minister Nene Pimentel? Why does he appoint I such terrible OICs? And I said, you know that is a false I report because really, what we read about are those OICs I who are not doing well. Unfortunately, the OICs who are I really performing very well do not make news, we do not read or hear about them. But I know that many of you are giving your best efforts and certainly I appreciate those of you who really are giving your all. For those of you who are still taking it rather easy, now is the time to show our countrymen that we indeed deserve our positions and we do aim to perform better than our predecessors.

I think that most of us are concerned about the coming elections. And perhaps today I would like to remind all of you — please don’t come to me and tell me when election time comes around, “alam mo Cory, wala kaming pera, wala kaming guns, wala kaming goons.” (You know Cory, we don’t have money, guns or goons.)

I’d like to remind all of you that in our biggest battle of February, I had very little money. In fact I was very apologetic to most of you because I could only afford to give so I much. Definitely I had no guns, I had no goons, but I know I had something more important than any of these three. And that was the faith and confidence of the Filipino people. And because of this, I am now your President. I think the same should work for you. You should all try your very best to gain support of our people because that is what matters in the long run.

Let us forget about the past practices of doing everything, especially during elections, with just money. Of course I realize money is also a very important ingredient in that nobody has ever won with just talk. But it is very important for us now. We are being given the opportunity to change things. We should in spite not only ourselves but our people to bring about the changes that we have long been clamoring for.

So when I was asked if I could see you, and if you could come to Malacanang, I said I really preferred going out of Malacanang. It is a beautiful place but I feel I should not isolate myself from the people. This is why every opportunity I get I try to be with the people. I thank all of you who were present yesterday because I think we needed yesterday to remind us that it is so important for us to unite, to be one, to make this country of ours the great country we want it to be.

Please try to forget minor differences, we have to work with almost everybody. I realize that we still have political enemies but as much as possible, let us try to reconcile. Let us forget our minor differences.

I have asked General Ramos to help out in those areas where there are still pockets of disturbance. In fact, a few days ago, I was in conference with two protagonists of Sulu and I am very happy to inform you that I think we

solved their problem. And I am very grateful to all of you here who did not come to me with all their problems. I really appreciate leaders who are able to solve their problems without major help from the national government. I feel this is the aura of a true leader; to be able to thresh out differences without having to complain to higher-ups. So again, I wish you the very best and you do have my support when election time comes around. Those who have performed very creditably these past few months are specially assured of my help.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Philippine Business for Social Progress Speech
of**

**Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Philippine Business for Social Progress**

[Delivered on June 16, 1986]

GETTING BACK TO BUSINESS

The broad objectives of the Aquino government are to create jobs, alleviate mass poverty and distribute the fruits of development equitably. Target beneficiaries of an agriculture development program comprise 70% of the population.

I am pleased to address today an audience of smart businessmen. I say smart because you have long known what many businessmen outside the PBSP still fail to see. And that is: Where true and dependable profits lie. These are not found in the company vault nor in the large and immediate returns on your investments, but in the improving welfare of Filipinos – in the jobs you create and in the families that are thereby cared for. In general terms, in a developing Philippine economy and a progressively just and stable society. In short, in helping the goose grow strong and healthy that lays the golden eggs. By “Goose” I mean a high motivated, skilled and justly compensated Philippine workforce that is also the consumer base of a vigorous Philippine economy.

The biggest mistake of my predecessor and his business associates was that they were smart but shortsighted. They accumulated great wealth. They made fantastic profits on a slim investment, meaning to say on the pure exercise of their unlimited power to use public funds for private ends. But in the end, their coffers were empty, and I mean this even before the PCGG came around. There were no reserves of public goodwill to draw from. No accumulation of gratitude, respect and trust to sustain them in leaner times. No more consumers to buy the old lines, the recycled promises, the empty programs for change. In the end, there was only a nation consumed – by poverty, hopelessness and rage. What did it all profit them in the end?

As I said, I speak to smarter men. For as early as 1970 you, the leaders of the business community, saw that no enterprise could possibly thrive above and apart from the social environment. When you formed the Philippine Business for Social Progress Foundation 16 years ago, there seemed hope for the progress and justice you envisioned. Unfortunately, your efforts were set back by 14 years of an unbelievably corrupt and inefficient government, a dictatorship in fact with a will to economic plunder rather than progress.

But all that is in the past. Your vision, which requires the cooperation and parallel efforts of government, is shared by me.

Our broad objectives, as you know, are the alleviation of mass poverty, the generation of employment, and the equitable sharing of the fruits of development. Toward these ends, we have chosen to direct our resources and energies into agricultural development. The target beneficiaries are the 70% of our people who live in the countryside.

I understand that your 5-year PBSP work program for 1986-91 is set along parallel lines. It is your aim to regionalize your development efforts to benefit specific poverty groups in priority provinces. This is the approach I am most comfortable with: immediate attention to pressing problems. Long-term programs that by-pass immediate problems for a total solution far into the future are well and good. But for the solution of some problems there can be no delay in conscience. Joblessness and poverty are some of them, especially and inexcusably in our potentially rich countryside. With proper coordination and cooperation between government and the PBSP, total countryside development becomes even more feasible.

The knowledge that the PBSP is squarely behind our economic recovery program is reassuring indeed. With business joining us in the task of reconstruction, the combined effort will be invested with the efficiency, pragmatism and energy that are the hallmarks of private enterprise.

Because a percentage of your profits are regularly and voluntarily set aside for your socio-economic programs, I know your commitment to a better future for the country and a better life for the Filipino goes far beyond mere posturing and words.

We would like to thank you, and commemorate with you, 16 years of partnership with the Filipino people in the cause of economic progress and social justice. The government now joins your partnership and will be relying heavily on it in the months and years to come.

The country, you might say, is back in business. You have been indispensable partners in the national venture. With your continued support, we know that we can and shall be viable.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 79th Anniversary of the University of the Philippines

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the 79th Anniversary of the University of the Philippines

[Delivered on June 18, 1986]

CROSSING OVER FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT

The Aquino administration pledges to listen and respond to both condemnation and constructive criticism from academe, traditional nemesis of Establishment.

While gearing to speak before you today, I conditioned myself to face and accept a simple fact. I am now the President of the Philippines. I am no longer leading a ragtag revolution against the powers that be. Mine is no longer that small insistent voice of the opposition that was drowned out by the drumbeating of the tyrant's propaganda machine, until that voice grew into the roar of millions. I am no longer the underdog. I am, by a miracle that still amazes me as the work of Providence never fails to, at the top of the power structure.

On my way here, I felt saddened somewhat by these facts. Now I will no longer enjoy the same audience I used to at the University of the Philippines. I hope against hope, but somehow I know the rapport will not be the same. For I have done what no one who wishes to remain popular with the U.P. ever does – cross over to the establishment. But that, I suppose is the hazard faced by anyone who presumes to lead a popular revolution. There is possibility you might win. Then you become the status quo and fair game for the activists of the U.P.

That is the venerable tradition, the life force, the saving grace that is our irrepressible University of the Philippines. The U.P. has always been the problem no past President of our land has managed to solve. Not even its illustrious sons have escaped vilification.

In this, I guess, the U.P. simply remains true to its character, to the mission imparted to it at its birth. The U.P. was founded 79 years ago to demolish the intellectual underpinnings of one social order and establish another. It's first graduates were trained to occupy influential positions in government and society. They were to sweep the landscape clean of counterproductive colonial values and influences. Spanish elitism and traditionalism were the very first targets of the very first activists of the campus.

Finally, a new government and social philosophy based on American republicanism successfully replaced the old order. This was no sooner accomplished than the U.P. began to see and denounce the flaws in the new dispensation. Down through the years of the young Republic, the criticism and the prescriptions took on an increasingly radical direction, reaching a peak in the Marcos years. Protracted struggle and violent overthrow were offered as the only effective remedy to an exploitative and self-serving regime.

But, in the latter years, I thought I detected in the U.P. a no less powerful alternative to tyranny and silent suffering quietly sweeping the campus, a breath of the fresh wind of non-violent change that blew into the sails of our Yellow Revolution. Students saw a viable alternative to lives of quiet desperation or violent outpouring in the quiet determination of our yellow revolutionaries.

Quite a few clichés of this University were overturned by that revolution. Clerico-fascists turned out to be clerico-revolutionaries. The military-business complex turned out to be a conspiracy for democracy. The passive, hopelessly a political Silent Majority turned out in the millions to protect the ballot and then to protect the rebellion. And that simple housewife "who used to serve us coffee," as some of Ninoy's friends who are now serving my government

used to say (and they are going to be sorry), turned out to be the leader and wielder of the power of the people. These unexpected turns of events should diminish in some measure the arrogance of academe.

And now, what lies ahead for the U.P.? What judgments will it make, what pressures will it exert on our fledgling government that you now view as the establishment? I cannot presume that my administration, unlike past administrations, will escape the harshest scrutiny in your classrooms. But just as I had convinced myself to accept that I am now on the establishment side (at least it is one that endeavors to be just), I have also prepared myself to listen and be responsive to criticism. For as history has shown, the shove and pull of ideas emanating from U.P. has served not to upset but to balance government.

And so now I must return to the halls of power. There, where we plan and strategize a new era of progress for the Philippines, we are far from the upheavals of the U.P. campus; but we are not insulated. Our windows are open to catch each fresh wind that carries both condemnation and constructive suggestion from the corridors of the U.P.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the International Reunion of the Movement for a Free Philippines

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the International Reunion of the Movement for a Free Philippines**

[Delivered on June 20, 1986]

WELCOME HOME, EXILES

The job cut out for the freedom fighters, and these include those who chose exile rather than live under the tyranny of Marcos, is to provide for a decent life, a better future for millions of Filipinos; to get the economy back in shape and rebuild a country left in moral and political ruins.

There are three things happening today that my husband Ninoy would not have thought possible:

First, that it is I, and not he, who is doing most of the talking.

Second, that we should actually be concerned about Marcos and Imelda fading from the public memory.

And third, that the Movement for a Free Philippines should be holding its international convention right here, in the midst of what was once the land of bondage, and only three years after he bid you goodbye in the United States.

Ninoy must share our astonishment. The Philippines is exhilaratingly and unquestionably free. The cause, the burning dream of your movement has finally been realized. And sooner and more painlessly than we all thought possible.

In the midst of our waiting and our struggle, I thought our children would have to carry the torch after us. Who would have imagined God would snap His fingers and we would be free. But looking back now, I can see how God prepared our snap liberation through many years, many people and groups, and out of a variety of circumstances. And one of His very special instruments, used quite skillfully and potently outside of Philippines, was the Movement for a Free Philippines.

Marcos liked to call your members “steak commandoes.” I know that not many of you could afford steaks in exile. What Marcos did not realize, or what he could never admit, is that there in the land of steak, it was he who was being turned slowly in a spit. Thanks to the MFP commandoes, world opinion was slowly turned against him and a new foreign policy towards the Philippines was taking shape.

I am more fortunate than most Filipinos in that I was able to watch your group at work. In the United States, I became well acquainted with the ideas, the campaigns, the organized and widespread network of the MFP. I saw how Filipinos in exile, my friend Raul Manglapus and other exiles, managed to find the time, the funds, and the energy (and that is never easy in the mad rush for a living in Europe and America), to lobby for the Philippine cause. I also saw native Americans, Canadians, Europeans, many of whom had never seen the Philippines, embrace the concerns of our land as wholeheartedly and intensely as if they were their own. I saw all these take place, and I can never forget what; it was like and how admirable you were to keep trying, in spite of the cynicism and the mockery. In behalf of Filipinos who were not privy to your efforts, but who now enjoy the benefits of what you worked so tirelessly for, I thank you. We shall always be grateful.

And now, what does an organization like the Movement for a Free Philippines do now that the Philippines is free? *Time* magazine, in one February issue, commented that the Philippines’ freedom fighters now face the hard

part (obviously, the writers never experienced exile), the nitty-gritty phase of their cause. And that, as you all know, is to provide a decent life, a better future for millions of poor and hungry Filipinos. It is a struggle to get our economy back in shape, to rebuild from the moral and political ruins left by “that man” who forced many of you into exile.

I understand that the MFP has just launched the Philippine Reconstruction Corps; I also understand that your group will be lobbying or personally participating in a program to transfer technology, resources and investments from abroad to the Philippines. I have also been told that some of your members will uproot themselves from comfortable residences and careers abroad to settle here and pioneer in the work of reconstruction. The country is grateful.

The work of the Movement for a Free Philippines, if I may presume to interpret your agenda, has really just begun.

As in the years past, our country, though separated from your places of work by oceans, is greatly dependent on the continuance of your zeal and vision. And as before, the contributions you make are purely voluntary. You didn’t have to help, it was enough that you paid the price of exile, but you did, anyway. And the results, I know, will be the same. It didn’t look as though we could make it, but we did. The world hasn’t seen the last of the miracles made in the Philippines. And that, through the grace of God, and again with much help from the MFP.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the ASEAN Conference

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the ASEAN Conference**

[Delivered on June 23, 1986]

**NEW
FOR MIRACLES**

ASEAN

STRATEGY:

PROVISION

The seeming indifference of the rich countries to our economic situation should have motivated ASEAN countries to look into the potential of the Region for other ways to achieve sustained progress, President Aquino tells ASEAN foreign ministers at their meeting in Manila. It is time to re-examine the ASEAN position, she says. While ASEAN has handled several international crises admirably, it has not done much in the field of economic cooperation and progress.

On behalf of the new government and the people of the Philippines, I wish to extend my warmest welcome to the Foreign Ministers and Delegates attending the 19th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting.

I have been looking forward to this occasion because it is my first opportunity to reaffirm the commitment of the Philippines to ASEAN.

Through our collective efforts, ASEAN has gained recognition as one of the more successful regional organizations in the world. This is clearly shown by the keen interest that the rest of the world has shown in developing ties with us. However, lest we be led to believe that ours is a total success story, let me remind you that we still share problems which remain unresolved and threaten to frustrate the tremendous promise of this region. These problems equally threaten to render meaningless our continued association. Even as we meet today, we face the same obstacles to peace and progress which we have signally endeavored to overcome.

The continuing occupation of Kampuchea and the irresolution of the issues that prevent a unified and viable government in that sad country, threaten the balance of power in our region, cast a dark shadow on the world's perception of its stability, and constrain the progress that could realize the full promise of the Region. Rather than be the vortex of instability, ASEAN should be the stabilizing factor in what, I suppose, is the unavoidable competition of great powers. If ASEAN could stand tall as an example of a regional force for reason in international relations, humanity in political order, and progress in its economies, it could exercise a salutary influence over the rest of the world.

The economic picture likewise has not been as rosy as it used to be. Of course, it never was for the Philippines under the previous government. ASEAN's trade performance in recent years has become more and more dismal. The global recession that hit the developed countries has wrought havoc on our export-oriented economies. To reduce their trade deficit, our industrialized partners – have restricted access of our exports to their markets. Contracting demand for manufactured goods forced foreign companies to scale down their operations and recall their investments from our shores. The world glut in oil, sugar, metal and semi-processed goods has depressed our primary and secondary industries. All these factors combined to stunt the economic growth of the Region for the past several years.

It is lamentable that, despite our experience, we continue to look outwards from the Region for the revival of its progress and the fulfillment of its promise. My own country is learning the hard way that strength must be built first from within. First, among the vast majority of our people locked in poverty and a retrogressive agriculture. Then, to the second circle of increasingly capital-intensive industries. And then outwards to the rest of the world. I should like the next stage to be within the ASEAN, among the nations that have a common security interest with us, and that should have, by virtue of proximity and colonial experience, many points of economic interest. This is how ASEAN should have evolved: by native self-reliance, expanding to regional interdependence until we had collectively achieved a level of strength sufficient to take on the vagaries of the international developed economy.

It is not malevolence that moves the developed economies to act in derogation of our interests, but their own survival, charity begins at home. Let us take that message to heart. The seeming indifference of the rich countries to our economic situation should have been motivation enough for ASEAN countries to take the initiative in looking into the potential of the Region for alternative paths to sustained progress.

After 19 years of existence, ASEAN should already be evaluating the impact of regional economic cooperation instead of endlessly discussing how to get it off the ground.

Distinguished Delegates, it is time to re-examine our present position, consider how far short of ASEAN's goals we have fallen, and renew more firmly our commitment to achieve those goals. ASEAN is not without achievements. It handled several international crises admirably, crisis of the kind that plunged Western countries into war. But we were established for economic cooperation and progress. What we have accomplished in these last respects is more kindly left unmentioned. I think the time is well past for talking.

I look forward to the summit meeting that will be held in Manila next year. This will be an opportunity for me to meet all my distinguished counterparts in ASEAN. It should also be the occasion when ASEAN makes the hard and fast decisions to reach the objectives of its creation. The only way I can explain the delay and hesitations of the past is that they are rooted in fear of failure. But why should it be so? Who would have thought that the Filipinos would succeed in restoring democracy by boycotting beverages and newspapers, calling out a military revolt that numbered a handful, and strolling along an avenue-but in the millions? A miracle? Yes, indeed, as I believe all faiths that hold sway over the hearts of ASEAN peoples make provisions for miracles.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the anniversary of the Philippine Navy

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the anniversary of the Philippine Navy**

[Delivered on June 23, 1986]

**KEEPING
OF COOPERATION**

ALIVE

THE

NEW

SPIRIT

As Commander-in-Chief of the New Armed Forces of the Philippines, President Aquino tells the members of the Philippine Navy that they were no less a part of the people's victory over dictatorship in the February 22-25 revolution, as the other branches of the AFP. She exhorts them to keep alive the new spirit of cooperation and trust between armed forces and people which is a key element of national recovery.

As Commander-in-Chief of the New Armed Forces of the Philippines, I have addressed nearly all the commands that make up our nation's defense. In all these encounters, I made a general call for unity and loyalty, for discipline and dedication, for a total commitment to keeping the peace, I have stated again and again the nature of the mandate the people gave us in the armed forces of the Republic. And that is to uphold and protect the democracy they fought so hard and with such distinction to restore.

I have spoken before our soldiers in the Academy, and in the military camps in the cities and in the countryside, I have asked our land-based troops to continue the process of reform in their ranks. I have asked our generals to be as vigilant of the well-being of the people as they are of the honor of the corps. I have asked them to ensure that their men are well-led, well-armed, well-provisioned and properly motivated. The best form of "welfare" for the troops, a great general said, is first-class training. My government is exerting itself to make all this possible, particularly in the area of increasing hazard pay. We are poor but we are trying. I have asked our men in uniform to participate in the task of national reconstruction, to employ their energies and skills in maintaining and upgrading the infrastructure of the countryside and other public service facilities. While we try to obtain adequate means to carry out this mission, I have asked them to keep alive the new spirit of cooperation and trust between armed forces and people that is a key element of national recovery. This requires no machinery or expense; only the spirit that propelled the revolution and won us back our democracy. To that end, I have asked them to maintain their rapport with the civilian populace, to inspire respect rather than fear, confidence rather than mistrust.

I have spoken before our soldiers in the Air Force, I have asked for their continuing diligence in protecting the integrity of our skies as well as assuring from above the peace of our terrain. I urged them to display the same kind of heroism and patriotism they manifested to our people during the revolution. At the critical hour, they must always heed the voice of democracy and not the self-serving orders of those who seek to subvert it. Though the skies be their domain, their feet must be firmly planted on the ground below, in the foundations of our new democratic society.

And now, at last, I address the reformed forces of our Navy. I now speak before that section of our defensive shield that is rarely seen by the majority of our people. At the height of our people's revolt the main battlefield was at EDSA. There on that avenue, the forces for reform found effective shield and potent weapon in people's power. And in the skies above the camps, air force pilots sent by the enemy heard above the roar of their engines the voice of democracy present, or at least not obviously so, at the site of the revolution. Yet that powerful and potent arm of the military had also taken sides. Though your battle stations were far offshore, you too heeded the call for democratic restoration. At the height of the conflict, your guns may have been primed and your Marines were among the forces sent to quell the rebellion, and yet not a shot was fired, not a man moved to carry out the directions of the tyrant. You were no less a part of our people's victory. That almighty spirit that moves us all, had also moved within the ranks of the men at sea. In retrospect, we can see that the critical shift in the military's allegiance, away

from the falsely proclaimed president to the duly elected government of the people, took many forms. Ramos and Enrile, by their heroic and defiant stand, blazed the trail to democracy for the military to follow. But just as the military revolt needed the enfolding protection of the people to survive, so democracy ultimately depended on the desistance of the loyalist troops to triumph. In the end, the loyalists had proven loyal: to their consciences and to the people.

I want to take this opportunity to tell all the officers and men who have been tagged “loyalists” that I understand you. I hereby strike the pejorative connotation of the word “loyalist” from the lexicon of the armed forces. You and I, all of us in the New Armed Forces, are all loyalists and all rebels. Loyal to the democratic republic and rebels against any who seek to subvert it. The Navy has therefore appropriately entitled its anniversary commemoration, “Hukbong Dagat, Kabalikat sa Pagkakaisa.” This theme sums up my message today, we are one in the armed forces in the defense of our country and our liberty.

Long before the February Revolution, the Marines of the Navy showed what civil-military relations should be and can be. I commend the Navy highly for this achievement even while the dictatorship was in place. For you, there was no excuse for not living up to the ideal of the Filipino

A distinguished and respected friend, a Marine, gave me this advice: Take care of your marines, and they will take care of you. I have taken his words to heart.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 13th Anniversary of the Development Academy of the Philippines

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the 13th Anniversary of the Development Academy of the Philippines

[Delivered on June 23, 1986]

SETTING POLICIES AND SYSTEMS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

President Aquino points out four areas of concern for the Development Academy of the Philippines: 1) public policy that meets needs of the people; 2) empowerment of the people to enable them to gain control of their lives; 3) public ethics or good government to restore true democracy, and 4) public management based on the policy that government should manage only what it can manage well and what the private sector cannot do as well or better.

I am told that the main weakness of the Development Academy of the Philippines is that it does not receive a budgetary allocation from the government. It must earn its keep by undertaking programs and projects for government as well as private institutions. Like any business, it must keep its customers satisfied; but unlike most businesses, it has a very limited, and in the case of the government, a very niggardly market. The lack of money has been the recurring threat to the survival of the Academy. As head of the post-Marcos government, let me say to you, Welcome to the Club. If you are expecting a favorable change in fiscal policy toward the Academy, let me also say, don't hold your breath. Rather than offer you financial support, I give you instead the consolation of pointing out that your chief weakness may well have been the source of your greatest strength. Because you have stoutly resisted the financial comfort of a government subsidy, you have remained relatively free to carry out your mandate of supporting and nurturing the developmental forces at work in the nation, and of choosing your involvements according to the broad, disinterested and forward-looking criteria of a professional and multidisciplinary staff.

In retrospect, the Academy remains with us today because its institutional design — strangely enough considering its Martial Law origin — allowed the Academy personnel the academic freedom to discuss and debate an unlimited variety of approaches to the nation's problems. Although the Academy has also had a colorful history of strong and divergent ideological convictions, this appears to have in no way detracted from the integrity of its intellectual productions. Ideology has not distorted so much as increased the perspectives from which problems have been handled. In that regard, it is, like my cabinet, an interesting if often misunderstood body. I am as comfortable with the DAP as I am comfortable with democracy.

The DAP, as I happily remarked earlier, has always had a distant attitude to government support. Instead it feeds on challenges. In that regard, I have not come empty-handed.

As you all know, we have really just begun the revolution; the campaign and the rebellion were just the start. As the revolution shifts to the implementation of the vision that fired it, the government must now deal with nitty-gritty of the plans and programs to realize that vision. This is where, oftentimes, the resolve falters, and the vision is in danger of being lost or worse discredited.

The Academy is one of the few government institutions specifically mandated to sustain and guide the forces of development in our country. There are four areas of concern to which I should like the Academy to devote its attention.

The first is the area of Public Policy. Despite the continuing enthusiasm of our people about the new government, in the end its success will depend on our ability to formulate and implement the policies that squarely meet the needs of our people. Strangely enough, I am not deluged with policy proposals. Instead, I am surprised at the dearth of

approaches to our problems, and most of these proposals are either tried and tested failures, or patently impossible to adopt in the light of our values, the balance of forces in our society, and our place in the geopolitical scheme of things. I should like to see, not only more creative and socially sensitive approaches to our social and economic problems, but also systematic studies and discussions of these approaches. In that way their implications can be fully assessed and weighed against one another. Only by allowing open and free discussion of public issues and policy proposals can we prevent isolated and rightly unpopular views from becoming final policy and a national calamity.

A second area of concern is the Empowerment of the People. In the February Revolution we experienced a wide and spontaneous display of outrage against the abuses of authoritarian government. People Power toppled a dictatorship. But today that power must still pay for the crimes and waste of the dictatorship. What we need to do to avoid a repetition of our recent tragic experience with uncontrolled government is to increase the control of the people over their lives — over the resources they depend on — in order that they can truly be free to act in their enlightened self-interest. And not only free to act, but to act effectively. That means the organized power of the small. The common people must be empowered and the government must help them be so. The Academy can help design effective and efficient ways of creating and strengthening rural and community organizations.

Empowerment also involves giving effective voice to the people. We must create mechanisms for continuously hearing and heeding the voice of the people. We must regularly take the public pulse through reliable surveys, such as the snap surveys the Academy has been undertaking since the Revolution.

It is not only the government that should know the public pulse, but the people themselves must be made aware of their collective opinion on important public issues, so that they can draw strength from the knowledge and find the resolve to act on these issues. The durability of the dictatorship rested on its success in keeping the people ignorant of their common opinion and collective strength on any issue.

Empowerment involves not only the collection of feedback from the people, but also the provision of feedforward, of information on what the government is doing through its hundreds of agencies and instrumentalities, and through its thousands of programs, projects and activities. The people must know what the commitments of government are; so that they will be empowered, and thereby emboldened, to regularly demand these of government. The aim of feedforward mechanisms is to eventually abolish the role of intermediaries, of “fixers” really, between people and government, and thereby make it truly their own. The Academy is in the best position to pioneer in this effort.

The third area of concern is Public Ethics or Good Government. The people launched a revolution to restore true democracy. By democracy they meant more than the right to periodically elect crooks and suffer their tenure until the next election, but the right to have honest government; preferably also wise, but at the very least “good” government. This government is, if nothing else, honest; and I am going to make sure it stays that way if I have to fire everyone to do it.

I created the Commission on Good Government to retrieve the wealth that government officials and government-connected individuals stole from the people. But that is not enough. We must go beyond restitution and punishment to prevention. The undoubted satisfaction that either will bring cannot offset the irretrievable waste of precious and limited resources and the damage to public faith in government. Nothing the PCGG can do will erase the \$26 billion that was misspent or stolen and that we must pay.

We need to study in a systematic way the problem of graft and corruption that has been the way of government in the Philippines. And I am not impressed with the rationalization that that is the way of government in many countries of the world. If that is so, that is the problem the concern of another workhorse of the new government, the Presidential Commission on Government Reorganization under the able leadership of Minister Villafuerte, whose pragmatic creativity has impressed his colleagues in the Cabinet, myself included. The government bureaucracy must be organized to achieve results, not only to undertake activities. The flurry of purposive action in the past government of geniuses, so-called, is still burning a hole in our pockets and our memories. They generated a lot of heat, at great cost, but surprisingly little light. And no wonder, we now find out. What they were really doing needed the cover of darkness.

A fourth area of concern is public management.

The DAP has a long experience in studying the problems of government organization. Its inputs will be more than welcomed by the Reorganization Commission. My own input is simply this, government should manage only what it can manage well, and what the private sector cannot do as well or better.

If this has not satisfied your appetite for challenges, be sure that I have a host of others that will equally fire of their peoples; elimination of graft and corruption in our governments is our commitment.

We are racing against time. As you know, there are rumors already circulating of graft and corruption resurfacing in this government. I must say that those we have looked into appear to have been prompted less by well-grounded suspicion as by the burning desire of the informant to replace the accused as OIC. But I know the virus is there waiting for complacency to set in so it can break out again in epidemic proportions.

I have said that setting the example is a necessary measure to eliminate corruption. But it is not sufficient. The example of national leadership is not enough. It must be imitated throughout the bureaucracy of national and local governments, and by the people themselves in their dealings with government. If moral exhortation will not do, then we must impress on all and sundry that the public official whose favor you buy today will be bought tomorrow against you.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the National Defense College Graduation

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the National Defense College Graduation**

[Delivered on July 3, 1986]

**A STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE:
WAGING PEACE**

As the first class to graduate under her government, the members of the 20th regular course of the National Defense College are congratulated for pledging support to the February 22 revolution. People rallying to the defense of the armed forces in the events of that month was a moving experience that should give the military in turn a sense of duty to protect them.

First, may I congratulate the members of the 20th Regular Course of the National Defense College of the Philippines. I understand that this year's graduating class suffered is the greatest attrition in the history of the course. And I am relieved to learn that this is not for any other reason than because of the course of studies has been the toughest ever. At any rate, this class is distinguished for registering several "firsts"

It is the first class to graduate under my government. More importantly, it is the first NDCP class that pledged support for the February 22 Revolution that toppled the dictatorship. And it is the first NDCP class to have among its distinguished graduates a former member of Parliament (and an oppositionist at the time) and now Deputy Minister of National Defense. I refer to Deputy Minister Wilsom Gamboa, whose participation in the course signals an earnest effort on the part of government to appreciate the imperatives of national security. His participation also underscores the broader concept of national security that holds sway under this government.

For national security, in the traditional view, was synonymous with national defense, with public safety, with the preservation and re-imposition of order. The February Revolution has enriched that traditional view to include as the first order of priority the preservation of the rights and liberties that our people restored in such a distinctive and distinguished fashion. That revolution has imposed a double duty and an onerous burden on those charged with the defense of our republic. Not only must we now defend that republic by martial force but also with the same militant regard for the rights and liberties it now embodies and in the unique conciliatory spirit in which they were restored. In short, our New Armed Forces must now wage peace.

All of you who graduate from the National Defense College at this time are particularly well-trained to conduct this unique campaign. For you have had the opportunity to pursue and understand your course, not only within the walls of Fort Bonifacio, but right outside of it. In fact, the most valuable lessons in national security and defense were impressed upon you, not only within the classrooms of this College, but in the crash course held at EDSA last February.

There, at the height of our snap revolution, both civilians and our men in uniform learned the higher, more sophisticated techniques of keeping the peace, maintaining order, and securing, not only the interests of government, but the collective well-being of all Filipinos as well. National security, we all learned, was not a matter of keeping the people at arms — or armalites' length — or of erecting higher walls or denser barbed wire fences between government and people; but of bringing the people in — to join us in a united effort to protect the liberties and institutions we all cherish. Effective national security is not a task that is adversarial in policy or practice, but rather,

cooperative. Security forces do not protect operations or establishment *from* the people, but *for* and *in behalf* of the people. And better still *with* the people. It is a difference in military technique, but in attitude; an attitude grounded in the moral and common sense that effective defense, like successful politics, is addition. That superiority in numbers will carry the day anytime. That if the people are with us, nothing can prevail against us.

When an army of civilians surrounded the two military camps, it became evident to every soldier within, that there could be no better assurance of his personal survival and the effective discharge of his mission, than the combined force of army and people cemented by mutual trust and fired by a common patriotism and devotion to liberty and justice.

I know that I am telling you nothing new. As I said, the need for harmony between the civilian populace and the military is one that you have learned well in theory, and observed in dramatic application on the streets during the revolution. But as you take on new offices and responsibilities, ascend in rank, acquire commands and take to the field, the values and attitudes that you learned in this College and from recent political events may start to fade from memory. That would be a tragedy. Do not let it happen. Keep ever in mind that the armed forces must be deeply rooted in the trust and cooperation of the people. The mistake of your former Commander-in-Chief was to think that an army could be a wooden club in his hand. Cut off from the sources that sustain it, the armed forces would snap like a piece of dry wood under the pressure of adversity.

And finally, the events of February do not just teach a new and effective form of national defense. The rally of the people to the defense of the armed forces was a moving experience that should give you an indelible sense of duty to protect them in turn. To rephrase a military saying. Take care of the people and they will take care of you.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Seminar on Peace and Order Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Seminar on Peace and Order**

[Delivered on July 3, 1986]

NOT A THRONE OF BAYONETS

The Second Principle of counter-insurgency states that “The government must function in accordance with law.” Where this principle was observed, as in Malaya, insurgency was defeated. The principle is clear, we must be better than our enemies. We cannot fight a good cause with evil weapons.

I am happy and reassured to see this particular mix of participants in this seminar on peace and order. I say reassured because I notice the presence not only of members of our military and the national police, but also of our ministers, acting governors, mayors and other OICs in government.

If peace and order were merely a military problem, the task of government would be easier by a significant percentage, in one sense, but also desperate and tragic in another. We would need only to fan out our divisions in the fields and cities of our country and leave the matter to the courage of our soldiers and the tenacity and generalship of our commanders. But, thank God, things have not come to such a pass. For if they had, then the fate of this government and our democracy would be decided on a throw of the dice. It would mean that the insurgency had attained the confidence to meet our forces head-on, or, in another area, criminality has increased to the level of anarchy and the social order has broken down. It would mean that military might alone would decide the outcome. If it comes to that, then all is lost. For a throne of bayonets cannot serve comfortably as the seat of government.

But things have not come to such a pass.

Our rights and liberties have been restored and a government is in place that is bent on justice for all. True, there are places where the insurgent forces continue to hold their own.

But the people, whose indifference if not hostility to the former government had sustained the insurgent forces, have found new hope in the new government. We have a chance to start afresh. And we shall be working with a people who have reaffirmed their faith in the ways of peace and the promise of democracy. It was, in fact, and as we all know, the direct intervention of the Filipino people that restored democracy in our land. Contrary to what some quarters say, we don't have to sell the idea of democracy to the Filipinos. I can tell you now that nothing hurt my image more during the campaign among our people, especially in the rural areas, than the false charge that I am a Communist. Nine-tenths of the battle for the hearts and minds of the Filipinos has been won, and won by the Filipinos themselves. With these advantages, it is unforgivable to fail. We can fail only by betraying the principles of democracy, justice, human rights, and the rule of law for which our people fought with such distinction. I will not let that happen. I stand at the head of this government that was installed by the people, for the people, to make sure that the faith they have reposed in it is not betrayed.

The military and the national police forces, the local governments, the agencies and instrumentalities of government will defend this democracy, and defend it in a way that enlarges rather than diminishes its meaningfulness for the people. When we say that we shall fight to preserve our dignity as free men, it will be done in a way that will not detract from that dignity or reduce that freedom. This government will not tolerate the practice of torture. That hideous practice has no place in a democracy and no justification in the accepted wisdom on counter-insurgency. You know the classics in that field better than I. Minister Enrile, who advises me on the insurgency, gave me a book on the subject in which I read the following passage:

The Second Principle (of counter-insurgency) states that “The government must function in accordance with law.”

”There is a very strong temptation in dealing both with terrorism and with guerrilla actions for government forces to act outside the law, the excuses being that the processes of law are too cumbersome, that the normal safeguards in the law for the individual are not designed for an insurgency, and that a terrorist deserves to be treated as an outlaw anyway. Not only is this morally wrong, but, over a period, it will create more practical difficulties for a government than it solves. A government which does not act in accordance with the law forfeits the right to be called a government and cannot then expect its people to obey the law.”

Where this principle was observed, as in Malaya, insurgency was defeated. The principle is clear, we must be better than our enemies. We cannot fight a good cause with evil weapons.

We have a chance to start afresh. A chance like this may not come again. It is imperative therefore that we think the matter through carefully before we address the insurgency problem again. Let us review the record for the errors and abuses that fueled rather than finished off the insurgency, as they were perversely meant to. This seminar is a good and substantial beginning.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Catholic Educators Association of the Philippines' Annual Convention

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Catholic Educators Association of the Philippines' Annual Convention**

[Delivered in Cagayan de Oro City, July 6, 1986]

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION:
A PRIMARY CONCERN**

President Aquino assures the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines that quality education of our youth is a primary concern of Government. While the main burden of educating the youth should be borne by Government, private sector has earned a substantial part of the burden. She announced implementation this year of the service contract scheme whereby students who cannot be accommodated in government schools may be enrolled in private schools.

I wish to thank Mr. Javier for now making me officially a member of the Jesuit Mafia. I wish to add that I was joking, before things get out of hand. I am very glad that the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines, chose to hold its annual convention here in Cagayan de Oro City. You have allowed me to pay a second visit to the south and to reaffirm a central policy of our national government. Early in my term, I pledged to decentralize the operations of my administration to reach out to the provinces and to formulate the policies in collaboration with the people, who will be most affected by them. I also promised to focus visual attention to the South to do my best to heal the wounds inflicted by decades of economic exploitation, political neglect and cultural misunderstanding.

Thanks to the CEAP, we are here in another key Southern city opening direct lines of dialogue with the population and able to discuss our national program of recovery in terms that are relevant and practical to the people of this region.

The government's concern and intent to reach to the grassroots is also shared by the CEAP. You comprise a network of 1,200 schools distributed in key municipalities throughout the archipelago, though your central seat of operations is in the City of Manila, your program and policies are made to come to life in hundreds of dioceses, or mission schools run by rural based parishes, and religious orders. This is a network you have carefully nurtured over a number of years. Your special concern for the development and welfare of Filipinos in the provinces adds to the moral component of the government in the areas of economic improvement. In the past four teen years, our rural populace were not only politically starved and abused, but also morally and spiritually undermined. The 14-year spectacle, of .moral turpitude rewarded and moral rectitude that was put on by the old regime called into question the continuing relevance of many of our lives.

But fortunately, enough of our values were meant to call the Filipinos to rally perhaps for the last time, in defense of those values, and in powerful rejection of the old regime.

It is now our task to pick up the momentum of spiritual and moral renewal. In fact we have the advantage of working with the people who themselves started that momentum.

We are building on a substantial foundation, made firm by the triumph of the people in the last elections and revolution. Our focus must be on the young, on those who were born and grew up in the age of our shame, and who were witnesses from the most impressionable age to the triumph of vice and punishment of virtue. One event last February, will not wipe out the work of 14 years. For this reason, your government recently launched a values reformation program implemented by MECS. Until a few days ago, I made the teaching of human rights mandatory in schools.

In a message to educators in Baguio City, I outlined a broad direction of this program. This involved the instilling in our youth, of a love for peace, a jealousy for their political rights, a firm sense of justice, and a willingness to be responsible for themselves and to the community. I specially stressed that the promotion of self-discipline, hard work, respect, and concern for their fellowmen regardless of social status, and an abiding trust and faith in God and the triumph of good. The theme of your 18th convention, national reconstruction through moral regeneration, underscores the identity of our concerns and objectives. At long last, the Catholic academic community and your national leadership are now of a single mind and purpose. I should now like to review the areas where the CEAP and the government can work together.

First, let me assure you that I am keenly aware that Catholic educational institutions are as deeply affected as public schools by the issues of tuition fees and teachers salaries. But where your resources permit, I appeal to you to reach out to the even more financially strapped, if not outright impoverished schools, in your various communities.

I would propose a kind of adoption program, where in a CEAP affiliated school could adopt a public school catering to the same student age-levels. You could then work out a scheme for sharing facilities, services and faculty development programs.

A second area of cooperation is one you have already started to work on. And that is the formation of the total school environment, or the inclusion of the surrounding community or parish in teaching and learning activities. The Assumption experiment in San Simon, Pampanga, is a particularly inspiring example of the conversion of a formal school structure into a community wide learning experience. It is an experience that mutually enriches the studentry and the community; the community by the immediate relevance of what the students are taught and the students by the immediate awareness of the needs of their communities.

The main burden of educating our people should be borne by the government, and I am therefore grateful that the CEAP's network for all the financial constraints under which it operates, has carried a substantial part of that burden. I would therefore like to assure you that the government is exploring every possible source of support for private education. We have identified several areas where we can assist.

For this school year, the service contract scheme which was pilot-tested in two regions will be implemented nationwide, not only on the high school but also on the elementary level. This means that thousands of students who could not be accommodated in government schools are now enrolled in private schools. The impact of this program is two fold: first, the government saves by paying minimal tuition fees instead of constructing new school buildings; second, the private schools have another source of revenue.

Because of the merits of this program, a funding scheme will be evolved so that this partnership of government and private schools can be extended into a tertiary level.

I wish I could make a long list of incentives and other forms of assistance. But I know you understand the enormous demands from all sectors that government must respond to. But, I assure you, there is an earnest effort to find feasible incentives.

The quality of education of our youth is our primary concern, even if it does not appear always as our first priority. We have to address the immediate and dangerous problem of unemployment and mass poverty, particularly in the rural areas. We have to keep bodies and souls together before we can get minds working. And working in constructive rather than destructive directions. That democracy is the first and highest value is unquestioned by a race that cannot live without liberty and pride. But let us not give our people the exclusive choice of bread or freedom. But while the immediate alleviation of poverty is our first priority, the quality education of our youth is the best assurance of maintaining the progress we hope to achieve. I said in Davao that we were left with little by the previous government and we shall not be helped much by our friends abroad. But I also said that, nonetheless, we shall achieve the progress we desire. And that is because, pushed to the wall, we shall fall back on the intangible resources of the people and push ahead by the strength of our will and the power of our intelligence. Both these resources are created by the kind of education we provide. I know the ultimate priorities. Whatever it takes, they will be followed.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the Philippine Bishops/Businessmen Conference

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines During the Philippine Bishops/Businessmen Conference

[Released on July 10, 1986]

FORGING A POST-DICTATORSHIP AGENDA

The fight is not over, President Aquino tells members of the Bishops/Businessmen's Conference. Systemic injustices on which the past regime fed, remain and must be removed. The people must be on their guard against the enemies from within and without.

Fifteen years ago, a group of 35 bishops and an equal number of businessmen lifted their noses from their breviaries and bank books and took alarming notice of the state the country was in, and the even more alarming direction in which it was headed. They decided to combine their respective attributes of spirituality and pragmatism in a systematic effort to uncover the roots of the Philippine crisis and find the appropriate solutions.

One year later, Martial Law was declared and the country was plunged deeper into crisis. To the socio-economic problems they pledged to tackle, the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference added the politics of dictatorship to its agenda. It was a brave decision in the circumstances and the Conference never faltered in adhering to it. For 14 years, the BBC was one of a handful of voices raised in protest against the abuses of the Marcos regime and the social abuses it added to those already endemic in the system.

The BBC brought wisdom and a profound ethical concern to the important issues confronting the nation: minimum wages, labor-management relations, the impact of large enterprises on communities, the role of different instrumentalities of government in a democratic society, and human rights abuses. In this last category, the BBC puts the stamp of Christian approval to the personal outrage felt by many Filipinos over the abuses of the authoritarian government and its military establishment. It was a consolation and a source of strength to feel that what we felt and thought about these abuses were not merely personal reactions, and that the need to do something about them was a Christian duty.

The BBC was one of the chief influences in the education of our people in the humane values of a true democracy, even while this democracy was still a dream. In preparing us for it, it emboldened us to bring it about in a unique and Christian way that has made us the object of the world's admiration.

Last week, an attempt was made to overthrow our democracy. It failed miserably. It failed because the political order, not to mention the personalities, that was offered as the alternative to our democracy went against the grain of the values of our people, values for which the BBC has stood and which it tried to engrain in us.

The fight is not over. The dictatorship is gone, but many of the systemic injustices on which it fed remain with us. The work of the BBC is far from over. The Enemy has many more disguises than the ludicrous one it put on last Sunday at Manila Hotel. We must be ever on our guard. We must be on our guard, not only against the enemy without, but even more against the enemy within. The cynicism that paralyzed our people could creep in again and weaken them against another assault on their liberties and values. That spell of cynicism was broken by the gunshot that killed my husband. Let us not depend on such startling and costly events to keep us alert to danger.

We are presently engaged in the work of giving permanent constitutional form to the gains of the Revolution. We will need the same wisdom and morality you have brought to bear on other issues in this particular project as well. I wish you a fruitful day of deliberations and look forward to receiving results of your dialogue.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Ateneo Convocation

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the Ateneo Convocation

[Released on July 11, 1986]

REACHING FOR NEW HEIGHTS IN PHILIPPINE HIGHER EDUCATION

Excellence, equity and efficiency must assume great importance in higher education if the nation is to respond to the gigantic task of national reconstruction. President Aquino says Government is committed to giving due recognition and proper incentives to universities and colleges, both private and public, which have achieved standard of excellence. But excellence must be made available to as many as possible in society. As in business, government policy is towards minimum intervention in education, only so much as needed to guide the school system along a long-range overall national education plan.

Let me first of all express my deepest admiration for the tradition of excellence which the Ateneo de Manila, my new Alma Mater, has maintained through the 127 years of its history in the Philippines. Eloquent testimony of this tradition are the accomplishments of two of its most illustrious sons, Dr. Jose Rizal and Fr. Horacio de la Costa.

I also take note of the Ateneo's continuing efforts toward equity by enabling a significant number of students from lower income families to receive a Jesuit education through a large scholarship program.

At the same time, efficiency has distinguished the management of this institution. This is shown by the gradual but steady expansion of the Ateneo from her humble beginnings at Intramuros to her wide complex here at Loyola Heights, the productive use of her resources, the successful campaign for philanthropic contributions from here and abroad, and her annual output of graduates, many of them outstanding experts in various fields of human endeavor.

If we as a nation are to respond to the gigantic task of national reconstruction thrust upon us by the February Revolution, then excellence, equity and efficiency must assume great importance in higher education in our country. Our aims to consolidate the gains of the Revolution in a just and viable society cannot be fulfilled unless higher education and research are able to provide knowledge and expertise, which is to say excellence; to as many as possible, meaning equitably; and to do so efficiently. And, because we are in a hurry, in as short a time as possible.

As UNESCO studies have insisted, the condition of higher education does provide an index of national, social and economic development.

Excellence refers to the quality of education, the performance of the individual and the institution. An institution of higher learning achieves excellence only insofar as it provides a relevant education, one placed within the context of Philippine conditions, and responsive to our needs on the national and local levels. Twenty years ago we were ahead of some of our Southeast Asian neighbors in the field of education. Now they are outstripping us, if we have not yet fallen far behind, in terms of program and course offerings, the degrees and expertise of faculty, and enlarged modern facilities. There can be no compromise on excellence. Nor can we afford to acquire and maintain it at a leisurely pace. The recovery cannot wait and it needs what excellence in higher education brings to such an endeavor.

My Government is committed to (1) promoting excellence in higher education; (2) removing all obstacles to excellence; and (3) giving due recognition and proper incentives to universities and colleges, both private and public, which have achieved standards of excellence. As in the field of business, so in education, the policy of my

government shall be minimum government intervention; only as much as deemed necessary to guide the direction of the Philippine school system along a long-range overall national education plan.

But excellence must not be the exclusive property of a few. It must be made available to as many as possible in our society. This is the principle of equity. According to the World Development Report of 1982, 27 percent of 20 to 24 year olds in the Philippines are enrolled in higher education. We are ahead of our ASEAN neighbors by an average of three percent. We are only two points below Japan. But the quality of education in the Philippines is uneven. Excellence is available only to a few and this is a pity because the figures show that many of our young people have the talent and capability to profit from quality basic education and excellent and relevant higher education.

I am happy to note that Ateneans have taken these two goals of excellence and equity to heart. Many Ateneo graduates have joined the university's volunteer program and have sacrificed the opportunity of immediate cashing in on their education to go out into the countryside to share their learning with our less privileged brothers and sisters.

My government is committed, as soon as our economy picks up and sufficient resources are available, to revitalizing and increasing the government scholarship programs. Programs such as the NSTA, the State Scholarship, the Scholarship Program for Cultural Communities, which have suffered setbacks over the last few years, and which enable poor students to take excellent, relevant, high-powered programs that are so essential for national reconstruction.

My government is likewise committed to study proposals for additional tax incentives for scholarship donations and other contributions to educational institutions and foundations.

This brings us to the question of efficiency. There is, as one study has indicated, a mismatch between the products of our colleges and universities, and employment opportunities in our country. Thousands upon thousands of Filipino college graduates have left or are leaving the country to seek employment in the Middle East, in Europe, in Hongkong, to be wage earners, blue collar workers, and domestics. Likewise, associations of schools, individual institutions, and respected educators (including Minister Quisumbing when she was in private education) complain of excessive government control and complicated red-tape in procuring Ministry approvals.

My government is committed to developing, in cooperation with public and private sector educators, a comprehensive long-range educational plan designed to meet the requirements of economic recovery and growth, as well as the need for national political maturity. This last requirement is as important as the first. We are in this mess because our politics went awry as a result of our political ignorance and indifference. We are also committed to giving as much autonomy as possible to institutions that meet specific accreditation requirements and to assuring academic freedom of teachers and the academic freedom of institutions of higher learning.

I thank the Ateneo de Manila University for this honor she confers on me today. It is the second in a week. I think there is a suspicion that I may still slip out from Jesuit fingers and so this second effort to stamp me indelibly in the Jesuit mold. Don't hold your breath, many have tried and failed. I ask the administration, the faculty, Jesuits and lay persons alike, the students, not to rest on your laurels but find new ways of achieving excellence, equity and efficiency as we build, with great hope, this great nation.

I ask you, in keeping with the Jesuit sense of availability and readiness, to pursue the more universal good and the greater glory of God. Do not hesitate to undertake new programs, new types of research, new schools even and institutions, if these will indeed promote the welfare of our people and our country's development. It is by daring that we are now living in a democracy.

I would like to see more scholarships available to poor students in your school. Hence, I appeal to the alumni, friends and benefactors of the Ateneo to help in the expansion of the Ateneo's scholarship program.

I also would like to assure foreign governments and agencies interested in the promotion of education in the Philippines that any form of assistance you offer to schools like the Ateneo will undoubtedly contribute to the progress of our nation, especially in this crucial time.

And lastly, I ask the Almighty Father to bless this university, now my Alma Mater, for good measure, adopted me again as one of her own.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the National Science and Technology Authority

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the National Science and Technology Authority

[Released on July 11, 1986]

CREATING INDIGENOUS TECHNOLOGY

Our scientists must adapt foreign technologies to local realities and develop indigenous technologies that will make full use of our native resources. Filipino science and technology plays an important role in the new self-reliant posture of the country.

I will be brief as I always am. My interest in science and technology is utilitarian. I must measure the importance of any activity by its potential contribution to the work of national reconstruction. I have been given statistics indicating that the national allocation of funds to science and technology in the Philippines is much much smaller than in the industrialized countries, old and new. This says the obvious. We are economically backward because, to some extent, we are weak in science and technology: and we are behind in science and technology because we do not have the kind of economy that can support their vibrant growth. These facts will not excite anyone to contribute readily to local science and technology, especially as your brief to me indicates that it is easier, even if it is not cheaper in the long run, to simply buy the foreign technology in finished products or pay royalties for its use. The private sector goes for the short-term gain, principally because the local private sector does not have more than short-term resources. It must invest in immediate growth because it can rarely support a long-term investment. These are the facts of life that undoubtedly throw a damper on your enthusiasm but they must be faced. It is a vicious cycle, but I accept that the government has a measure of responsibility in breaking it. Government must invest more in scientific and technological research and development, if only to keep the best brains among our people at home. Its investment, directly or through incentives for private sector to support research and development efforts, is like its investment in education. It does not offer immediate gains but it is the height of irresponsibility not to support it generously, for government has responsibility not to the present but chiefly to the future of the country. However, because the resources of our government are scarce and because we are pressed on all sides of competing priorities of unquestionable urgency, such as the alleviation of mass poverty, it is necessary for long-term investments to justify themselves by offering some prospects of immediate returns. In short, it's got to pay and now.

In the case of general education, it must show itself to be relevant to the social and economic conditions of the times and to the objectives that we have set ourselves for the immediate future. We want relevant education, meaning to say, educational programs that turn out graduates with a place in the system such as it is, and who will contribute to make that system what it aspires to be. The same with science and technology.

I have said that the first priority is the alleviation of mass poverty, which is found principally in the rural areas. Urban poverty is just the result of the bad conditions in the countryside that have driven the people to seek a better life in the cities. The main thrust therefore of our economic recovery program is in agriculture.

This thrust will take the form of massive infrastructure investments in the countryside that will make farming again a viable and, perhaps also, a profitable venture. We aim to build farm-to-market roads, irrigation systems, silos and other post-harvest facilities that will permit the farmer to increase his productivity because he has the assurance that his products will readily find markets. We also want to acquire the facilities in a manner that immediately generates employment. We have strongly emphasized the need to use labor-intensive efforts in these projects. But we want these methods also to be efficient. We cannot afford to subsidize the unemployed in digging holes and filling them in again. In short because of our situation, one approach must yield as many results as possible. It is here that Filipino science and technology must prove its immediate usefulness.

We need our scientists to adapt foreign technologies to local realities, and better still to develop indigenous technologies that will make full use of our native resources. I have said that we shall lift ourselves by our own bootstraps because there is no one around to help us carry the full weight of our problems. I acknowledge the role of Filipino science and technology in the new self-reliant posture of the Philippines. And it is an acknowledgement that will find concrete expression in government support for its growth and development.

In concluding, however, I want to express my own interest in Filipino science and technology apart from its immediate contribution to the national recovery effort. I delight in expressions of the power of the Filipino will and intelligence to find unique solutions to impossible dilemmas. I saw this in our Revolution where we found a unique and simple response to an armed and intransigent dictatorship, a response that had eluded all other nations suffering the same political affliction. You know what I mean. You lived the answer yourselves at EDSA. We found our way out of that problem. I trust you, who are among the best brains in our country, to help us find our way out of the problems we inherited. There will be many more Philippine revolutions before the work started out by the February Revolution is completed. Filipino science and technology should spearhead one of them.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Knowing how to fight is important, but is no guarantee of success unless there is an even more profound understanding and appreciation of the values for which one is called to fight. Those values not only gives us compelling reasons for supreme sacrifices but, more importantly, they should establish the tenor of any struggle in which we are called to engage ourselves. We must fight with honor. The way we fight to protect what we claim to be our cherished values must do honor and not violence to those values. The manner of the struggle must already be a victory, a fitting testimony to the moral supremacy of our cause. This is the new spirit of our armed forces. It is a spirit imbibed from the distinguished manner by which our people regained their liberties. It is the spirit of justice, compassion, concern, moderation, and reconciliation. That spirit must now be imparted to our youth so that the achievements of this generation, achievements honored by all the world, are passed on without diminution to the next generation. Our Revolution will be eternal. It will be lived by each generation in turn. That is my commitment and my vow.

The present thrust of the MCMTC reflects this new spirit. Even as I called upon the New Armed Forces to repel threats to our new democracy, not only by moving to destroy its enemies but more importantly to build in the hearts of men, so now it appears that the youth involved in citizen military training have branched out from the bare essentials of military training to social upliftment.

I am happy to note that CMT cadets and cadettes who constitute more than a fourth of the college student population in Metro Manila have been mobilized to combat the proliferation of illegal drugs and marijuana in school campuses. Drug abuse is an enemy more insidious than those that offer overt threats to national security. It strikes deep at the physical foundations and the moral fiber of our national strength.

Another service assistance program of MCMTC is its registration volunteers program which is implemented in all universities and colleges in Metro Manila. This program calls for CMT cadets to lead student volunteers in assisting students during enrollment. The program has proved especially helpful to students coming from the provinces.

In order to further expand the community and social involvement of CMT cadets, MCMTC has organized its 'Damayan Organization'. The organization will allow the involvement of the cadets in disaster, rescue, relief, and rehabilitation operations now carried out mainly by the organic elements of the command.

I see a wider involvement for CMT cadets in the core values and institutions of our new democracy. The heart of democracy is the electoral process. That process has been trashed time and again in our country. I cannot remember a time when it was not, even before the dictatorship. We must never allow it to happen again. Our people put their lives on the line during the last elections to underscore the supreme value that elections must have in a vibrant and real democracy. Because elections must be held everywhere in the country, even in the most remote barrios, the work of assuring their integrity is one that can be carried out only by great numbers of committed souls. People must be there at the polling places to watch and step into protect the ballot. The job calls for discipline, perseverance, stamina and courage. These are military virtues. Our people spontaneously displayed them. We want to make sure they are always present in every election. I am therefore suggesting that the AFP give serious consideration to the extensive use of the cadets and cadettes in this noble work; a work that puts the citizen intimately in touch with the core of democracy. We shall have the first elections under a new charter very soon.

The world stood rapt with wonder at how we regained our freedom. I want the world in the same condition when we show how we have used the freedom.

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Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Speech
of**

**Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry**

[Released on July 21, 1986]

REVVING UP THE ECONOMIC ENGINE

Despite gains made since the ouster of former President Marcos on both economic and political fronts, President Aquino deplores that big business has been slow or even reluctant in making significant investments that will give the economy a much-needed push. She tackles grievances: that the Minister of Labor should be replaced (under today's prevailing circumstances, he is the man for the job); that the PCGG is going beyond its bounds (efforts of PCGG have been aimed at preventing illegal transfers of shares, assets and monies); that import liberalization will wreak havoc on the export industry (the need is to make our export industry competitive and efficient).

It is now nearly six months since I spoke to you on February 3rd. How many of us really believed that deliverance was near at hand. I do not know. But it was clear that we were all terribly determined to deliver ourselves from bondage. And that was more important. The determination was even greater after Marcos stole the election from us and we embarked on a campaign of civil disobedience. At this time, a foreign emissary came to me and asked me when I thought our victory would take place. I answered him. Perhaps in three months, maybe six, who knows? All I know, I told him, is that I will not stop whatever the price I would have to pay. He told me, Mrs. Aquino, if you had given me a definite time when you would definitely take power, I would have dismissed your efforts. But now that you tell me realistically that you do not know but that, regardless, you will not stop, I know you will succeed. It is all in the will.

I remember how wildly you cheered when I last spoke to you, when I challenged you to let your voices be heard and let the power of the people be felt. So resounding was your response and that of the rest of our people, that three weeks later I was your President.

Today I come with yet another challenge. This time, the enemy is no longer an aging dictator. It is fear. Fear and its attendant feeling of uncertainty and reluctance. Fear and the failure of the will. The challenge is to overcome this fear and to join hands with your President and your government in rebuilding our nation. I offer no quick dramatic solutions, now any miracles except those that God will work through our hands, which is the same as the miracle at EDSA. Remember that in our unrelenting struggle we followed no pillar of smoke or fire, but only the pillar of our resolve to be delivered from the house of bondage. So what I offer, once again, is a long and difficult struggle with no more certainty of success than faith and perseverance guarantee. But that, as we have learned, is no small surety.

This struggle that must be nourished by faith and determination must also proceed on a clear and fearless understanding of the events that unfolded and are unfolding in our country today. In the spirit of candor with which I led our struggle for freedom, let us pause and take stock.

The then major opposition forces in the country forged a united front to rid the country of the dictatorship and to establish a democracy. Let me repeat that it was a democracy that we collectively sought to establish and not another dictatorship. Neither a dictatorship of power nor a dictatorship of ideas of how to tackle the problems of the nation. We promised effective government, that is true, but effective in its responses to the diverse demands of the people and parties that propelled us to power. These were demands that the dictatorship had ignored and which I pledged sincere efforts to answer. That is why I promised that my government would be one of consultation and not of unilateral direction.

This government reflects, in deliberating on the problems of the nation, the wide diversity of views of the forces that brought it to power. Some people now think that this was a necessary but, as things have turned out, an unfortunate compromise. Those who think this way do not understand democracy, and if their way of thinking spreads, we won't have it for long. What would they have in its place? I ask them.

Where some see weakness and confusion, I see strength in a government that is able to listen to the widest range of views and yet is able to move ahead with the kind of resolve we have adequately demonstrated over the last five months. As was dramatically proven by the fall of the Marcos regime, the strength of a government lies, not in its ability to speak with a single voice, as the Marcos government always did, and with a consistently lying voice at that, but in its ability to keep the trust and confidence of its people. And that ability hinges on the government's willingness to listen to the people. Is the babble of popular voices too distracting for business? Remember that the decline of the Marcos dictatorship was marked by the silence of a people quietly withdrawing their support. They had lost all hope of a hearing.

This government is pledged to listen to the people and strains itself to catch every voice. We make no pretensions at a monopoly of knowledge, unlike Marcos. I have learned more about government from my direct contact with the people and their popular leaders in our consultations than I have from the pundits. Certainly more about their needs and how to go about meeting them given our limited resources.

What I am afraid of is not an increasing number of views but a decreasing ability to heed them all, given the limitations of a pure Presidential government without the benefit of a separate legislature and local governments that are popularly elected and periodically responsible to their constituents.

This is why I have placed such a premium on the swift completion of the drafting of a new constitution. This is why I advised the Constitutional Commission to stick to the work of writing a constitution and not to usurp the legislative and policy-making functions of the representative institutions they are called upon to create. The commissioners were appointed to create the representative institutions of a democracy, institutions in which the preferences of the people would be heard and acted on by the people's duly elected representatives and no others.

I want to preside over a full-blown democracy, with all the proper institutions and agencies in place that will be acutely sensitive to the public pulse. I said I would lead our people but only in the direction they wish to take. What this direction is, from among the many that various sectors of the nation propose, is something that the duly elected representatives will tell us.

The legislative and local elections will give your government the opportunity to present to our people a set of candidates who will assist us in the rebuilding of our nation. It is to be hoped that the mandate we now enjoy at the national level will translate into an equally powerful mandate in the legislative and local government levels, so that the reconstruction of our nation can proceed with full vigor and dynamism and a minimum of obstruction.

In the meantime, my mission is to strengthen the unity that we as a people displayed in the Campaign and Revolution. I want to bring into that unity even the forces that opposed us, who must know that our victory is irrevocable. For we now face a greater and common foe — the underdevelopment and poverty of our country — and the greater challenge of making its material progress commensurate with the spiritual triumph of the Revolution.

It is against this backdrop then that we must assess our progress to date, and our ability to move forward in the future. As we take stock, it is appropriate to recall what we said during the campaign would be our main economic thrusts:

We said we would restore credible leadership through personal example.

We vowed to drastically reduce, if not totally eliminate, graft and corruption in government.

We said we would relentlessly pursue the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses and their cronies. The applause that followed this pledge was deafening.

We said that the focus of our economic policies would be the unemployment problem.

And we said that rural development would be assigned the first priority it has long deserved.

And how have we fared in the five months since we assumed office?

We have reestablished the credibility of the Philippine government not only in the eyes of the Filipino people but before the entire world; this credibility rests not only on a president who, I believe, still enjoys the overwhelming support of the people, but also on cabinet and sub-cabinet appointees who are widely acknowledged to be outstanding, even if also outspoken, men and women of intelligence, integrity, and political sense.

We have significantly reduced the level and pervasiveness of graft and corruption at the higher levels of the bureaucracy. But we have to admit that corruption continues at the middle and lower levels.

We have made very significant gains in our efforts to recover the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses and their cronies. At the very least, we have, to a significant extent, neutralized the residual economic power of the forces of tyranny to make a comeback. We have done the same in the political field through the equally controversial policies of the Ministry of Local Governments.

We have made significant progress in the economic field. The exchange rate has stabilized and we are building our international reserves. We have controlled the inflation rate at very moderate single-digit levels. We have introduced a moderate liquidity into the financial system to allow interest rates to drop to levels that should make investments attractive. We have allowed the benefits of lower oil prices to spread throughout the economy in the form of lower fuel, power and transport costs. We have introduced a tax reform package designed to reduce the burden on those who can least afford it, to shift the burden of taxation toward non-essentials, and to stimulate investments in equities. We have also launched an aggressive program to create new jobs over the next 18 months by embarking on a massive, employment-intensive infrastructure program in the rural areas. This program is the centerpiece of our short-term recovery efforts. It is intended to improve the purchasing power of our rural communities, where 70% of our population lives, and thus increase the demand — and therefore improve the markets — for our agricultural as well as industrial products. This, we believe, is the stimulus needed by our economy to nudge it toward recovery and sustained long-term growth.

Obviously, much more remains to be done. Many more jobs need to be created. We have appealed to the private sector to help us get the economy moving. We have pointed out the obvious. We are a democracy; the rule of law has been reestablished, there is no longer a power in the land that can gobble up by fiat the fruits of your enterprise. These things, you said, had dampened the spirit of enterprise. I remember your wild applause when I vowed to remove the obstacles that prevented you from being the engine of our economy.

I have removed the obstacles, but where is the engine?

Five months ago, the excuse was Marcos. Allow me to change metaphors: you gave me the impression that you did not want to put out your best silver because he might steal it, as he had done everything else. Well, he's gone. So where is it? Perhaps he took it also. Then you should say so. Admit that the private sector no longer has the wherewithal to play a significant part in the economy. But if that is the case, then why has the blame shifted to certain personalities in my government, to the likes of Bobbit Sanchez and Nene Pimentel, to the PCGG commissioners, to Jobo Fernandez and Jimmy Ongpin? At any rate, the small and medium entrepreneurs are still there to hold up this economy, as they have done through all its crisis and predicted collapses. But I like to think that big business will keep its pledge to propel this economy and so I will take your grievances seriously. But because I believe you are intelligent, I will focus on the issues rather than the personalities.

First the labor situation. Addressing myself particularly to those who think that the ultimate solution to our nation's labor problems lies in the replacement of the labor minister, I invite you to reflect on the causes of our present situation.

In my view, the militancy of Philippine labor is the inevitable result of years of economic plunder and mismanagement, from which you all suffered, but from which labor suffered even more. Surely we can once again blame Marcos and his cronies and technocrats, but should we not also look at ourselves? What did we do during those years to protect the interests of our workers? Is it any wonder that they now aspire to protect themselves?

Whatever its roots, the militancy of labor is now a fact of life that we can neither reverse nor suppress. Instead we should respond constructively to the legitimate grievances of labor. We can begin by making a sincere effort to understand their plight; the same kind of understanding want them to have of management's difficulties.

The first step toward understanding is dialogue. The labor ministry's role is that of moderator in this dialogue where the aim is not mutual recrimination but understanding, and then, hopefully, cooperation in finding workable solutions. The labor minister must thus be acceptable not only to employers but also to labor. For suspicions and impasses will continually be referred to him for clarification and resolution. And it is in this context that I reiterate my conviction that Minister Sanchez is the man for the job under today's prevailing circumstances.

The Minister of Labor, of all people, took exception to my Labor Day Speech as being too liberal. I, on the other hand, found a liberal policy just plain practical. And so I overruled him and went ahead and liberalized the labor laws. It was clear to me that industrial peace would not be achieved by draconian legislation. It went against the temper of the times, not to mention the promises of my campaign. It was clear to me, and finally clear to Bobbit, that industrial peace could come about only by the willingness of both sides to submerge some of their conflicting demands for bigger slices of the economic pie in a common effort to first come up with a pie. And that is why I called, and continue to call, for a six-month moratorium on strikes, so that the nascent recovery we are beginning to see can take firm hold. What is needed is dialogue, not adversarial positions. The things that labor and management will not be achieved without dialogue and consensus.

I understand the PCGG is causing you some distress. I am not going to refer to my campaign pledge to go after hidden wealth, a pledge you welcomed with roars of approval. All I am going to ask is two questions: Do you want these thieves to get away with it? Second, why are you worried about the PCGG? Only those who were involved in the robbery of our nation have reason to fear it. But I understand how such a roving commission can cause you distress. It could err and sequester the wrong business, causing irreparable damage. Marcos was in power so long that quite a number of legitimate businesses had to let him in for protection. I understand this expediency. But as a result of it, the Commission has found it necessary to involve itself, through its agents and nominees, in the corporate affairs of the sequestered enterprises in order to prevent illegal transfers of shares, assets, and monies. This has apparently caused alarm, due perhaps to a misunderstanding of the Commission's motives. Let me state therefore that the PCGG will disengage from all sequestered enterprises at the earliest time possible. I hope that a definition of the PCGG's role, that is compatible with the political normalcy we shall soon attain, will emerge from the current discussions about its role. But it should be clear from my assurances that we will not relent in hunting down the wealth that was stolen from our people. I will give one more assurance. If you come across any abuse of the Commission's mandate, either send it to the press or send it to my office. Just do me the favor of respecting my intelligence by providing some proof.

Let us now shift to another issue which I know you are deeply concerned about. This is the issue of import liberalization. This issue has been extensively debated. Not only under my government, but even under the previous one. This government is for import liberalization because we are convinced that in the long run this is probably the best way of ensuring the emergence of world-competitive and efficient enterprises. I think the direction is, by and large, accepted as the appropriate one to take with a few persuasive caveats here and there. There is a strong argument that what we need is FAIR trade rather than free trade, and that the nations held up as models of development never practiced free trade in its pure form. But the really violent disagreement appears to be over the timing. I have been told that the proposal to erect high tariff walls to ease the transition has been met with less than wild enthusiasm by businessmen who know how porous tariff walls can be.

There is obviously need for further discussion as to the timing and scope of our liberalization thrust and I hereby direct the Minister of Trade and Industry to personally sit down with the PCCI and come up with reasonable recommendations in the context of our economy's needs as well as our ongoing discussions with the IMF. I would like to receive these final joint recommendations by the end of this month.

The list of issues you asked me to tackle today extends far beyond those I have discussed. I think I have spoken enough. Suffice it to say that these issues will get the same attention.

In closing, let me restate my firm conviction that your government has done what it can to set the stage for economic recovery. I think it is high time that the private sector does its part. But this is a free society. You can choose to gripe instead.

Business wants to think of itself as the engine, of the economy. But it looks to me like this engine wants to be pushed until it finds a gentle downward slope where it can coast along without effort. Well, for your information, we are at the foot of a steep mountain and the flood waters are rising.

My friends in the business community: when I agreed to stand as candidate for the Presidency, I did so with the assurance that I could count on all of you for your support, not only in the campaign, but more critically in the tortuous effort of turning this country around. That support has not been forthcoming. Let's get one thing clear. The support is not for me, but for your country, for yourselves and your posterity unless you all want to be immigrants. This is your only country. You sometimes give the impression that it is not. That you can afford to stand back and see how this little country turns out before committing yourselves to it. You complain of the uncertainty. I am telling you that it is uncertain because you are uncommitted. This country will be what you, and the rest of our people, make of it. If you want it to be something you can live with, or better still, prosper in, then make yourselves a part of it now.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Philippine National Bank's 70th Anniversary

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Philippine National Bank's 70th Anniversary**

[Released on July 22, 1986]

LAUNCHING A PEOPLE'S NATIONAL BANK

The PNB was established to counterweight the foreign banks that dominated the financial system. As the premier bank of the agricultural sector, it helped in the growth of the Philippine economy.

Now as it turns 70, President Aquino believes that with the right leadership the PNB can again be instrumental in the country's bid for economic recovery.

The anniversary theme of PNB is Working Together for Economic Recovery and President Aquino reminds them that in her administration, economic recovery means "rescuing the majority of the Filipino people from the poverty and underemployment that wastes their potential for prosperity and growth."

PNB's new mission is' to return to its traditional role as the mainstay of agricultural development; friend of the small farmers and small entrepreneur — be the People's Bank.

When Joker gave me the PNB invitation, he said, "If you think EDSA was a miracle, look at this: PNB is turning 70." I have had to work with cynics. But I am not surprised that the PNB has endured this long, even if it has to celebrate this anniversary in black. The PNB had built up such a fund of goodwill from the days of its establishment that only another year of Marcos could have finally done it in.

The PNB had a long and venerable history, closely tied to the aspirations of our people to be independent. Independent not only in the sovereign sense, but equally importantly, in the sense of being economically strong and progressive. It was established as a counterweight to the foreign banks that dominated the financial system. For many years, it served as a central bank. It was the custodian of other banks' reserves, the sole depository of the government, and the clearing house of the banking system. Alone among the banks, it had powers to issue circulating notes. It played a key role in the post-war reconstruction of our country.

The PNB was the premier banker of the agricultural sector, which amounts to saying it banked the Philippine economy. Without the PNB, it is doubtful whether those traditional industries that were the main props of our economy, such as sugar and coconut, could have grown as rapidly as they did. That these industries did not have the prudence and, in many cases, the honesty, to build up wisely from such fortunate beginnings is no reflection of the public service rendered by the bank.

The PNB, like all instrumentalities of government, does not make policy. It is an instrument of policy made elsewhere. The reckless and profligate course it took under the previous regime should not therefore be blamed on it. What the PNB needed was a leadership worthy of its tradition of service. That is why I appointed Ting Jayme to be its president.

I felt that he was one of those who could bring the spirit of the new morality and patriotism that triumphed at the Revolution into such necessary instruments of Philippine progress as the PNB. He is the right man to lead you in the new course we have charted for it.

The theme of your anniversary celebration is Working Together for Economic Recovery. It would be good to remind ourselves that economic recovery and progress has been amplified, under this administration, to mean more than mere advances in production, income and the usual economic and financial variables. Our chief concern is rescuing the majority of our people from the poverty and underdevelopment that wastes their potential for prosperity and growth.

Within the context of this broad goal, the PNB's new mission is to return to its traditional role as the mainstay of agricultural development, the friend of the small farmer and the small entrepreneur. To be the people's bank. Its extensive branches network and long experience in agri lending argues strongly for its success in this mission.

I understand, however, that a new direction is not enough. It must be reconditioned for its daunting mission. Your management has already submitted a rehabilitation plan which is at present being considered by the government. Essentially, the plan calls for the transfer of the bank's non-performing assets and liabilities to the government, so that the Bank can have a fresh start. Whatever the final configuration of the plan, I can assure you that you will have an easier time with your NPAs than I will with mine.

We pledge that the Bank will never again be misused by government. But we won't always be the government. I advise you therefore to use this period to rebuild your tradition of integrity and competence, and build it firmer than it has ever been in the past. Make this Bank impervious to anything but a sense of patriotism and responsibility for the common good.

I would like to congratulate you on your anniversary. I will not wish you success, because I know it is certain to come. I have put Joker Arroyo here as Chairman to keep me posted of the certain progress of this institution, since I know Ting Jayme to be also a very modest man. You have all the ingredients of success: professionalism, integrity, and leadership. I know that it will not be long before our people can again lean on the PNB for the requirements of Philippine progress, without fear that it will give way, and with every confidence that it will willingly support them.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the opening of the Ninoy Memorabilia Exhibits

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the opening of the Ninoy Memorabilia Exhibits**

[Released on August 4, 1986]

REMEMBERING NINOY

Ninoy lives in the Filipino of the February Revolution, a Filipino who is zealous of his rights, fierce in the protection of his liberties, alert to the needs of his country and dedicated to its progress.

I want to thank you all for helping me to open Ninoy's memorabilia. It is important that you are here with me on this occasion. For when Ninoy was lost to his family, he became a part of you for whom he gave his life. I will not talk about the family's grief except to say that for myself, having lost him on the tarmac, I saw him again in the revolutionary movement that his death released. I saw the face of Ninoy in the massive crowds that pressed unrelentingly for change but always with a gay, lighthearted spirit. And he was smiling. No, it wasn't the smile of a man getting back at his enemies, but of a man who loved people so much there could not be a higher destiny for him than to become their animating spirit toward liberation. Every time the people scored a victory by a demonstration whose massiveness paralyzed the government, by an electoral turnout so huge it could not be covered over by cheating, and finally by that remarkable revolution that had an entire nation turning its back as one on the dictator until he had to leave like an uninvited guest, I smiled to return the smile on Ninoy's face. A smile that said, I told you, the Filipino is worth dying for. For as long as his spirit is in our people, I haven't lost him and I shall not need this memorabilia to remind me. But it may not be the same for others. And so we have this exhibit of the things that accompanied Ninoy in his life. But what really registers his presence most is not any of these things, but what you were in the glory days of the campaign and the election, and, of course, during the four days in February. Ninoy lives in the Filipino of the February Revolution, a Filipino who is jealous of his rights, fierce in the protection of his liberties, alert to the needs of his country and dedicated to its progress. To the end of developing more such Filipinos, I am pleased to announce the Ninoy Aquino High School Scholarship grant. Each year, for four years, fifteen Filipinos will receive a four-year grant. The grant will include tuition fees, books, school supplies and a monthly allowance.

Nine boys will be accommodated in Ateneo, De La Salle and San Beda; three in each school. Six girls will study in U.P. These are the schools where Ninoy studied. These schools will determine the scholars' entrance requirements and qualifications.

I can think of no better place to build a memorial to Ninoy than in the hearts and minds of the people he loved.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on claiming God's promise

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On claiming God's promise**

[Delivered at Martha's Vineyard, August 5, 1986]

CLAIMING GOD'S PROMISE

There are many miracles; God-sent beyond question. But they all happen through the work of men.

I have often likened our journey to freedom to the flight of the Jews from the land of Pharaoh. Indeed, like the people of Moses, we were blessed by God with a series of miracles. And our Pharaoh, against his wishes, and despite his power, was forced to let us go.

But we who study the Bible know that there are many more chapters after the deliverance of the Jews. As they marched into the unknown, seeing their destiny only by Faith, they faltered. When the land of milk and honey did not materialize over the horizon, they grew impatient and grumbled. When their supplies ran low and the way grew harder, they complained against Moses and yearned to return to the easy, if shameful, life of servitude. They had witnessed great miracles, but when challenges and difficulties confronted them, they recoiled, forgetting the power of their God.

We too are not long into our journey to seek a better, more prosperous land for ourselves and our children. But already there are those beset by doubt as to how we shall get there, or whether we shall get there at all. Like the Jews in the desert, hardships have dimmed our memories and shaken our faith.

I too can become prone to such moments: to times when the problems of our country seem beyond solution. Yet I wake and step forward each day, strengthened by Christ's promise: "Seek and you shall find, knock and the doors shall be opened, ask and you shall receive." For it is said in Matthew that we are no less than children of God. And when a child asks his father for bread, no parent would give him a stone instead. For if fathers on earth can be generous and trustworthy, what more of our Father in heaven?

Moses did not despair in his journey, though it lasted 40 years. But I can understand the despair of his people. For God had led them forth out of the house of bondage by His hand, which they could see. And so, when He withdrew His hand, they became unsure of themselves and afraid. It was not they who conquered the hostile tribes, but God who conquered and who all but carried them over the endless miles. But I cannot understand the despair of a people whose deliverance was worked by God through the work of their own hands, as those hands were made strong by the power of their Faith. For that is what happened here. There were many miracles; God-sent beyond question. But they all happened through the work of men.

When we prayed in our bondage for the miracle of deliverance, what did we say? We prayed that our people would one day find the courage and the strength to strike the shackles from our wrists and rise up against the tyrant. Did we not keep telling ourselves, when will the Filipinos rise? It was a strange prayer since it was the Filipinos themselves who were saying it. But God understood. And so, when He answered, He did not send plagues to strike fear into the

heart of Pharaoh and a pillar of fire to lead our people to freedom. Instead He put the courage to break their bonds into the hearts of our people and the Faith to persevere for the right into their breasts, even as He put, at the fateful moment, compassion and understanding into the hosts of their oppressor. As a result, when the moment of truth came, our people stood their ground on Faith and love, and the hosts of Pharaoh that were sent against them responded in the end with sympathy and compassion.

By working the miracle of our deliverance through us, God conferred on us a greater honor than if He had carried us out to freedom on His hand. He treated us no longer like a child snatched from the brink by his nurse but like mature men to demonstrate his wit, and like the angels that Thomas More said God created to reflect his glory. But more than honor, God gave us the permanent assurance that we can achieve what right we set out to do. If He had worked external miracles, then we should always feel unsure of ourselves and afraid for our future. But God revealed the secret of achievement. It lies in a will ready at hand to whoever has Faith.

Although God worked the miracle of deliverance largely through the efforts of ordinary men and women of faith, His hand was as surely there as if we had seen it. As God's spirit moves us from within, His hand, cleared the way for us from without. It was that hand that put the words into the mouth of Marcos when he called for his doom through Snap Elections. It was that hand that prevented bloodshed at EDSA, parrying the Pharaoh's heavy hand with the hand that revealed itself before an astonished world in the faith-charged multitudes of People's Power. In those fateful months of our Exodus, People's Power was the manifestation, liberty and democracy the consequence. But always, Faith was the active principle.

May I ask you today to pray for the strengthening of our Faith. Pray that we may not forget the witness of the past years, when in our need we sought God's kingdom and righteousness, and in answer all these blessings were added unto us. Please pray that in the midst of our quest for national peace and recovery, we may not become discouraged, peevish, rebellious and unchristian. May we cling to the first battlecry of our revolution: that it is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness. May we always be sensitive to that voice within us that urges us to act, but always in love. And when we pray for these things, may we do so with utmost Faith.

In the letter of James to the tribes of Israel, he says: "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds: because you know that the testing of your Faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking in anything."

A faith tempered by trials accepts that God has dignified us to be the instruments of His will, not just the passive receivers of His grace. We must have Faith in praying to him for further miracles and other redemptions, but also certain knowledge that the response is in us already. When you lift up your hands to implore another miracle, look at your hands for it is from thence that the answer will come.

May I close with a final passage that I hope might inspire you when you ponder the fate of our country and government. In Saint Paul's letter to Timothy, he writes: "I urge then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone — for kings and for all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives."

If you pray and claim this promise with faith, and if we lend ourselves as instruments for its fulfillment, then we are already destined for times of quiet and peace.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : March 22 – August 5, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the PC-INP Day

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the PC-INP Day**

[Delivered on August 8, 1986]

**CLARIFYING THE ROLE
OF THE PC-INP**

Addressing the Philippine Constabulary and the Integrated National Police on their 85th and 11th anniversaries respectively, President Aquino underscores the chief lesson of the February Revolution: that the only solid foundation of government is the people's consent and cooperation. Tasked with maintaining peace and order in the communities, the PC-INP must recognize this. The mission of these forces is essentially preventive, and as such they must learn to interact well with the communities.

I am happy to be here, for this camp evokes stirring memories of the triumph of the non-violent movement I had launched to depose the dictatorship. Here at EDSA we witnessed and were a part of the fitting climax to that movement: the heartfelt union of military and people in the struggle for Filipino freedom.

Today, as I join the Philippine Constabulary in the celebration of its 85th anniversary, and as I congratulate the Integrated National Police for its 11 years of dedicated service to the nation, I want to point up the chief lesson of the February Revolution: that government rests securely only on the foundation of the people's consent and cooperation.

When we hear it said that a government must be for the people and not the people for the government, we regard this as a statement of democratic principle. It is more than that. It is a statement of fact. If government is not for the people it will not last. The clearer statement really is: a people must be for their government or the government is doomed; doomed to extinction, and long before that doomed to ineffectiveness, which is an even more shameful fate.

This is what happened to the previous government. From August 21, 1983, the people increasingly withdrew their consent and cooperation from the government. The bullet that cut off Ninoy from us, severed the bond between people and government. When this separation took place, we saw who really depended on the other for its life.

The people reacted to the assassination with massive demonstrations and widespread boycotts. Despite the frequency of these actions that paralyzed the government and interrupted economic activity, life for the people went on much as usual except for a sense of higher purpose that filled their lives. The government on the other hand reeled from these blows. Its reform initiatives fell flat and its threats fell on deaf ears. Only Marcos, deep in his palace, did not feel it. He looked around him and counted his armed retainers and concluded that all was well with the government. But as he reassured himself by counting his battalions on the fingers of his hand, the country slipped through his fingers and joined what was becoming a revolution against him.

This was Marcos's big mistake. He equated power with force. Toward the end, I think the dictator lowered his standard of power. He figured, as he counted his battalions again, that so long as they were not against him, he was

alright. He was still their commander and therefore still the President. After all, it was only a small rebel band that had holed up at EDSA.

I do not think Marcos ever realized that you cannot be a real Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces without also being the President of your people. His battallions finally realized this. They did not turn their guns on him. Instead, they joined the Filipino people in turning their backs on him.

And so the old dictator must still be baffled why he is in Hawaii and I am here. He must still be counting the battallions that did not turn against him and must therefore still be for him. That is why he keeps wasting our money calling here long distance. He has not learned that you must first be the President of the People before you can presume to call yourself the Commander of their Armed Forces. He never learned that real power cannot be counted on the fingers of your hands, even if you do it by battallions or services. For true power derives from the multitudes of the people. Lacking their support, you can put your hands to better use packing your bags than counting your soldiers.

That there is only people power if you are talking about real power, I have long known. My whole campaign rested on the simple and daunting strategy of reaching out personally to as many Filipinos as I could to bring them over to the cause of their liberation. It is a lesson that I know you have learned here at EDSA. That with the people, there is nothing you cannot accomplish, whether it is governing the country as President or bringing security to the people as soldiers and police.

The importance I place on drawing upon the power and wisdom of the people makes my job a little more complicated and, some complain, tedious. It is tedious for them. It has only been enriching for me. The pains I take to consult the people are more than offset by the confidence I have in the decisions I finally take.

I note with great satisfaction that you have been charting the same course of popular consultation in drawing up your strategies. No one can know better than the people what they need protection from, and what kind of protection will improve rather than aggravate the security of their communities. Open yourselves to what the people have to say, enlist their support and not just their tolerance of your presence. I address these matters to you because, of all the elements of the Armed Forces, you the constabulary and police forces, have been specially charged and trained to maintain peace and order in our communities. You are shaped to be finer instruments for peacekeeping than the regular armed forces. You are expected not to disrupt, but, on the contrary, to preserve the way of life of the communities placed in your charge. For this reason, interaction with the community becomes an integral part of your work. Your mission is essentially preventive. To prevent threats to the peace from growing to a size that would require the intervention of our regular forces.

In the 85 years of its history, the Philippine Constabulary has, by and large, discharged this mission well. The ignoble use to which the previous government had sometimes put the Constabulary cannot obscure the distinction of its overall performance. Throughout our history there have been many movements that have sought to rend the fabric of our society. Only recently have any of these movements approached their objective. The vast majority of these attempts to break up our society have failed and this is thanks to the work of the Constabulary.

While keeping the peace is a difficult mission in itself, you have another role to play. Because your work requires your intimate involvement in the life of our communities, and because you wear the uniform of authority, you have the added responsibility to reflect the ethic of the new order you serve. This government stands for integrity, selfless service and self-sacrifice. I know that these qualities have generally marked the Constabulary and the police. In many areas of the country, you will stand out as symbols of the national government and its ideals. I have every confidence, my constables, that you will do us justice.

Congratulations to the Philippine Constabulary and the National Police. I wish all success in your missions.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Address of President Corazon Aquino at the dinner with the Generals

Address of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the dinner with the Generals

[Released on August 15, 1986]

OFFERING THE INSURGENTS THE OLIVE BRANCH

President Aquino reiterates that offering the communists the branch of peace is not a sign of weakness on the part of the government: It is an essential part of unifying the nation once again so it can withstand the common enemy, in or out of the social mainstream. Her foreign visits to ASEAN and then to the United States will demonstrate where the country's past is rooted, and where the country's future belongs.

We seem to be seeing a lot of each other. My staff tease me that I seem most at ease in the company of priests and soldiers. Certainly, I am an unapologetic demander of professional excellence and dedication. And these are two vocations that, at their best, require most of these qualities.

You have shown patience and fortitude as we, your political leaders, have sought to bring the insurgents to the negotiating table. This is not an easy process and may well not be a successful one in its conclusions. But it must be tried. This chance for peace was what our people voted for in February. Offering the communists an olive branch is no sign of weakness. Rather it is an essential part of binding our nation together again so that we can withstand the common enemy, be he within or outside our society.

Another part of this political renewal are my foreign visits, first to ASEAN and then to the United States. The first demonstrates to our regional partners that we know where our past is rooted and where our future belongs. The second allows me to strengthen the bond with our oldest ally. I think the administration in Washington understands that more than a government changed here in February: We regained our national pride.

Whatever our economic difficulties, I will not be approaching Washington as a supplicant but as an ally and an equal.

The visit will, I believe, dramatically demonstrate to our friends abroad, and perhaps to opponents at home, how complete a new leaf has been turned over in Philippine national life. Just a year ago to imagine the Philippine President would be invited to address the Joint Houses of Congress would have been unthinkable.

Now we can all hold our heads high in the world, conferring as much honor as we receive on occasions like those. Our armed forces can hold their heads high also. You have played a loyal, and many of you, a heroic part, in the months of our national rebirth.

May I also say that a professional armed forces cannot run on commitment and honor alone. I think you all know how seriously my government is examining how, even with the present austerity, the pay and conditions of our troops can be improved. I am committed to this.

Does one congratulate a new general? I think so. To all of you the prayers of myself and our people. May you hold up the honor and integrity of our nation and help me bring peace to our land.

Some say peace is not possible. They must be the same ones who said that Cory will never be President and democracy will never come back. If you told me that peace is impossible, I would say to you what Bonaparte told

one of his generals: “You write to me that it’s impossible; the word is not French.” I would say to you, “The word is not Filipino,” as our joint efforts showed early this year.

The French prescription for victory is: “Audace, audace, toujours audace.” And Patton, taking off from that, said that with audacity nothing is impossible in war And so in peace, nothing is impossible either if we have the courage to dare. At the same time as I ask you to renew your pledge to give peace a chance, let me assure you that I have no intention of allowing the enemy to make a peace table out of the corpse of our Christian republic.

To all of you, to my new generals, and to our great nation, that you have dedicated your lives to defending, I hold up my glass.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Opening of the Museo ng Malacañang

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Opening of the Museo ng Malacañang**

[Released on August 16, 1986]

OPENING THE PALACE TO THE PEOPLE

The Museo ng Malacañang stands as a symbol of the living reality of a government open to the people and trying to become an integral part of their lives and hopes. This, according to President Aquino, is the only kind of government that will survive and succeed from now on.

I want to thank you for your interest in the Museo ng Malacañang Foundation. The Foundation President, Mrs. Regina Coseteng, and the Chairman of the Membership Committee, Mr. Roberto Romulo, have given you the program and objectives of the Foundation. I wish to express only the larger significance of this project.

The opening of Malacañang Palace to the public as a museum and as a historical site achieves one of the most important goals of those who dreamed and fought for Filipino freedom. Before the opposition had decided on a definitive course of action to seize power and restore democracy in this country, and even before I had accepted to lead the effort, it was widely held that the new government could not do better than throw the Palace open to the people. The paralysis of Philippine society and government, the inability of that government to do anything but steal for its private benefit, was traced to the distance that this Palace created between the people and their government. Its inaccessibility, the mystery of what it contained and what transpired here, strengthened the popular belief that government can only be a bane and no boon to their lives. This one gesture of opening the Palace to the people brings people and government together in a bond of mutual trust that should give enduring strength and confident direction to our country.

Previous governments had cordoned off Malacañang for security reasons. My predecessor denied even street access to this Palace and filled its grounds with troops. This was a terrible mistake. What little gain he made in his personal security was totally erased by what he lost in popular trust. There just isn't enough room in this park for the troops you would need to continue governing a people whose support and cooperation you had lost.

What we have done by opening the Palace is just a replication of the events of February where two things of great political importance were shown. The first is that real power must be rooted in popular support. The second is that nothing can offer better security than the people. You must remember that when the mutineers in Camps Aguinaldo and Crame got wind of the President's intention to take military action against them, their correct impulse was to throw open their gates and let in the people.

Some people think that this idea of a Museo ng Malacañang in the same grounds as the seat of power is a security nightmare. It is not. It is the ultimate security. I do not want any protection from the people. On the contrary, the only protection in which I have confidence is that which they alone can give.

The Museo ng Malacañang is not just the symbol but the living reality of a government open to the people, and trying to become an integral part of their lives and hopes. Given the high degree of politicization that 14 years of oppression and three years of glorious struggle have injected into our people, this is the only kind of government that will survive and succeed from now on.

I want you therefore to appreciate the importance of the project that has been entrusted to you: to preserve the symbolism and reality of our new democracy.

I wish to thank the Board of Trustees of the Foundation for the tremendous amount of time and energy they have so generously poured into the establishment of this Foundation. But, most of all, I wish to thank all of you here today for your support.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the TOYM Awarding Ceremony

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the TOYM Awarding Ceremony**

[Released on August 19, 1986]

AWARDS SHOULD GO TO THE RIGHT PEOPLE

The President believes that awards, whether given by the government or by civic organizations, must be given to those who really deserve them: recipients can either give distinction to, or disgrace, the awards they receive. At the TOYM awarding ceremony, she explains why she supports the idea of honoring excellence in the young, and informs the gathering about her move to refurbish the honors and laurels of the Republic.

Awards are intended to honor their recipients, but, if you think carefully about it, it is the recipients who give distinction to the awards they receive. Twenty-five years ago, Ninoy Aquino received the TOYM award. Between then and the present, quite a few other good men received it and a number of scoundrels as well. I point this out for two reasons.

One, it is good to honor excellence in the young. A person should know, before time has spent all his powers, what he has done right and well, while he has the energy to continue and build on that achievement. It is a mistaken prejudice to confine honor to a person's later years. The drive for excellence is fueled by the thirst for honor and this is nowhere stronger than among the young. Why waste the chance to bring out the best in the race?

The second reason is that awards in this country have been cheapened rather than hallowed by time. Remember what I said about the recipients distinguishing their awards? The high honor of a Nobel Prize arises from its success over time in maintaining the purity of the intention behind it and equally from the distinguished list of the people who received it, and not just from the fact that an explosives manufacturer had the remorse to create it and the wealth to fund it. Even so, recipients can disgrace the awards they receive.

A lot of this happened during the Marcos years when there was a systematic attempt to cheapen everything of real value in our country. I remember hearing people dismiss the courage of the Opposition as insanity, and its persistence as the mark of born losers. A lot of these oppositionists had received high honors under the old Republic and they saw these honors distributed indiscriminately among people who rightfully belonged in jail.

I have started to refurbish the honors and laurels of the Republic. Two weeks ago, I rescued the Legion of Honor from the shameful places in which I found it, around the necks of people who should have been execrated rather than decorated. I therefore conferred it on Senator Lorenzo M. Tañada, whose acceptance of the award raised it once more to its rightful place as the highest civilian honor the Republic can confer. I am going to work on the others, too. I am sure I shall not lack for heroes given the scope of the February Revolution and length of the struggle that preceded it.

As with official honors, so with a great number of awards given by civic organizations. Time-servers have sat on their boards of judges and used these honors to cover up vices rather than point up virtues.

It was therefore with great pleasure that I read the list of the 1985 TOYM Awardees. The selections honor the judges and restore the original lustre to this prized object of youthful striving. To the awardees, I say that the harsh conditions surrounding your particular achievements—a country on the brink of civil war, an economy in ruins—will mark you out for the special admiration of our people for many years to come.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Address of President Corazon Aquino on Recalling Ninoy Aquino's Supreme Sacrifice

Address of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On Recalling Ninoy Aquino's Supreme Sacrifice

[Held at Sto. Domingo Church, August 21, 1986]

RECALLING NINOY AQUINO'S SUPREME SACRIFICE

Three years after the assassination of her husband Ninoy Aquino, addressing the throng at Sto. Domingo Church once more, the President recalls the momentous events that shook the country: the millions who poured into the streets to pay tribute to Ninoy, the strengthening of the Opposition, the Presidential election campaign of 1986, the countless who said NO to the Marcos dictatorship, and the heroism of Namfrel volunteers and those who gave up their lives for freedom, like Evelio Javier.

It is hard to believe that it was only three years ago that we first gathered here for Ninoy's funeral Mass. We set off from here on the procession to his last resting place, some three million of us, marching in the heat and then in thunderstorm, in that moving tribute to his courage and martyrdom. I had sat in this church with a weight like a stone in my heart. The man who had given his family the strength even to bear his sufferings lay there, the flag draped over the coffin. But, as the march progressed, I felt that weight lifted from me by the millions of hands that Ninoy's spirit had infused with courage. He had not failed us even in death.

It was from this church, too, that we set forth for Liwasang Bonifacio for the "kick off of our seemingly quixotic campaign to beat the dictator in his own game of a Snap Election. And it was here, also, that we assembled again, the Sunday after he stole the elections, to thank God for our victory. For we were victorious. Victorious in the renewal of a nation rededicated to the ideals of freedom, justice, and democracy that had attended its birth. Victorious in the moral courage shown by the natural leaders of the people that emerged from the Church and the Opposition. Victorious, above all, in the raw physical courage of the ordinary people who, in the millions, staked their lives, with the abandon of seasoned warriors or the simplicity of faith, for just the hope of democracy. In all this, Ninoy's spirit was clearly at work. God in his mercy had finally granted Ninoy's incessant prayer to be one with a race that had rediscovered its pride.

Almost every homily preached after Ninoy's death gave voice to the conviction of our faith that new life rises from a martyr's death. The Gospel speaks of the seed that must fall to the ground and die to bring forth an abundant harvest. Ninoy himself, citing Gandhi, had called the willing sacrifice of the innocent "the most powerful answer to insolent tyranny that has yet been conceived by God and man." And as Ninoy rose to go with the military escort that had come for him and read his death in their eyes, he knew that it had fallen to his lot to give flesh and blood to these words: his flesh and his blood.

The days and months which came after August 21, 1983, revealed the truth of these beliefs. They made manifest another belief that Ninoy held: that courage is not so much instilled by preachment as caught by the contagion of example. The days and months in the three years that followed revealed still another truth: that courage is fortified by practice and sustained by faith and prayers.

During the days of the campaign, and the time of the elections, I saw the truth of these beliefs verified in the millions who had found the courage to say, "No more!" to the dictatorship. I saw it in the thousands of NAMFREL workers who labored tirelessly and at grave risk to bring out this message of rejection in all its shattering truth. I saw it in the sacrifice of Evelio Javier and in the millions who offered to make the same sacrifice, with their children in their arms, when they threw themselves around the camps at EDSA. I saw the truth of these beliefs in a multitude of

acts of faith and courage that are now a part of the theology of our faith, and that must remain the vital force of our new democracy.

One man sprawled on the tarmac; one seed fallen to the ground, watered with blood. Tyranny had sowed a bullet and reaped a revolution. One man had worked the reluctant field of his people, finally threw in his life, and brought us home a harvest of freedom.

I accept with deep gratitude these gifts of medicine from the Spanish government and people. They are among the things we need most urgently to bind up the wounds of my people, wounds inflicted by long neglect and conflict. I shall cause these medicines to be distributed to the Ministries of National Defense, Health and Social Services.

The relationship between Spain and the Philippines is not one of those contrived and self-conscious relationships based on mutual self-interest. But of two old friends who don't really have to depend on each other. But the other one is always there in a time of need, without need for calling, as is the way with friends. We will not forget your unsolicited and unstinting support for the cause of Philippine democracy. And now these gifts. I won't say more; the best feelings are left unspoken between eternal friends.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on a State Banquet hosted by the President of the Republic of Indonesia and Madame Suharto

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On a State Banquet hosted by the President of the Republic of Indonesia and Madame Suharto**

[Delivered in Indonesia, August 24, 1986]

STRIVING FOR UNITY IN DIVERSITY

During a state banquet hosted by the President of the Republic of Indonesia and Madame Suharto, President Aquino says that to seek unity in diversity (“Bhinneka Tunggal Ika”), as the Indonesians have done, is a noble task. She praises Indonesia’s achievements in food production. The Philippines likewise is giving priority to agriculture, with the aim of achieving self-reliance in food production and establishing a solid basis for industrial growth. It will also continue to make reforms and repair in all areas, despite the difficulties.

Permit me at the outset to express my profound appreciation for the invitation of your Excellency the President of the Republic of Indonesia and Madame Suharto to visit this country and enjoy its kind hospitality. This invitation demonstrates the friendship and attention that mark the association of our two countries and it is with a sense of great pride and respect that I am able, on behalf of my people, to renew that friendship today.

Further, I would like to take this opportunity, together with all the Filipino people, to convey my sincere congratulations to the Republic of Indonesia, which has just recently, on August 17th, commemorated the 41st anniversary of its proclamation of independence. The accomplishments of this nation have been great, and its pride well deserved.

The very gracious and warm reception that has been extended to me this evening and during my stay in Indonesia is no small measure of the special relationship enjoyed by our two countries. This relationship has been shaped by the many goals and aspirations that we share and by the similarities that we are fortunate to enjoy.

Ours are both cultures of great diversity, rich in custom and history. We believe, as you do, that it is an ennobling task to seek unity in diversity: “Bhinneka Tunggal Ika.” Ours are both countries and nations proud of our heritage, vigilant in the defense of our independence and of our freedom – for freedom is the birthright of every nation and independence is the product of struggle.

And ours are both countries striving for a better life for our peoples.

This is not a matter of economic development alone, for the process of growing as a society and as a nation involves many facets of development. Nor is it a matter of growth just for the sake of growth, for to pursue such a course is to pursue no course at all. Rather, we are seeking to develop in a manner consistent with the fundamental values of our race and culture, informed by the sad lessons of our recent past, and adapted to the challenges of the future.

Finally, ours are states whose tasks reach beyond the confines of our territories to the well-being of the broader communities of which we are a part. In the birth of ASEAN, we have seen the association of member nations determined to provide for the stability and peace of the region and the prosperity and happiness of its peoples. Further, we each strive for the creation of an order in the world which is based on independence, abiding peace, and social justice. Indeed, these high ideals are enshrined in the preamble of your Constitution.

It is said that Indonesia is a fighting nation, a nation of fighters committed to upholding the ideals of the nation. These emerged from Indonesia’s struggle for independence, even as its fighting spirit was tempered in the fires of

that struggle. We too have known the suffering of external intervention, and we have recently emerged from our own struggle to remain true to ourselves and to the aspirations that underlie our society. And we recognize that this is part of a struggle that has no end because it is in striving to realize ideals that we mark our progress as a nation.

If, therefore, our fundamental concerns reveal a kinship greater than the natural affinity of race and proximity, we may consider ourselves and future generations fortunate. For this kinship holds the promise of ever increasing cooperation, and affords the opportunity to gain insight from the experiences of each other. We may draw lessons from our difficulties and comfort from our success.

It is in this spirit that I would like to consider the cornerstone of our countries' respective economic policies and that is agriculture. Allow me to express our profound admiration for Indonesia's achievements in food production. Following a carefully planned series of 5-year development plans that established agriculture as the focal point and prime mover of development efforts. Indonesia has succeeded, by dint of hard work and responsible leadership, in doubling its food production in the past 15 years. This is part of the development movement in Indonesia which takes into account three essential elements known as the trilogy of development: attaining equitable development, economic growth, and national stability. If Indonesia has given priority to the agricultural sector, this has been with the intention of raising the income and well-being of the millions of farmers and their families who form the largest segment of Indonesian society.

Similarly, the agricultural and rural sector of Philippine society must be given the utmost attention so that the 70 percent of our people who constitute our rural population can gain their rightful share of the nation's wealth and purchasing power. The objective is to achieve self-reliance in food production and establish a sound foundation for industrial growth. Therein lies the core of our recovery and development strategy.

The Philippine program of recovery is founded on the rebuilding of its democratic institutions and traditions which can alone provide stability to the political system. Mechanisms to hasten that process are now in place.

As you may be aware, in June of this year we entrusted a 49-person constitutional commission with the mandate to prepare a draft constitution for the country. This draft, soon to be completed, shall be considered by the Filipino people and, if accepted in a national referendum, shall become the fundamental law of the land. Thereafter we shall have an elected legislature to represent and fashion laws for the Filipino people. These will represent important steps in securing the kind of responsible leadership that will assure the political and economic stability of the Philippines over the long term.

These qualities, of course, are already exhibited by Indonesia to a remarkable degree. For hand in hand with carefully executed development plans, the Indonesian economy has been prudently managed. Even in the face of economic adversity caused by falling commodity prices, the Indonesian government has gained praise from its creditors and international financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank. Inflation in Indonesia is well under control, the foreign debt is within manageable proportions, and foreign exchange reserves are substantial. Indonesia has shown itself capable of adapting to changing economic conditions while maintaining the trust of the international banking and financial community. Unfortunately, it was profligacy rather than prudence that marked the management of the Philippine economy. But I believe that we have done our part to regain that trust. We excised that profligate management with the care of surgeons working on a patient whose life hung in the balance, careful not to inflict any damage to an already fragile system. We have immensely increased our international reserves, stabilized the exchange rates, effected fiscal reforms, renegotiated our debts with our international creditors, and have started on a massive employment generation program to immediately address the chief affliction of our society's mass poverty. All this while laboring under a 26 billion dollar debt that eats half our export earnings to be serviced and is nowhere reflected among the resources at the disposal of our economy. Indeed, we shall need more than trust from that community; we shall need understanding and sympathy, even as we shall need the encouragement of friends like Indonesia.

We shall continue to make reforms and repair in all areas, knowing fully the difficulties that we now face and addressing them with patience and foresight. We shall raise the funds required to fuel our economy from both

domestic and foreign sources. We shall honor our debts and foster an environment in which business and enterprise may flourish. We shall address the needs of the present and establish a sound foundation for the future.

The Philippines now seeks to rejoin its ASEAN neighbors on the path to economic, social and political progress. Nineteen years ago, representatives of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand gathered in Bangkok with the desire “to establish a firm foundation for common action to promote regional cooperation in Southeast Asia in the spirit of equality and partnership and thereby contribute towards peace, progress, and prosperity in the region.” To the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, we renew our pledge of support. Its purposes of accelerating economic growth, social progress, and cultural development in the region and furthermore of promoting regional peace and stability continue to hold great promise for the future.

To this ASEAN vision of cooperation and amity, Indonesia and the Philippines bring a long history of friendship, support, and sharing of common goals that has had the effect of a catalyst on the ASEAN effort to achieve the same things.

As of today, our two countries have forged no less than 43 bilateral agreements on subjects ranging from extradition to the purchase of oil. The Indonesian government has also consistently extended assistance to the Philippines. We deeply appreciate the efforts of Indonesia to ensure the continuity of our rice and oil supplies during critical times. We are in the same way grateful for her endless patience in allowing our use of the Palapa satellite. To archipelagoes like Indonesia and the Philippines, satellite communication is indispensable for the promotion of national unity and development.

Direct interaction among our peoples is healthy and increasing. In certain areas, they have become important enough to merit regulation by mutual agreement of our governments. A good example is our flourishing border trade.

We have also adopted common approaches to the economic challenges confronting us. Indonesia and the Philippines joined efforts in the adoption of the Archipelagic Doctrine by the International Convention on the Law of the Sea in order to take advantage of the doctrine’s infinite economic implications for our respective countries.

But nowhere has Indonesian-Philippine solidarity found more eloquent and higher expression than in the commitment to the ASEAN vision. Although our two countries are the largest members of ASEAN, we have consistently honored by faithful practice and supported its procedure of decision by consensus among equals. Without doubt, this has contributed greatly to the growing influence of the Association.

We are proud that ASEAN will commemorate its 20th anniversary next year by holding a summit conference in Manila. We believe that it is appropriate to consider fresh avenues and ideas, particularly in the fields of trade and industry, to give greater momentum to ASEAN. Let us invest the organization of our region with all our efforts in order that it may continue to play the valuable role that its history has led us to expect.

I now stand before you holding the reins of a free Republic. We have emerged from a turmoil that brought us to the edge of calamity but that has provided us with a renewed faith in our capacity to overcome our problems and realize the full potential of our nation. And as we set out on our new course, we are heartened by the confidence and support of the Indonesian nation. Recognizing that the interests of our two countries, and those of the region, are closely intertwined, we trust and believe that we will work even more closely together to achieve the ideals of our nations.

In this spirit, I ask you to stand and join me in a toast to the continued good health of President Suharto, the progress of his great country under his leadership, the special friendship of our two nations, and the flourishing brotherhood of the peoples of ASEAN.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the ASEAN Economic Ministers' Meeting

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the ASEAN Economic Ministers' Meeting**

[Released on August 27, 1986]

**OVERCOMING ASEAN
MEMBERS' SELF-INTERESTS**

To a great extent, the President says, the ASEAN economies have gone their separate ways, emphasizing linkages outside the region and pursuing respective self-interests. Despite this, the members have friendly ties, and the goals of ASEAN have been achieved. The task now is to find renewing gestures of a friendship that will last.

As you know, I have just arrived from visits to two ASEAN countries, Indonesia and Singapore. With the leadership of each country I discussed issues particular to the relationship between the Philippines and that country. But, from both, my people received, in the person of their President, a warmth and depth of affection one could expect only from kinfolk. It was this sentimental outpouring that constituted the ASEAN component of my first official trip abroad. I am sure that I would have encountered the same warm fellowship from the other ASEAN countries, if the pressing duties of my office had not prevented me from extending my trip. So, although I expressed before the ASEAN Ministerial meeting that was recently held in Manila some impatience over the slow progress of ASEAN towards its stated objectives, I must now say that ASEAN will endure regardless of the speed or, I have learned to state things diplomatically, the circumspection with which the Association proceeds towards its objectives. And I have come to appreciate the tremendous value of the mere existence of the Association and the great contribution that a continuing dialogue rooted in durable affection has made to the stability, peace, and, yes, the potential for progress of the region.

I see ASEAN now as the regional analogue of the democracy that my people gloriously reestablished in their country. For the value of a democracy lies not so much in the actual achievement of its present objectives but in the limitless creativity and potential it releases and in the sense of community it fosters. For a democracy is a process of continuing reappraisal and correction, of taking stock from time to time in the belief that the future will always reveal something new that should cause us to reevaluate the steps we have taken and even the goals that we established when we first set out. And this is necessary so that the policies and objectives we set for ourselves do not harden because of long veneration into obstacles to the attainment of our ultimate goals or become distractions from the things we really want.

ASEAN was established as an instrument for fostering regional cooperation. That cooperation, it was felt, would contribute greatly to the economic growth of the particular members of the Association. The progress of each particular country in the region would in turn contribute to its general stability and peace.

If we take this progression of steps as a complete statement of the meaning of ASEAN, then we might well feel disappointed at the record. Particular projects of economic complementation have failed or have never even gotten off the ground. To a great extent, the ASEAN economies have gone their separate ways, emphasizing linkages outside the region, in the pursuit of their respective self-interests. Almost all the steps that were deemed essential to

the attainment of ASEAN's objectives and indicative of the respect in which its members held it have largely failed, as I have said. And yet, peace and stability reign in the region. And, as I was delighted to discover in my recent trip, the amity and affection among its members are as strong as one could wish.

Perhaps we have failed to see the forest for the trees. The goals of ASEAN have been achieved. They were there already at her foundation. How else was it possible for our countries to come together and work out the structure of an association dedicated to goals that seemed irrelevant to Southeast Asia at the time? The region was the horrified spectator of a terrible conflict. Never had the world seen such a convergence of so much hate, blood, technology, and anguish in such a small place. We converged in Bangkok to create this Association with a great fund of peace, friendship, and stable affections for one another already in our hearts. We gathered to reassure one another that these good feelings were very much alive and created the ASEAN to serve as the expression of those feelings and as an instrument to make sure that they will abide.

What else is the meaning of efforts at complementarity among economies that are so much alike? So much alike because we come from one family and live in neighboring countries that naturally share nearly identical natural features. The best and brightest of ASEAN's minds bent their intellects to refute the economic wisdom against the integration of the region's economies. That is very Asian and democratic as well. For it is the way of Asians who are deep friends to go out of their way to strengthen a friendship that needs no improvement. This is also the way of democracy. For in the freedom it guarantees, some of us can thrive better if we go our separate ways but we don't. We don't because, in addition to the private fruits of freedom, we wish to enjoy as well the incomparable joy and fulfillment of community.

And so I return from my ASEAN journey bringing back the greatest advantage and benefit that I could have hoped from it. I bring back word of the enduring friendship and affection among the peoples of our region. Now I see the meaning of my ASEAN journey. It was as though I had told my friends and fellow countrymen here that I was leaving merely to visit our friends in ASEAN to bring them our well wishes and assuredly bring back their best regards. To peoples who come from a heritage of hate and enmity, this may seem a slight reason for the grave occasion of a state visit, but not to the peoples of ASEAN who have shared a long history of friendship.

And so I say to you, we reached the goals of ASEAN a long time ago, long before its foundation. Our work today is to find renewing gestures of a friendship that is certain to abide. I know that this message, instead of discouraging you with the redundancy of your tasks, will inspire you to work harder to bring the economies of the region as close together as our hearts.

What I have told you today is merely the unspoken truth of our long standing relations that I have come to fully appreciate. And you will forgive me, I hope, for the excitement and delight of my discovery.

Welcome, our friends, to our home.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Alay sa Kawal Foundation

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On the Alay sa Kawal Foundation

[Released on August 29, 1986]

REMEMBERING OF FALLEN SOLDIERS

THE

FAMILIES

Being a widow who also lost a husband “in the front lines,” the President feels a special sympathy for the families of fallen soldiers. Unlike her family, however, the families of fallen soldiers have very little resources. For this reason, there is great need for a project like the Alay sa Kawal Foundation.

I have a special sympathy for the families of our fallen soldiers. I say this not just because these heroes of our new armed forces lost their lives in the service and defense of our new government. I have a special sympathy for them because I too am a widow: I too lost a husband in the front lines.

Ninoy, you might say, was with the advance troops of our people power march to freedom, as your husbands and fathers were in the forefront of the defense of this freedom that we had regained. And like them, he fell in the line of duty. I therefore know the pain of loss, the difficulty of carrying on and keeping the family together when the better and stronger half is no longer by one's side, and the pride of being the surviving heir of a great sacrifice.

But my family is more fortunate than the other bereaved families your organization seeks to assist. We had financial and other resources to draw upon even after the head of our household had passed away. The families of our fallen soldiers are rarely left so secure. I am glad you did not simply choose to observe this sorry state of affairs and shake your heads with regret. You have taken the recourse I hope more of our privileged citizens will take in the future. After seeing, you took action. I am particularly appreciative of the efforts of the volunteers that came forward from the Philippine College of Surgeons, some 65 of them so far, who generously responded to the call of Alay sa Kawal with their free and expert services. These volunteers, among whom are some of the most distinguished names in the medical profession, will supplement the services of the military hospitals on a need basis.

Sabihin ninyo na makulit ako, I have said it before and I will say it again – we shall rebuild and we shall recover only by collective effort and we shall heal our wounds only by the help and care we give one another. The wounds of this nation were self-inflicted. Filipino having hurt brother Filipino, the wounds were deeper than the weapons had reached. Only the ministrations of fellow Filipinos will be able to heal them.

But there is an even better reason why it is important that we reach out and help the people around us who are hurt and suffering. We claim to be a Christian nation, and we point to the February Revolution as a marvelous manifestation of our deep faith. Well, those who claim to have faith, but whose deeds do not manifest it, are really not of the faith at all, according to the book of James. And James goes on to say, “If a brother or a sister is naked and short of daily nourishment, and one of you says to them: ‘Go in peace, keep warm and eat,’ but you do not give them what they need for their bodies, what good does it do? So even faith, if it does not have the acts of faith, is a dead thing in itself.” We should show our faith from our actions.

Or to put this more in the context of the goals of your organization, James also writes: “This is the pure and undefiled worship before our God and Father: to care for orphans and widows in their affliction.” I tell the visitors who come to admire the land and people of the February Revolution that no one can understand what happened here who does not see the role of faith in our lives. The work of the Alay sa Kawal Foundation expresses more than patriotism and civic duty: it is the acting out of our faith in the same manner as our Revolution.

God bless you and I wish you all the success you deserve.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Palanca Awards for Literature

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Palanca Awards for Literature**

[Released on September 1, 1986]

HONORING THE COUNTRY'S WRITERS

On the occasion of the 36th awards night of the Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature, the President pays tribute to the country's writers, recalling that writers had a special place in the heart of her husband Ninoy (who started his career as a journalist). She declares that writers are the people's conscience, and that they must look deep into their hearts and speak truthfully about what they see. Filipino writers today, she concludes, have a great advantage because they are writing for an audience committed to truth and freedom.

Tonight we honor our writers and celebrate the 36th year of the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature. I congratulate this year's winners for their creative works and join them in paying tribute to Mr. Carlos Palanca. His unwavering support for Philippine literature since 1950 bears a bountiful harvest every year in fiction, poetry, and drama. It can truly be said, after more than three decades, that the Palanca Awards are the hallmark and pillar of our flourishing literature.

I am honored and happy to be among writers tonight. Writers occupied a special place in Ninoy's heart. His first job, as you know, was as a newspaperman trying to recapture Filipino heroism in Korea. I myself find among my happiest moments those times when I find solace and inspiration in a writer's work.

Today, we enjoy the blessings of our new-found freedom and face the daunting task of rebuilding our country in order to preserve that freedom in which literature flourishes best. I know that you as writers cherish our country's freedom, and that your works glow with love for our people and our way of life. Behind you is a noble and stirring tradition going back to the first Philippine Revolution, when sword and pen went hand in hand. During the long dark night preceding the February Revolution, our writers were at the forefront too, wielding pens for lack of swords, and unwittingly prefiguring the unarmed revolution that succeeded, where weapons could not, in restoring our freedom.

I am confident therefore that you as writers will continue the good fight, for it is not over. Your first Muse, as with Rizal, is Inang Bayan. You are sensitive to issues of justice and human dignity because all great works of literature rest on the inestimable worth of the human spirit.

Where writers are free, there is the truest freedom. There is no surer sign of a true democracy. People often think that the writer is a non-conformist, an individualist, someone, therefore, whose life and work cannot be relevant to real events and pressing issues. The conclusion is wrong. The premises are necessary. A writer does not write for any particular group or ideology, for otherwise he is not free. He writes for himself, he writes for that part of himself that all men have in common whatever group or ideology has them in its grip. The writer must distance himself even from the very things he loves and believes in, so that he can see clearly and dispassionately the truth about them. It is only by this temporary solitude that he is able to rediscover or create values and weave them into the thread that really binds a people together, the thread of their triumphs and disappointments, their griefs and their joys; that make us recognize each other as brothers.

As all men of good will now join forces in rebuilding our country, you as writers have a very important part to play.

You are the memory of the race. Your stories, poems, and plays endow the history of our nation and the lives of our people with form and meaning. You mourn our failures and celebrate our victories. This is an uncompromising task, for a people is only as wise and strong as its memory.

You are our people's conscience. You look deep into our hearts and speak truthfully of what you see. Your vision is not distorted by dogma or prejudice, not even your own. In this, you are selfless. You speak for those who are speechless and powerless, be they rich or poor, but whose lives could speak volumes.

Finally, as a conserver and creator of values, you serve our future. You work in the present because that is all that is within any man's grasp, but you draw from our people's memory and conscience a vision of the future by which our lives in the present are strengthened and enriched.

As the leader of a people trying to rebuild their country, I would like to think that, tonight, I am with one of my most important partners in this task. I would like my presence here tonight to be seen as an indication of the importance I place upon that partnership.

Much has been said about the relationship between the writer and the state, but for all the passion and ink that have been spent to define it, the relationship remains murky and fraught with suspicion on both sides.

All our Constitutions, except that of Malolos, guarantee state patronage of arts and letters. This guarantee remains in the Freedom Constitution and undoubtedly will be preserved in the new constitution. This simply stated guarantee, I believe, describes the ideal relationship between writer and state, and provides the proper measure for evaluating and adjusting reality.

It will be my Government's measure. I am convinced that writers offer a gift to the nation and none should stand as an obstacle between them and the people. I know that the state, wittingly and unwittingly, has sometimes been such an obstacle. There were many instances when the state met the writer with the heavy arm of antagonism or the thick wall of indifference rather than with the hand of assistance.

The cynicism, if not outright hostility, with which many writers view the state was therefore inevitable. I work against that inevitability when I issue my call for their helping hand. The Government now asks writers to help in undoing what Government, with the help of some of their own brethren, has done to the partnership between writers and the state.

This Government hears the many voices that speak of the present plight of writers. It accepts its responsibility to create those conditions, material or otherwise, congenial to the writer's exercise of his craft. My Government acknowledges that freedom to write must be accompanied by conditions that encourage creativity.

The writer must have easy access to the works of literature that are being produced both here and abroad. For a writer belongs to two countries: his own and the world of literature against which he tests his mastery of the craft and the validity of his vision. A tariff reduction measure has been adopted to improve this access but it is not enough. Further measures to enhance it will be seriously studied. Along with them will be measures to encourage the publication of local works of literature. In this respect, media can help, for traditionally the media have been the first door that gives the writer access to his audience. I refer not only to the print media but to radio and television as well.

The writer must have some assurance that his needs as a human being will be met. He must, through his craft and without any violation of its integrity, be able to acquire the means whereby he lives and the recognition which gives fulfillment to his life and labors. Not as a special privilege but as a matter of justice.

If support and assistance to writers and artists in general shall be the orientation of my administration, respect for their autonomy shall be one of its hallmarks. I fully understand the jealous sense of independence of writers because I share it, along with the millions of our people who refused to take any more dictation and did something about it.

Writers today are working with already one great advantage over writers of the past, they write with certainty that they are reaching men and women whose commitment to truth survived and triumphed over 14 years of lies. This is a great consolation, I am sure, and an equally great challenge. And I am sure you will be equal to it.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Muslim-Christian Meeting

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Muslim-Christian Meeting**

[Released on September 4, 1986]

SEEKING PEACE IN THE SOUTH

In a meeting with leaders of Mindanao before returning to the South on a mission of peace, President Aquino expresses her belief that peace and progress can be attained on conditions that are fair to all sectors of Mindanao. In the Philippines, being now a democratic nation, there is room for coexistence among different ideas, cultures, and societies. Ideas and cultures may be diverse, but there is no conflict in the basic desire for the peace and progress of the country.

I have invited you here, to break bread with me, because you are among the chief leaders of Mindanao. The peace and progress of Mindanao depend on your support. Tomorrow I fly South to meet with the other leaders who were not able to make it here. I shall also meet with Nur Misuari who has come in from Jeddah. This completes the circle of leadership upon which, as I said, the peace and progress of Mindanao depend.

It follows from this recognition of your roles that peace and progress is possible on terms that are fair to all the sectors of Mindanao, just to the Filipino nation as a whole, and faithful to the principles for which it stands. But there shall be no derogation of the integrity of the Republic. I have pledged to transform Mindanao from a land of broken promises, of warring communities, to one of fulfillment in unity.

The Filipino nation is democratic if it is anything. There is room within the broad conception of Philippine democracy for all manner of ideas, cultures and societies to co-exist and thrive. What is needed is our mutual respect and support for the wide spectrum of ideas and cultures that make up the rich diversity of this one nation under God.

There is a rich diversity of ideas and cultures but no conflict in the basic desire we all share for the peace and progress of our one country.

My visit to the South again is intended to start a round of consultations in the areas where Muslims and Christians co-exist in order to bring them together in a common effort to uplift their communities and establish the material foundation of their political and spiritual growth. I invite you to take part in these consultations that are specifically intended to reorient the policies and energies of government in your areas in the direction you think best. No one can presume to know this better than you. That is the character of this government, the nature of a true democracy. Our great people who snatched victory and freedom from the jaws of calamity, by signal acts of self-sacrifice and courage, will have it no other way.

The world envies us for our achievement. It was an achievement not only of oppositionists who stood firm for democracy in the spirit of non-violence but of loyalists who held back in the spirit of brotherhood and patriotism. If we were able to exercise self-restraint and show brotherhood in the heat of partisan conflict, surely we can work together in the common love of country for the peace and progress of all our people.

Long live the Republic!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Address of President Corazon Aquino Before the Zamboangeños

Address of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines Before the Zamboangeños

[Held in Zamboanga City, September 5, 1986]

TOWARD IN THE CITY OF FLOWERS

RECONCILIATION

Addressing soldiers and civilians in Zamboanga City, “the flower of the South,” President Aquino recalls the city’s commitment to democracy and those Zamboangeños who died for freedom, like Cesar Climaco. She declares that the people of Mindanao, whether Christian or Muslim, are brave, strong, and fiercely jealous of their rights. Thus, no side should dictate on the other. Only when Filipinos are united as one people can Philippine progress be achieved.

Your city has been known as the flower of the South, the thriving center of Southern industry and entrepreneurship for nearly four centuries, and the model of Muslim and Christian community. It is also a shining example of commitment to democracy. Last February, the opposition won overwhelmingly in this city. You threw your great numbers and courage behind the effort to oust the dictatorship and reestablish democracy in our country. You have given generously of your brave children, among them Cesar Climaco, to the cause of Filipino freedom. Although you are far from its political center, you are close to the democratic spirit of the Republic, and closer to my heart for the bravery and commitment you have shown.

I am here to bring the national government to you, the democratic government you helped install, on the pledge of its leadership to govern in consultation with the people. No one can presume to tell you your needs for in the end it is you who will bear the burden of meeting them. The policies of government are paid by the people, so let the people say what those policies should be. I am here to initiate a round of consultations with the political and civic leaders of Region 9. I met with some of them in Manila last night. I flew South this morning to meet with the rest. Earlier today I met with Nur Misuari. With that we complete the circle of leadership on whose support and cooperation depends the future peace and progress of Mindanao.

I said to some of your leaders last night that there can be peace and therefore progress in Mindanao only on the basis of mutual respect and support for the various aspirations of the several sectors of this island, Christian and Muslim. We cannot build to the full potential of this great and promising island on the shattered dreams and betrayed hopes of any one of these sectors. That is a weak foundation for a durable peace. There is no way out. The people of Mindanao, be they Christian or Muslim, are too brave and strong and fiercely jealous of their rights to accept any infringement of one by the other of their dignity and autonomy. We shall either progress as one united people or perish as warring factions. Unity is the price we must pay for progress. But why must we consider it a price and not a gift? Look at the freedom and pride we gained by being united. Is there anything our great people cannot achieve in unity? There is little we can achieve divided. We waste our energies and, tragically, our lives fighting for the goal of peace we all desire.

Our country was made poor by tyranny; its riches were wasted, even its future was mortgaged. We have a great deal to do to make up for the years of Philippine progress that might have been if we had not lost our freedom. But even before we launch our country again on the path of progress. There is a triumph that already lies within our reach: the religious and cultural reconciliation of our nation. Let us show the world that Muslims and Christians can live together, not just in the spirit of tolerance, but with the fervor of common patriotism and in a joint endeavor to achieve the progress we all deserve as Filipinos.

I have gone to the South three times since I became President. My first trip outside Manila as President was to Mindanao. My first trip abroad was to our ASEAN neighbors in the South. I reach down South time and again to the well-spring of our race and culture, the fountain of its native courage, to renew my strength, my resolve and my faith in the mission of my Presidency and the vision of our future for which you and I staked our lives and fortunes in the Revolution.

To you, my soldiers in this far-flung frontier of the Republic, I come to see with my eyes the battle-tested honor and valor of our race, and the fidelity of the Filipino to the vision of one united country. When Filipinos, from faction or ignorance, forgot that vision and turned on one another in a conflict that threatened to rend our country apart, you, soldiers of the Republic, stood fast by your thankless duty to keep our country intact. Hated by many, suspected by most, you stood by the flag ready to lay down your lives to stop anyone from ripping the Southern star from its field. Your sacrifices were not in vain nor will they ever be. The peace we seek will be the crowning glory, and not a betrayal, of the unity for which you fought and that I am pledged to preserve.

I have read the record of your bravery and, leaving behind this portion of the Republic, I know I leave it in good hands. I shall work earnestly for the peace the soldier longs for most. He has known so little of it. I shall pray and work that it shall come swiftly so that he can be reunited with his family. But it must come honorably. For honor is the soldier's life and the first virtue of our Republic. In the time before a lasting and honorable peace is achieved, my soldiers, keep watch over our people, protect their lives and properties, their dignity and freedom. I leave you with the noble and mournful duty to preserve them for the peace that may come, even if it means that you yourselves may never see it. That is the fate of the soldier. He reads it in the flag he defends: The blue of peace rests upon the red of sacrifice.

Mabuhay ang Pilipino!

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Military in Jolo Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Military in Jolo**

[Delivered in Jolo, September 5, 1986]

PEACE: THE SOLDIER'S DREAM

Mindanao belongs to all, whether Muslim or Christian, who have shed blood and tears to make it a home for Filipinos. Speaking before soldiers of the First Brigade and constables of the Territorial Command, President Aquino tells them that their sacrifices have not been in vain. She urges the soldiers to keep the faith, and to pursue the elusive dream of peace.

I have come here to renew myself in the spirit of your great courage and unfaltering devotion to our country. Sitting at my desk in the Palace and listening to people complain about others or make requests, of course, all for the sake of the country, I begin to feel a little despondent. That is when I seize the first opportunity to be back among my soldiers, especially those in the farthest and most dangerous frontiers of the Republic. Here, among men who live only by honor, duty, and country, I am able to renew my strength, my resolve, and my faith.

Sentinels of the southern frontiers, I want you to know that your sacrifices are seen and acknowledged. The great distance from here to the capital cannot dim the lustre of your honor and valor. Nor will your sacrifices be in vain. No portion of the Republic can ever be alienated where her soldiers have spilled their blood. Nothing can supersede a claim based on sacrifice. Mindanao belongs to all, be they Muslim or Christian, who have expended sweat, tears and blood to make it a home for Filipinos. It belongs to the Republic as the legacy of her heroes who fought and died for the vision of a Philippines that is free and strong and united from Batanes to Jolo. That vision is still a reality thanks to you, soldiers of the Republic, who stood fast by it even when the communities around you lost sight of it because of faction and misunderstanding. Keep the faith, my soldiers, for I am here with you true to my word that I shall ask for no sacrifice greater than I myself am prepared to make, nor send you to any perils that I myself am not prepared to embrace. I am here also to fulfill my pledge to try to bring an honorable peace to our country, a peace that will meet the just demands of the contending forces without detracting from the honor of the Armed Forces. Peace is the soldier's dream, for he has known it so little, just as honor is his life. You and I will make an earnest effort to achieve the first, but we shall never lose the second. Ninoy's favorite words were those of the soldier who said, "All is lost but honor."

Long live the New Armed Forces of the Philippines!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Pride in Being a Filipino

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On the Pride in being a Filipino

[Delivered at the Manila International Airport, September 15, 1986]

PRIDE IN BEING A FILIPINO

The Philippines is still a poor nation, but it has already achieved that for which greater nations bend all their efforts: a glorious and unparalleled achievement that will excite the admiration of the world.

I have given the various reasons for accepting the invitation to visit the United States. I shall meet with the American President and address the American Congress. I shall meet with our expatriate countrymen whose prayers contributed to the happy outcome of our revolution. I shall also be meeting our creditors and the leaders of the international business and financial community. I shall bring before them the problems of our country whose solutions, I believe, should be as much their concern as ours. But no reason will give me as much pleasure as that which really impelled me to accept the invitation. And that is to stand before them, as the President of our people, and the living proof of their power and courage. I shall remind them all of what Filipinos can accomplish when they set their minds and hearts to it. I shall do this to convince them that they can depend on us to meet the unfair obligations that we, out of honor, have taken upon ourselves. But I shall do it principally out of pride, pride in being a Filipino, pride in what he now represents in the eyes of all the peoples of the world, especially those who suffer oppression: freedom, democracy and peace, and the courage to win and preserve them.

We are still a poor nation, but we have already achieved that for which greater nations bend all their efforts: a glorious and unparalleled achievement that will excite the admiration of the world. Whatever others will say, you and I, my people, know that that achievement in the form of a restored democracy will never be lost. Those who are afraid that my absence will endanger that democracy are those on whom we cannot depend to protect it. For democracy here is not held up by me alone but by the Power of the People that won it.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino upon her arrival in San Francisco, United States of America

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Upon her arrival in San Francisco, U.S.A.**

[Delivered in San Francisco, September 15, 1986]

AT HOME IN A FAIR CITY

President Aquino shares with Americans proud memories of a democracy won back and the excitement of building a new country.

San Francisco was the first stop on that life or death mission to give my husband, Ninoy, a triple heart by-pass in Dallas. Ninoy felt very weak on the plane. But when we stopped over here and Ninoy breathed in the clear, blue air of San Francisco, he immediately revived. The color went back in his cheeks. That's the effect of freedom on anybody who has been denied it too long. I felt it, too. I can't say I feel it now, for I come from my country that has just won its freedom. And so, now, I guess I feel somewhat at home arriving here in your fair city. I say only somewhat for I feel here the strong and rich earth, and the vigor of America, that has sustained its democracy. We Filipinos are not so fortunate yet to have the progress to keep our democracy going forever. But we are starting. We are starting to put our country back in shape, starting to rebuild a many-pillared house worthy of our new democracy. I have come to America to share with its people our proud memories of how we won back democracy and the excitement of building a new country. I have come here also to thank the American people for their prayers and their cheers as we Filipinos advanced to freedom in our country. My Government has issued several formal reasons for my visit here, having to do with economic and political issues of bilateral concern. They are all valid reasons that I am going to press hard for. But to tell the truth, the overriding reason I am here is because I wanted to see our friends. Thank you for your warm and gracious welcome.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Power of Prayer

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On the Power of Prayer

[Delivered at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D. C., September 16, 1986]

POWER OF PRAYER

Freedom was the Filipino's greatest reward. But the real price was the reaffirmation of his faith, the demonstration of its power.

I would like to thank Filipinos and friends of Filipinos in Washington for your significant contribution to the restoration of freedom and democracy in the Philippines.

Some of you may be asking, what exactly is this great contribution I refer to? Well, aside from the financial assistance and political lobbying and support extended to us by our friends in this state, I refer particularly to your prayers. For I am told that, at the height of our recent political crisis, many Christian groups and individuals in Washington and other parts of the United States prayed earnestly for us.

Those not firm in the faith cannot understand the power of prayers. Those who are, never fail to be amazed and delighted at how they are answered. As proven to us last February, the answers come in the most unforeseen ways, and always exceeding human expectation and understanding.

We know by faith that nothing happens by accident. Christ knows full well what He put into us and what He must put us through to make us what we must be. I do not fully understand why it is I who am the President of a free country today, except that I, who was not made for politics, led a people who had lost faith in politics and led them to victory.

Who of us can claim to have sequenced the events that led to our successful bloodless revolution? How could those cunning minds in the previous government have made the blunder of making a martyr of my husband? And in such an ill-planned way? Why did the dictator open his mouth on American television only to swallow defeat in the snap election? What possessed our people to produce a million signatures to convince me to run? What moved them to risk their lives to protect my votes in the polls and proclaim my victory in the streets? Why did the military defect when it did? Who stayed the hand of Marcos as it poised to smash us? And why were Filipinos, who watched my husband fast nearly unto death, without a murmur of protest or pity, suddenly stirred to concern and action when he was already dead?

It began with the willing sacrifice of one man and ended with the offer of sacrifice of millions.

In assessing the gains of our uprising in Manila, I would say that freedom was our great reward. But the real prize was the reaffirmation of our faith, the demonstration of its power.

The Filipino raised his head and turned a new face to the world, the face of faith and courage.

And so it is that I thank you today for your prayers and ask you to continue with them. I stand here as living proof of their global reach. We need them in our country still. Freedom is priceless but memories are short.

I ask you to pray for me, that I be spiritually guided in every decision that I make. I request that you pray for our government, that we do not become an organization of men for the control of men; that we do not act like kings but rather as servants of the people and the one true king. And so that, once more, there might be peace and prosperity in our land. For it is also written that Christ completes what He has started in our hearts. And I pray that that time will not be far away.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino at a Dinner in her Honor hosted by Secretary of State George Schultz

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At a Dinner in her honor hosted by Secretary of State George Schultz**

[Delivered in Washington, D.C., September 17, 1986]

A NEW DAY

Once more Filipinos stand proud and are able to honor the democracy that Americans helped them win. No longer need there be shame abroad or repression at home in the conduct of the nation's affairs. The text of Mrs. Aquino's toast is preceded by the text of the toast made by Secretary of State George Schultz.

Secretary Schultz: Tonight is something special.

There are so many good friends here from the Philippines, and so many Americans who care about the Philippines. It's a real family evening.

I can't recall when there has been this sort of genuine enthusiasm for welcoming a foreign dignitary. I'm pleased to see members of the Presidential Observer Delegation. Would you stand up, please?

I note a number of others. Would all the senators and congressmen stand up, please?

Would those here from the American corporate and financial world – all American businessmen – rise for just a moment?

How about those from academic life?

And those from the media, would you stand up, please?

Madame President, these are important people. They make things happen. These men and women play a special role in helping to shape our national policies and major economic decisions. The warmth of their welcome for you shows the kind of support that your leadership has generated on the part of the American people. It clearly says to me – and should say to others – that we are on your side.

Just as the Philippines is itself in the midst of an historic renewal, your visit here has laid the groundwork for a new chapter in Philippine-American dialogue. We have the opportunity to build upon our longstanding friendship and to strengthen our cooperative efforts on the basis of mutual respect and common interest.

Through both good times and bad, our peoples have had a long history together. Today, our partnership makes an irreplaceable contribution to stability and peace in the Pacific. As importantly, our societies share a basic belief in democracy and free enterprise.

Americans were profoundly moved by the courage of the Filipino people in seeking a new birth of democracy in their own land. We were impressed that you have sought not only the return of representative government, but national reconciliation as well.

There is still much to be done. In seeking to reestablish democratic institutions, to bring an end to insurgent violence, and to reanimate the economy, your government faces formidable tasks. These are, at heart, Philippine

problems requiring Philippine solutions. Our message to you is simple: We stand ready to help in whatever appropriate way we can. The President, the Congress and the American people energetically support your efforts for democracy, peace and prosperity in the Philippine Republic.

I have been personally heartened by the progress that your government has made. The drafting of a new democratic constitution, the scheduling of elections, and the investigations into corruption and human rights abuses are important steps forward. You have strengthened judicial integrity. You have worked to restore the professionalism of the Philippine military.

The problems of bringing an end to the insurgency in the countryside are particularly difficult – but we have been impressed by the wisdom of your strategy of combining readiness for dialogue with a firm determination to resist insurgent efforts at intimidation and violence.

Your growth-oriented strategy for economic reform – based on free market principles – is sending an important and positive signal about the vitality of the Philippines' future. We have noted your government's initial successes in stabilizing the peso, negotiating an IMF agreement, freeing up producer prices, and dismantling crony monopolies. After two years of decline, real economic growth is now projected for 1986.

Now is an important chance for American firms to support the Philippines' economic recovery. Earlier, I asked all of the American businessmen here to stand up. But we also have some of the leading businessmen of the Philippines in the audience as well. My question to all of you is: Why don't you guys get together? Now is the time to do so. To my mind, increased American investment in the Philippines and greater trade between us is not just a question of good diplomacy – it's good business for both Americans and Filipinos alike.

I'm bullish on the Philippines. And for good reason. I believe in the energy and genius of the Filipino people. I see enlightened public policies on the part of a government commanding broad popular support.

It is with a sense of optimism, friendship and shared purpose that I ask you to rise – one more time – and join me in a toast:

- To President Corazon Aquino and the continuing efforts of her government on behalf of political, economic and military reform;
- To the special commitment to democratic ideals of the Filipino people; and
- To strengthened friendship and cooperation between our two countries in support of our common goals.

Response of President Aquino: Today is a new day in the enduring friendship between our two countries. When I sat down with President Reagan this morning we were meeting as two leaders of free nations. Both our nations again share the same commitment to freedom and opportunity.

So that is why I say it is a new day. We again share a political system which respects and honors the individual citizen. On this basis we can build a mutual respect and confidence that was previously impossible. President Reagan's remarks this morning were a strong demonstration of this.

Once more the Filipino stands proud and is able to honor the democracy that Americans helped him win in the first place. No longer need there be shame abroad or repression at home in the conduct of our affairs.

This places a responsibility on both of our nations to nurture our friendship in a spirit of mutual respect. On the American side there must be understanding and support for the difficult path we have to rebuild our nation.

On the Filipino side there must be a will to preserve our commitment to democratic values. We are a friend of freedom and democracy in the Pacific and we will never again let our leaders snatch that away from us.

We appreciate your understanding in recent months. We know how first your hearts and then your minds were won over to the cause of change in the Philippines.

Yet now that there is a democratic and open government in the Philippines, I think you also understand that we reflect the people's will. I don't need to put your diplomats on warning, Mr. Schultz, that that means we can sometimes be difficult to deal with!

What impresses me about the United States is that in all my meetings with your leaders you have understood this should be a virtue, not a vice, in your eyes. There is so much to be done to put our people back on the road to prosperity, to eliminate the poverty that afflicts two thirds of our nation.

We are completing the restoration of constitutional government and have national elections ahead of us; we are redirecting government away from the private sector and towards basic services; we are liberating the economy from state control; and we are dealing with the insurgency with a firm mixture of political and economic initiatives and military reforms.

It's a heavy agenda but a nation that did what it did last February can do it. We will recover our place as one of Asia's most dynamic economies. We look forward to your continued support.

May I ask you to join me in a toast: To Secretary Schultz, a true and warm friend, whose faith in our new country is deeply felt by us with gratitude; to his gracious wife, to the great American nation, and the new partnership in freedom between our two countries.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Address of President Corazon Aquino at the United States Chamber, United States – Association of Southeast Asian Nations Business Council, and OPIC Meeting

**Address
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the United States Chamber, United States – Association of Southeast Asian Nations Business Council, and
OPIC Meeting**

[Delivered in Washington, D.C., September 18, 1986]

WE MEAN BUSINESS

With democracy restored, the Philippines has created the environment for dynamic private sector business growth. Still, one depends on the other. The nation now needs economic growth to support democracy. This is an invitation to the American business community to invest in the Philippines.

I spoke this morning to the joint houses of Congress, now, I join you to address you, the other audience, American business. Together these two speeches represent the twin working levels of this trip.

I have come to say thank you to the American friends of the Philippines and to make new friends. But I have also come to reinforce the political and economic links between our countries.

We have restored democracy and thereby created the environment for dynamic private sector business growth. Yet, one depends on the other. We now need economic growth to support our democracy. We must reverse the decline in living standards of our people, end the poverty, and put our people back to work. So when we say I am here on an official working visit, I am here not just because I mean business in my dealings with the administration, but because I mean it also in my discussions with you.

Just as we have created a partnership in the Philippines between political reform and economic growth so, here in the United States, I look for cooperation and partnership, not just from the administration and congress, but also from the private sector.

So I stand before you now to say I mean business. We have begun the long process of rebuilding our nation: creating an environment of political stability and economic opportunity. Let me first outline those political changes.

Today, we are a people who believe that our freedom and our prosperity rest on protecting and strengthening our new democracy.

Democracy, at its worst, may be a long, slow, exasperating and uncertain path to progress, but it is infinitely better than dictatorship's shortcut to disaster. We now have a government that is founded on the belief that no one knows better than the people what they want and what they are prepared to pay for.

So this new government also aims to be a lean government.

We judge that this option follows from its democratic character. If a people want self-rule, they must be self-reliant. They should seek no more government than is absolutely necessary to correct the inequities of a free market in an imperfect world. The thrust therefore of my government will be to wean the people away from the idea that they must depend on the government. This should not be hard considering how little government has done for them these 20 past years. What is needed is to make them confident that they have the strength, which they have always had, to go it alone. After the resilience and determination the Filipinos showed at the ballot boxes and in the streets earlier this year, we have all the optimism and confidence to do it.

There are no more cronies with their hands in the till. Rather, government is redirecting its attention and energies to areas that are the proper concerns of free governments: bringing about social justice, building infrastructure, safeguarding the peace and order of communities and the nation's security.

To correct the people's deep and widespread cynicism about government's inability to render even-handed justice, we have recreated a new Supreme Court staffed by judges of the highest integrity and competence, beholden to no one but justice itself. A revamp of the rest of the judicial system is also well under way.

Next, the Constitutional Commission is almost through with its draft constitution. This draft will be submitted to a plebiscite in December for ratification. Its main features, even at this stage, should be familiar to you, for they are the enduring forms of democratic government that are the same everywhere.

Within the first quarter of next year, we shall have elected a new Congress and local officials, so that, at all levels, government will be in the hands of elected representatives, responsive to the needs of their constituents and accountable to them.

We have a new armed forces, restored to the people's trust by its noble part in the renewal of democracy. Together with my defense chiefs, I am overseeing a thorough military reform. A strong army is a vital part of the defense of our new freedom.

After six months, our political framework is in place. Additions, such as those to be made by a new constitution and elections, will only flesh out its democratic character. We can now bend greater efforts to the task of economic recovery and growth in a climate of freedom.

The broad outlines of this second task have also been drawn. We have agreed with the IMF to an increase in liquidity and to a larger budget deficit as a percentage of GNP. This greater latitude might allow my government to begin rural public works which will stimulate the economy at its grassroots. We have finished our talks with the IMF and the World Bank. Tomorrow, I move on to New York to meet with the creditor banks. The negotiations with these institutions will complete the elements of a new debt package.

The country's new financial indicators have improved. The foreign exchange rate has held steady for the last seven months. Interest rates are much lower than they have been in the last three years. Foreign exchange reserves exceed three months' import requirements. Non-tariff barriers to imports are being removed in phases. There is virtually no inflation. But part of the reason for this, unfortunately, is continuing low demand. The economy needs a fresh infusion of capital to get it really moving. And we prefer to have it come, to the extent it is wise and possible, from the private sector.

The Filipino people face the future confidently. American business should look long and carefully at our investment possibilities. I advise it to look as well at the great potential of the region in which we are located. Asia, according to the latest world economic projections, has the largest growth potential of any area in the world.

There are opportunities to be found in established businesses, mismanaged by the previous government and its friends, that are ready to be restarted with fresh capital and new management. There are also sound enterprises, well and frugally managed, that need fresh capital to improve productivity and product quality. And there remain many new areas of investments, some that will complement our major concern in developing our agriculture.

Capital will find in our shores a labor force that is hardworking, eminently-skilled, and cost efficient. It would cost the U.S. Navy six or seven times more to hire elsewhere the skills found in the Filipino. What is good enough to keep the arsenal of American democracy in good repair, should be good enough to assure American profit.

However, I should make it clear that we do not hold out to any investor, Filipino or foreign, profit opportunities by exploiting a meek labor force, prevented by police forces from asserting their basic rights. We invite you to consider investing in the Philippines not only because our labor is cost efficient, but because it is productive, and will more

than earn its pay. We have given labor back its motivation. If after 14 years of martial law, labor relations looked temporarily strained as we restored free collective bargaining, that was a honeymoon we deserved.

The Filipino worker knows he has to earn his way in the world. And he has the will and commitment to do so. Now in partnership with our business leadership, our workforce is settling down to the long hard haul of winning back old markets and building new ones.

We are also simplifying the rules and procedures for foreign investment and, in general, for doing business in the Philippines. This is part of our program to deregulate the economy.

Finally, we are fully aware that foreign investment seeks, first and foremost, stability of laws and regulations. Your assurance of this lies in our democratic government, where legislation is the fruit of open debate and government decisions must meet the requirements of due process. There should be no surprises in a democracy.

And that is how it is in my country today. No fears and no favors. Only the pledge of a people that experienced both to a tragic degree that it will never be that way again.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Democracy by the ways of democracy : speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, official visit to the United States of America, September 15-24, 1986*. Manila : [Office of the President of the Philippines].

Address of President Corazon Aquino at the Joint Session of the United States Congress

**Address
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Joint Session of the United States Congress**

[Delivered in Washington, D.C., September 18, 1986]

RESTORING DEMOCRACY BY THE WAYS OF DEMOCRACY

The Philippines has swept away absolute power by a limited revolution that respected the life and freedom of every Filipino. Now, the nation is restoring full constitutional government. Still, for democracy to flourish, the Philippines must be able to sustain economic growth, which is greatly hampered by the insurgency problem and a staggering foreign debt of \$26 billion.

The government has addressed the insurgency problem with a clear-cut policy to exhaust all peaceful means. Solution to the other problem, foreign debt, is dependent on whether the nation can renegotiate with creditors for fairer terms.

President Aquino invites America to join the Philippines in building a new home for democracy.

Three years ago, I left America in grief to bury my husband, Ninoy Aquino. I thought I had left it also to lay to rest his restless dream of Philippine freedom. Today, I have returned as the president of a free people.

In burying Ninoy, a whole nation honored him. By that brave and selfless act of giving honor, a nation in shame recovered its own. A country that had lost faith in its future found it in a faithless and brazen act of murder. So in giving, we receive, in losing we find, and out of defeat, we snatched our victory.

For the nation, Ninoy became the pleasing sacrifice that answered their prayers for freedom. For myself and our children, Ninoy was a loving husband and father. His loss, three times in our lives, was always a deep and painful one.

Fourteen years ago this month was the first time we lost him. A president-turned-dictator, and traitor to his oath, suspended the Constitution and shut down the Congress that was much like this one before which I am honored to speak. He detained my husband along with thousands of others – senators, publishers and anyone who had spoken up for the democracy as its end drew near. But for Ninoy, a long and cruel ordeal was reserved. The dictator already knew that Ninoy was not a body merely to be imprisoned but a spirit he must break. For even as the dictatorship demolished one by one the institutions of democracy – the press, the Congress, the independence of the judiciary, the protection of the Bill of Rights – Ninoy kept their spirit alive in himself.

The government sought to break him by indignities and terror. They locked him up in a tiny, nearly airless cell in a military camp in the north. They stripped him naked and held the threat of sudden midnight execution over his head. Ninoy held up manfully under all of it. I barely did as well. For 43 days, the authorities would not tell me what had happened to him. This was the first time my children and I felt we had lost him.

When that didn't work, they put him on trial for subversion, murder and a host of other crimes before a military commission. Ninoy challenged its authority and went on a fast. If he survived it, then, he felt, God intended him for another fate. We had lost him again. For nothing would hold him back from his determination to see his fast through to the end. He stopped only when it dawned on him that the government would keep his body alive after the fast had destroyed his brain. And so, with barely any life in his body, he called off the fast on the fortieth day. God meant

him for other things, he felt. He did not know that an early death would still be his fate, that only the timing was wrong.

At any time during his long ordeal, Ninoy could have made a separate peace with the dictatorship, as so many of his countrymen had done. But the spirit of democracy that inheres in our race and animates this chamber could not be allowed to die. He held out, in the loneliness of his cell and the frustration of exile, the democratic alternative to the insatiable greed and mindless cruelty of the right and the purging holocaust of the left.

And then, we lost him, irrevocably and more painfully than in the past. The news came to us in Boston. It had to be after the three happiest years of our lives together. But his death was my country's resurrection in the courage and faith by which alone they could be free again. The dictator had called him a nobody. Two million people threw aside their passivity and fear and escorted him to his grave. And so began the revolution that has brought me to democracy's most famous home, the Congress of the United States.

The task had fallen on my shoulders to continue offering the democratic alternative to our people.

Archibald Macleish had said that democracy must be defended by arms when it is attacked by arms and by truth when it is attacked by lies. He failed to say how it shall be won.

I held fast to Ninoy's conviction that it must be by the ways of democracy. I held out for participation in the 1984 election the dictatorship called, even if I knew it would be rigged. I was warned by the lawyers of the opposition that I ran the grave risk of legitimizing the foregone results of elections that were clearly going to be fraudulent. But I was not fighting for lawyers but for the people in whose intelligence I had implicit faith. By the exercise of democracy, even in a dictatorship, they would be prepared for democracy when it came. And then, also, it was the only way I knew by which we could measure our power even in the terms dictated by the dictatorship.

The people vindicated me in an election shamefully marked by government thuggery and fraud. The opposition swept the elections, garnering a clear majority of the votes, even if they ended up, thanks to a corrupt Commission on Elections, with barely a third of the seats in parliament. Now, I knew our power.

Last year, in an excess of arrogance, the dictatorship called for its doom in a snap election. The people obliged. With over a million signatures, they drafted me to challenge the dictatorship. And I obliged them. The rest is the history that dramatically unfolded on your television screens and across the front pages of your newspapers.

You saw a nation, armed with courage and integrity, stand fast by democracy against threats and corruption. You saw women poll watchers break out in tears as armed goons crashed the polling places to steal the ballots but, just the same, they tied themselves to the ballot boxes. You saw a people so committed to the ways of democracy that they were prepared to give their lives for its pale imitation. At the end of the day, before another wave of fraud could distort the results, I announced the people's victory.

The distinguished co-chairman of the United States observer team in his report to your President described that victory:

"I was witness to an extraordinary manifestation of democracy on the part of the Filipino people. The ultimate result was the election of Mrs. Corazon C. Aquino as President and Mr. Salvador Laurel as Vice-President of the Philippines."

Many of you here today played a part in changing the policy of your country towards us. We, Filipinos, thank each of you for what you did: for, balancing America's strategic interest against human concerns, illuminates the American vision of the world.

When a subservient parliament announced my opponent's victory, the people turned out in the streets and proclaimed me President. And true to their word, when a handful of military leaders declared themselves against the

dictatorship, the people rallied to their protection. Surely, the people take care of their own. It is on that faith and the obligation it entails, that I assumed the presidency.

As I came to power peacefully, so shall I keep it. That is my contract with my people and my commitment to God. He had willed that the blood drawn with the lash shall not, in my country, be paid by blood drawn by the sword but by the tearful joy of reconciliation.

We have swept away absolute power by a limited revolution that respected the life and freedom of every Filipino. Now, we are restoring full constitutional government. Again, as we restored democracy by the ways of democracy, so are we completing the constitutional structures of our new democracy under a constitution that already gives full respect to the Bill of Rights. A jealously independent Constitutional Commission is completing its draft which will be submitted later this year to a popular referendum. When it is approved, there will be congressional elections. So within about a year from a peaceful but national upheaval that overturned a dictatorship, we shall have returned to full constitutional government. Given the polarization and breakdown we inherited, this is no small achievement.

My predecessor set aside democracy to save it from a communist insurgency that numbered less than 500. Unhampered by respect for human rights, he went at it hammer and tongs. By the time he fled, that insurgency had grown to more than 16,000. I think there is a lesson here to be learned about trying to stifle a thing with the means by which it grows.

I don't think anybody, in or outside our country, concerned for a democratic and open Philippines, doubts what must be done. Through political initiatives and local reintegration programs, we must seek to bring the insurgents down from the hills and, by economic progress and justice, show them that for which the best intentioned among them fight.

As President, I will not betray the cause of peace by which I came to power. Yet equally, and again no friend of Filipino democracy will challenge this, I will not stand by and allow an insurgent leadership to spurn our offer of peace and kill our young soldiers, and threaten our new freedom.

Yet, I must explore the path of peace to the utmost, for at its end, whatever disappointment I meet there, is the moral basis for laying down the olive branch of peace and taking up the sword of war. Still, should it come to that, I will not waver from the course laid down by your great liberator: "With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and for his orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

Like Lincoln, I understand that force may be necessary before mercy. Like Lincoln, I don't relish it. Yet, I will do whatever it takes to defend the integrity and freedom of my country.

Finally, may I turn to that other slavery: our \$26 billion foreign debt. I have said that we shall honor it. Yet must the means by which we shall be able to do so be kept from us? Many conditions imposed on the previous government that stole this debt continue to be imposed on us who never benefited from it. And no assistance or liberality commensurate with the calamity that was visited on us has been extended. Yet ours must have been the cheapest revolution ever. With little help from others, we Filipinos fulfilled the first and most difficult condition of the debt negotiation the full restoration of democracy and responsible government. Elsewhere, and in other times of more stringent world economic conditions, Marshall plans and their like were felt to be necessary companions of returning democracy.

When I met with President Reagan yesterday, we began an important dialogue about cooperation and the strengthening of the friendship between our two countries. That meeting was both a confirmation and a new beginning and should lead to positive results in all areas of common concern.

Today, we face the aspirations of a people who had known so much poverty and massive unemployment for the past 14 years and yet offered their lives for the abstraction of democracy. Wherever I went in the campaign, slum area or

impoverished village, they came to me with one cry: democracy! Not food, although they clearly needed it, but democracy. Not work, although they surely wanted it, but democracy. Not money, for they gave what little they had to my campaign. They didn't expect me to work a miracle that would instantly put food into their mouths, clothes on their back, education in their children, and work that will put dignity in their lives. But I feel the pressing obligation to respond quickly as the leader of a people so deserving of all these things.

We face a communist insurgency that feeds on economic deterioration, even as we carry a great share of the free world defenses in the Pacific. These are only two of the many burdens my people carry even as they try to build a worthy and enduring house for their new democracy, that may serve as well as a redoubt for freedom in Asia. Yet, no sooner is one stone laid than two are taken away. Half our export earnings, \$2 billion out of \$4 billion, which was all we could earn in the restrictive markets of the world, went to pay just the interest on a debt whose benefit the Filipino people never received.

Still, we fought for honor, and, if only for honor, we shall pay. And yet, should we have to wring the payments from the sweat of our men's faces and sink all the wealth piled up by the bondsman's two hundred fifty years of unrequited toil?

Yet to all Americans, as the leader of a proud and free people, I address this question: has there been a greater test of national commitment to the ideals you hold dear than that my people have gone through? You have spent many lives and much treasure to bring freedom to many lands that were reluctant to receive it. And here you have a people who won it by themselves and need only the help to preserve it.

Three years ago, I said, thank you, America, for the haven from oppression, and the home you gave Ninoy, myself and our children, and for the three happiest years of our lives together. Today, I say, join us, America, as we build a new home for democracy, another haven for the oppressed, so it may stand as a shining testament of our two nation's commitment to freedom.

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**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the Joint Session of the U.S. Congress, September 18, 1986

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the Joint Session of the United States Congress**

[Delivered at Washington, D.C., on September 18, 1986]

Three years ago, I left America in grief to bury my husband, Ninoy Aquino. I thought I had left it also to lay to rest his restless dream of Philippine freedom. Today, I have returned as the president of a free people.

In burying Ninoy, a whole nation honored him. By that brave and selfless act of giving honor, a nation in shame recovered its own. A country that had lost faith in its future found it in a faithless and brazen act of murder. So in giving, we receive, in losing we find, and out of defeat, we snatched our victory.

For the nation, Ninoy became the pleasing sacrifice that answered their prayers for freedom. For myself and our children, Ninoy was a loving husband and father. His loss, three times in our lives, was always a deep and painful one.

Fourteen years ago this month was the first time we lost him. A president-turned-dictator, and traitor to his oath, suspended the Constitution and shut down the Congress that was much like this one before which I am honored to speak. He detained my husband along with thousands of others – senators, publishers and anyone who had spoken up for the democracy as its end drew near. But for Ninoy, a long and cruel ordeal was reserved. The dictator already knew that Ninoy was not a body merely to be imprisoned but a spirit he must break. For even as the dictatorship demolished one by one the institutions of democracy – the press, the Congress, the independence of the judiciary, the protection of the Bill of Rights – Ninoy kept their spirit alive in himself.

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OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

**[Filipino translation] Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the Joint Session of the U.S. Congress,
September 18, 1986**

**Talumpati
ng
Kagalang-galang Corazon C. Aquino
Pangulo ng Pilipinas
Sa Pinagsanib na Sesyon ng Kapulungan ng Estados Unidos**

[Inihayag sa Washington, D.C., noong ika-18 ng Setyembre 1986]

Tatlong taon na ang nakararaan, nagdadalamhati akong lumisan sa Amerika upang ilibing ang aking kaniyap, si Ninoy Aquino. Akala ko’y umalis ako doon upang ilibing din nang ganap ang kaniyang di-makaling pangarap na kalayaan ng Pilipinas. Ngayon, nagbabalik ako bilang pangulo ng malayang sambayanan.

Sa paglilibing kay Ninoy, dinarakila siya ng buong bansa. Sa magiting at mapagpaubayang pakikibakang magbigay ng karangalan, ang buong bansa ay nakabangon nang mag-isa. Ang bansang nawalan ng pananalig sa kinabukasan ay natagpuan yaon sa marahas at lantarang pagpaslang. Kaya sa pagbibigay ay nakatatanggap tayo; sa pagkawala ay nakatatagpo tayo; at mula sa pagkabigo ay nahablot natin ang tagumpay.

Para sa bansa, si Ninoy ang kaaya-ayang sakripisyo na tumugon sa mga panalangin nito hinggil sa kalayaan. Para sa akin at sa aking mga anak, si Ninoy ang mapagmahal na esposo at ama. Ang kaniyang pagkawala, nang tatlong ulit sa aming buhay, ay palaging malalim at makirot.

Ikalabing-apat na apat na taon ngayong buwan ang unang pagkakataon na nawala siya sa amin. Ang pangulong naghunos diktador, at nagtaksil sa kaniyang sinumpaang tungkulin, ay sinuspinde ang Saligang Batas at isinara ang Konggreso na parang gaya nito na isang karangalan ang magsalita. Ibinilanggo niya ang aking asawa kapiling ang ilang libo pang tao—mga senador, pablisar, at sinumang nagsalita para sa demokrasya—habang papalapit na ang wakas ng kaniyang pamamahala. Ngunit nakalaan para kay Ninoy ang mahaba at malupit na pagsubok. Batid ng diktador na si Ninoy ay hindi lamang katawan na makukulong bagkus diwaing dapat wasakin. Dahil kahit gibain nang isa-isa ng diktadura ang mga institusyon ng demokrasya—gaya ng press, Konggreso, independensiya ng hukuman, ang proteksiyon ng Talaan ng Karapatan— pinanatiling buhay ni Ninoy ang alab ng diwain nito.

Sinikap ng gobyerno na durugin si Ninoy sa pamamagitan ng panghihiya at paninindak. Ibinilibid siya sa maliit, halos walang hanging selda sa kampo militar sa hilaga. Hinubdan siya at binantaang ipabibitay pagsapit ng kalagitnaan ng gabi. Pinanindigan lahat iyon ni Ninoy. At gayon din halos ang ginawa ko. Inilihim sa akin ng mga awtoridad kung ano ang nangyari sa kaniya sa loob ng apatnapu’t tatlong araw. Ito ang unang pagkakataon na nadama ko at ng aking mga anak na naglaho na siya.

Nang hindi nagtagumpay ang gayong paraan, nilitis siya sa salang subersiyon, pagpatay, at iba pang krimen sa harap ng komisyon militar. Hinamon ni Ninoy ang awtoridad nito at siya’y nag-ayuno. Kung makaliligat siya doon, pakiwari niya, ang Diyos ay may nakalaang ibang tadhana sa kaniya. Muling nawala si Ninoy sa amin. Dahil walang makapigjil sa kaniyang sigasig na mag-ayuno hanggang wakas, huminto lamang siya nang mabatid na pananatilihin ng gobyerno ang kaniyang katawan makalipas na sirain ng pag-aayuno ang utak. Lupaypay ang katawan na halos walang buhay, winakasan ni Ninoy ang kaniyang pag-aayuno sa ikaapatnapung araw. May inilaan ang Diyos sa kaniya na ibang bagay, ramdam ni Ninoy. Hindi niya alam na ang maagang kamatayan ay siya ring magiging tadhana niya, dangan lamang at hindi pa panahon.

Sa alinmang sandali ng kaniyang mahabang pagsubok, maaari na sanang makipagkasundo si Ninoy sa diktadura, gaya ng ginawa ng marami niyang kababayan. Ngunit ang diwa ng demokrasya na nananalaytay sa aming lahi at nagpapasigla ng kamarang ito ay hindi mahahayaang maupos. Pinanindigan niya, sa kabila ng galimgim ng kaniyang selda at kabiguan ng destiyero, ang demokratikong alternatibo sa hindi mapigil na kasakiman at salat-sa-katwirang kalupitan ng kanan at sa mala-holokawstong pagpupurga ng kaliwa.

Pagkaraan, naglaho siya sa amin nang ganap at higit na masakit kaysa noon. Sumapit sa amin sa Boston ang balita. Iyon ay pagkaraan ng tatlong masasayang taon ng aming pagsasama. Ngunit ang kaniyang kamatayan ay resureksiyon ng tapang at pananampalatayang magpapalaya sa aming bayan. itinuring na walang kuwenta ng diktador si Ninoy. Dalawang milyong tao ang bumasag ng kanilang pananahimik at nagmartsa tungo sa libingan niya. At doon nagsimula ang rebolusyon na naghatid sa akin sa pinakatanyag na tahanan ng demokrasya, ang Kongreso ng Estados Unidos.

Nakasalalay sa aking mga balikat ngayon ang tungkuling ipagpatuloy ang paghahain ng demokratikong alternatibo sa aming sambayanan.

Winika ni Archibald Macleish na dapat ipagtanggol ang demokrasya sa pamamagitan ng sandata kapag tinapatan ng sandata, at sa pamamagitan ng katotohanan kapag tinapatan ng kasinungalingan. Nabigo niyang banggitin kung paano iyon ipapanalo.

Naniniwala ako sa ipinaglalaban ni Ninoy na dapat ipanalo iyon sa mga pamamaraan ng demokrasya. Naghintay akong makalahok noong halalan 1984 na inihayag ng diktadura, kahit alam kong dadayain iyon. Nagbabala sa akin ang mga abogado ng oposisyon sa panganib na maging lehitimo ang resulta ng halalang malinaw na dadayain. Ngunit hindi ako nakikipaglaban para sa mga abogado bagkus para sa mga mamamayang ang talino'y pinanaligan ko. Sa pagsasagawa ng demokrasya kahit nasa ilalim ng diktadura'y maihahanda sila sa demokrasya kapag sumapit ito. Ito rin ang tanging paraan na alam kong masusukat narin ang kapangyarihan ikahit sa mga bagay na idinidikta ng diktadura.

Itinaguyod ako ng mga tao sa halalang hitik sa karahasan at pandaraya ng gobyerno. Nagwagi ang oposisyon sa mga halalan, lumikom ng malinaw na mayorya ng mga boto, bagaman ang natamo nila—salamat na lamang sa tiwaling Komisyon sa Halalan—ay halos sangkatlo lamang ng mga puwesto sa batasan. Ngayon, alam ko na ang aming kapangyarihan.

Noong nakaraang taon, nanawagan ng biglaang halalan ang diktadura bilang pagpapamalas ng labis na kapaluan. Tumango ang bayan. Sa bisa ng mahigit isang milyong lagda, iniluklok nila ako na hamumin ang diktadura. At sinunod ko ang mithi nila. Ang sumunod ay kasaysayang nabuksan nang dramatiko sa inyong telebisyon at sa mga pambungad na pahina ng inyong mga pahayagan.

Nakita ninyo ang bansa, na armado ng giting at integridad, na mariing nanindigan sa demokrasya laban sa mga banta at korupsiyon. Nasaksihan ninyo ang mga babaeng tagapagbantay ng halalan na nagsitangis nang manloob ang mga armadong maton upang hablutin ang mga balota, ngunit itinali ng mga babae ang kanilang mga kamay sa mga kahon ng balota. Namalas ninyo ang mga tao na nagtaya sa mga pamamaraan ng demokrasya at handa nilang ihandog ang buhay para sa mababa nitong katumbas. Sa pagwawakas ng araw, bago pa sumapit ang bagong agos ng pandaraya na makapagpapabaligtad ng mga resulta, inihayag ko ang tagumpay ng bayan.

Inilarawan ng iginagalang na kawaksing pinuno ng pangkat tagapagsubaybay ng Estados Unidos sa kaniyang ulat sa inyong Pangulo ang nasabing tagumpay:

“Saksi ako sa pambihirang pagpapamalas ng demokrasya sa panig ng sambayanang Pilipino. Ang ultimong resulta ay ang pagkakahalal kay Gng. Corazon C. Aquino bilang Pangulo at kay G. Salvador Laurel bilang Ikalawang Pangulo ng Republika ng Pilipinas.”

Marami sa inyo na narito ngayon ang gumanap ng papel sa pagpapanibago ng patakaran ng inyong bansa hinggil sa aming bansa. Kami, ang mga Pilipino, ay nagpapasalamat sa inyo sa ginawa ninyo: na sa pagtitimbang ng

estrategikong interes ng Amerika laban sa mga usaping pantao ay maliliwanagan ang Amerikanong bisyon sa daigdig.

Nang ihayag ng sunod-sunurang batasan ang tagumpay ng aking kalaban, nagsilabasan sa mga kalye ang mga tao at inihayag na ako ang Pangulo nila. At tapat sa kanilang winika, nang ang iilang pinuno ng militar ay naghayag ng pagsalungat sa diktadura, ang mga tao'y nagbayanihan upang pangalagaan sila. Totoong kinakalinga ng mga tao ang kaisa nila. Sa gayong pananalig at pananagutang taglay nito nanungkulan ako bilang pangulo.

Isinantabi ng nauna sa akin ang demokrasya upang ilitas umano ito sa komunistang pag-aaklas na hindi lalabis sa 500 tao. Masigasig niyang nilabag ang mga karapatang pantao at ni hindi inalintana ang paggalang dito. Nang tumakas ang diktador palayo, ang armadong pakikibaka ay lumago sa 16,000. Wari ko'y may leksiyon dito na dapat matutuhan hinggil sa pagsisikap na supilin ang isang bagay sa pamamagitan ng mga pamamaraang magpapalago rito.

Walang tao sa aking palagay, sa loob man o labas ng bansa, na may malasakit sa demokratiko at bukas na Pitipinas, ang magdududa sa mga dapat isagawa. Sa pamamagitan ng mga pagkukusang pampolitika at lokal na programang pagtanggap ng mga tao mula sa armadong pakikibaka, kailangan nating pababain ang mga maghihimagsik pababa sa mga burol at, sa bisa ng pangkabuhayang progreso at katarungan, ay maipakita sa kanila ang lantay na layuning ipinaglalaban nila.

Bilang Pangulo, hindi ako magtataksil sa simulain ng kapayapaang nagluklok sa akin sa kapangyarihan. Gayundin, at walang sinumang kapanalig ng demokrasyang Pilipino ang mapasusubalian ito, hindi ko palalampasin at pababayaan ang pamunuan ng maghihimagsik na talikdan ang aming handog na kapayapaan at paslangin ang aming kabataang kawal, at magbanta sa aming bagong kalayaan.

Kailangan ko pa ring maghanap ng landas ng kapayapaan sa sukdulang paraan dahil ang wakas nito, anuman ang kabiguang masalubong, ang magiging batayang moral para sa pagpapalaganap ng kapayapaan at pagsusulong ng digmaan. At kung sumapit sa gayong yugto, hindi ako matatakot sa landas na iginiit ng inyong dakilang tagapagpalaya: "Walang malisya sa sinuman, may pagkalinga para sa lahat, at may katatagan sa mga karapatan, gaya ng mga ibinigay na karapatan ng Maykapal, tapusin natin ang trabahong nasa atin, bendahan ang mga sugat ng bansa, kalingain ang sinumang sumabak sa digmaan, at para sa kaniyang balo at mga ulila, ay gawin ang lahat ng matatamo at pahalagahan ang makatarungan at pangmatagalang kapayapaan sa atin at sa lahat ng bansa."

Gaya ni Lincoln, nauunawaan kong kinakailangan ang puwersa bago ang kapatawaran. Gaya ni Lincoln, hindi ko iyon gusto. Gayunman ay gagawin ko ang dapat gawin upang ipagtanggol ang integridad at kalayaan ng aking bansa.

At pangwakas, hayaang dumako ako sa iba pang kaalipnan: ang aming \$26 bilyong utang panlabas. Sinabi ko noon na kikilalanin namin ito. Ngunit ang mga pamamaraan ba para magawa iyon ay ipagkakait sa amin? Maraming kondisyon na ipinataw sa nakaraang gobyerno na nagnakaw ng inutang ang patuloy na ipinapataw sa aming hindi nakinabang dito. At walang tulong o liberalidad na katumbas ng kalamidad na ibinigay sa amin ang pinalawig. Gayunman, ang amin ang pinakamatipid na rebolusyon marahil. Kaming mga Pilipino, na kakaunti ang tulong na nasagap sa ibang bansa, ang tumupad ng una at pinakamahirap na kondisyon sa negosasyon ng utang: ang pagpapanumbalik ng demokrasya at responsableng gobyerno. Sa ibang pook, at sa ibang panahon na higit na mahigpit ang mga pandaigdigang ekonomikong kondisyon, ang mga planong Marshall at kauri nito ang naisip na mahalagang kasama sa pagpapanumbalik ng demokrasya.

Nang makaharap ko si Pang. Reagan kahapon, nagsimula kami ng mahalagang diyologo hinggil sa kooperasyon at pagpapalakas ng pagkakaibigan sa panig ng dalawang bansa. Ang naturang pulong ang kapuwa kumpirmasyon at bagong simula, at dapat mauwi sa mga poslibong resulta sa lahat ng panig ng pangkalahatang usapin.

Hinaharap namin ngayon ang mithi ng sambayanang dumanas ng labis na kahirapan at matinding kawalan ng trabaho sa loob ng labing-apat na taon, ngunit inialay pa rin ang kani-kanilang buhay para sa malabong demokrasya. Tuwing nangangampanya ako sa mga pook maralita o liblib na nayon, lumalapit ang mga tao sa akin at sumisigaw

ng demokrasya. Hindi trabaho, bagaman tiyak na nais nila iyon, bagkus demokrasya. Hindi salapi, dahil ibinigay nila sa akin ang anumang munti nilang naipon para sa kampanya. Hindi nila ako inasahang magbibigay ng himala na magpapalitaw ng pagkain, damit, edukasyon sa kanilang mga anak, at trabahong maglalaan ng dignidad sa kanilang buhay. Subalit nararamdaman ko ang pananagutang kumilos nang mabilis bilang pinuno ng mga tao na karapat-dapat matamo ang mga bagay na ito.

Hinaharap namin ang armadong pakikibaka ng komunista na lumulusog sa pagguho ng kabuhatan, kahit nakikibahagi kami sa mga tanggulan ng malalayang daigdig sa Pasipiko. Ito ang tanging dalawang pasaning dinadala ng aking mga kababayan habang sinisikap nilang magtatag ng karapat-dapat at matibay na tahanan para sa kanilang bagong demokrasya, na makapagsisilbi ring tanggulan para sa kalayaan ng Asya. Gayunman, hindi pa natatapos maglatag ng bato ay dalawa naman ang tinatangay palayo. Kalahati ng aming kita sa pagluluwas, na tinatayang \$2 sa \$4 bilyong dolyar, ang tanging naiipon namin sa labis na mahigpit na merkado ng daigdig, at ibinabalik pa upang bayaran ang interes ng utang na ang benepisyo ay hindi natatanggap ng mga tao.

Lumaban kami nang matamo ang dangal, at kahit man lang sa dangal, handa kaming magbayad. Ngunit dapat pa ba nating pigain ang pambayad mula sa pawis sa mukha ng aming kababayan at ilubog ang lahat ng kayamanang natipon ng tagapanagot na dalawang daan at limampung taon kumayod nang dibdiban?

Sa lahat ng Amerikano, bilang pinuno ng marangal at malayang bansa, ipinupukol ko ang tanong na ito: Mayroon bang hihigit sa pagsubok ng pambansang pagtataya sa mga mithi na inyong pinahahalagahan kaysa sa dinanas ng aking mga kababayan? Gumugol kayo ng maraming buhay at maraming yaman upang maghatid ng kalayaan sa maraming lupain na pawang bantulot tanggapin yaon. At dito ay may sambayanang nagwagi nang mag-isa at kailangan lamang ang tulong upang mapanatili ang natamo.

Tatlong taon na ang nakalilipas ay sinabi kong Salamat, Amerika, para sa kanlungan ng inaapi, at sa tahanan ibinigay mo kay Ninoy, sa akin at sa aking mga anak, at para sa tatlong masayang taon naming pinagsamahan. Ngayon, sinasabi kong, samahan ninyo kami, Amerika, habang itinitindig namin ang bagong tahanan para sa demokrasya, ang bagong kanlungan para sa inaapi, upang makatindig ito bilang kumikinig na—testamento ng ating dalawang bansang nagtataya sa kalayaan.

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Advisory Committee of Creditor Banks

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines To the Advisory Committee of Creditor Banks

[Delivered in New York, September 19, 1986]

OARSMEN IN THE SAME BOAT

Freedom and economic growth are inseparable factors. One cannot flourish without the other. One of the reasons for President Aquino's visit to the United States is to renegotiate with the Philippines' creditors for more reasonable terms. From its end, the Philippines has based its development program on a labor-oriented and rural-based strategy that will in the long run enable it to pay all its legitimate debt. In the medium term, the nation should grow at an average rate of six to seven percent a year in real terms. Given this goal, it is hoped that the nation's representatives and its foreign creditors can hammer out the appropriate debt-restructuring program to allow the Philippines to achieve its modest target.

I thank you for the welcome you have given me and the officials of my government. I come to you as the head of a nation whose rebirth you witnessed in splendid detail on your television screens almost seven months ago. Truly, it is with enormous pride that we recall those moments when a people threw caution and fear to the winds and staked their lives, for that was all they had, to restore democracy in their country.

Words cannot add to the vivid images you surely recall, nor will I try. It is not my purpose here to recall that triumph but to affirm my people's determination to move forward from there.

Even before my government was established, I had made clear what its underlying philosophy would be. We would have, I promised during the campaign, an open government, conducting its affairs in the full glare of public scrutiny. Its policies, I pledged, would be as accurately reflective as possible of the people's wisdom and preferences. I believed then, and still do, that no one can know better than the people what they want and what they are prepared to pay for it. Even more important than my believing it, the people are convinced of it after 20 years of unilateral direction by a leadership that claimed to know all and ended up stealing everything. We have an open, democratic government, proceeding to the extent possible, by wide, popular consultations. We have such a government as an expression of our faith in the wisdom of the people, a faith justified by their political achievement. We have it also because, as I said, the nation will have it no other way. The political marketplace has spoken. The Constitutional Commission that I appointed is completing a draft whose ratification by the people before the end of the year will give enduring form to the insistent democracy of Philippine politics. Within the first quarter of next year, a new Congress will be sitting to represent and fashion the laws of the Filipino people, thereby imparting a character of stability and predictability to the political system as a whole.

As with the structure of government, so with its policies. Unless these have taken into account the interest of the people as the people see it, unless the people can accept these policies as clearly contributing to their welfare, they will fail. You need not worry that my people will accept only policies that pamper them. My people offered to make the last sacrifice. With their families around them, they faced down the entire array of tyranny: guns, goons and gold during the elections; tanks, troops, and threats during the four days of February. They have seen the nobility of sacrifice in the death of my husband, they have experienced the power of an iron resolve in their democratic triumph. They are prepared to take on whatever burdens are required to rebuild their nation and make it worthy, by its material progress, of its great, unprecedented and unequalled political achievement.

If you still question their capability, consider the sacrifices they have already made: sacrifices that have borne us to where we are today. The present stability in our prices and exchange rates, the balance in our current account, have been achieved at tremendous cost in terms of our national product, our employment and our living standards. In

1985, for example, our real per capita income levels were down to what they were ten years before, while our external debt had increased by \$22 billion dollars. We lost ten years in our growth process and had nothing to show for it but the dubious distinction of being the country with the fifth largest debt in the developing world.

Undaunted, we have embarked on a consistent and realistic economic recovery program which was drafted in consultation with the people and premised on social justice and private enterprise.

Mr. De Larosiere's approval of a standby program for the Philippines two days ago is an affirmation of my government's program and the confidence of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank that our objectives can be attained.

As you know, the government's program is based on a labor-oriented and rural-based growth strategy that will in the long run enable us to pay all of our legitimate debt. We have determined that in the medium term, the Philippines should grow at an average rate of six to seven percent a year in real terms. This target was chosen for two reasons. One, because we would like by 1991 to regain our 1981 real per capita levels of income. And two, because it has been predicted by independent international studies that the average growth rate of Asia in the next five years will approximate that figure. You will agree with me then, that this growth target is, at the very least, eminently reasonable.

Given this goal, I leave it in the hands of your goodselves and my government's representatives to hammer out the appropriate restructuring program that will allow us to achieve this modest target. For after all, ensuring our economic recovery in the short-term, and sustainable growth in the long run, also ensures that your own ultimate self-interest will be served by enhancing our ability to service our future obligations in full.

I should like to believe that when you and my government sit down for these negotiations we shall not do so across an adversarial table but beside each other, like oarsmen in the same boat, pulling in the same direction, for the haven of the same shore.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Democracy by the ways of democracy : speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, official visit to the United States of America, September 15-24, 1986*. Manila : [Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the American Investment Group

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the American Investment Group**

[Delivered in New York City, September 19, 1986]

A NEW PARTNERSHIP

There is no question about the strength of the relationship between the governments of the United States and Philippines. The two nations have forged a new partnership, but it must be fueled by the contributions of the American private sector.

I come here tonight from a successful few days in Washington. I thought Washington was a sober city that gave its visitors a restrained welcome. Now I know differently. I must confess Washington has given New York competition.

You will also forgive me if I am very brief. New Yorkers have responded to Washington's challenge today and it has felt like one long party since I arrived this morning.

In Washington my main purpose was to reaffirm official contacts with the political leadership of your nation. This evening I'm back to doing what I enjoy doing most – I'm campaigning. This time not for the votes of the Filipino people, but for the confidence and support of the American business and banking community.

The last few days have removed any question about the strength of the relationship between your administration and Congress and my government in the Philippines. We have a new partnership, but it must be fueled by the contributions of the American private sector. That is why tonight's joint hosting of the reception by John Whitehead, as well as Jim Robinson and Hank Greenburg, is such an important symbol. I extend my thanks to all of you.

For our part, through imaginative debt for equity conversions, encouragement of foreign investment, privatization of government assets, a liberalizing of trade and, above all, the restoration of motivation to our skilled and able work force, we have created the environment.

Now it is your turn. Jimmy Ongpin and my other ministers have worked out in detail the ways you can join us. I just want to say, accept the challenge: join us in rebuilding a democratic, free, and prosperous Philippines.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Year of Liberty

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Year of Liberty**

[Delivered in New York, September 19, 1986]

YEAR OF LIBERTY

**The Statue of Liberty holds the torch in her hand and scans the horizon for refugees in search of freedom.
The Filipinos also hold a torch that shines as bright in their hearts.**

It's good to be in New York.

I regret that I am two months late for the spectacular celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the Statue of Liberty and its physical restoration. But I was able to watch that dazzling affair on Philippine television. Filipinos understood and shared your mood of jubilation. I told myself, if the struggle for Filipino freedom was still going on, we would have used your celebration of American democracy as a symbol of our desire and struggle to get back our own.

But just eight months ago, Filipinos, too, were dancing in the streets, celebrating the restoration of their Liberty. That celebration, the night the dictatorship fell, had no fireworks. Thank God for that. But as you know the Filipinos won back their freedom in a unique way.

I was last here in New York as a tourist with my husband, Ninoy, and our children. I wish he could be with me today to revisit your city which he admired for its energy and creativity. But in a way he's the reason why I'm here – to complete the mission he started, and to convey our thanks.

Your Lady holds the torch in her hand and scans the horizon for refugees in search of freedom. We hold a torch that shines as bright in our hearts as we seek ways and means to make that freedom more meaningful for masses of Filipinos still huddled in poverty.

I'd like to take this opportunity to convey a personal message of thanks from Ninoy, myself and our children. Six years ago, we sought asylum from tyranny here in the United States and it was granted to us. Your Lady Liberty was true to her words.

And that's why I say I'm happy to be here in New York. You and I, and here I speak for the Filipino people, sure know how to celebrate freedom. From nearly opposite ends of the earth, we made 1986 the Year of Liberty.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Democracy by the ways of democracy : speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, official visit to the United States of America, September 15-24, 1986*. Manila : [Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Peace Corps

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines To the Peace Corps

[Released on September 19, 1986]

A COMMON YEARNING FOR PEACE

The Peace Corps and the Philippines share a common faith: love for and belief in peace. Filipinos believe peace has a chance in their country. They have made a great investment, individually and as a people, in order to see it work.

Your organization, my government, I as a private individual and my late husband, Ninoy, share a common faith and foundation. We love and believe in peace, and we know it is attainable.

My initiation into the search and discovery of peace was first necessitated by personal need. I learned to seek peace when circumstances conspired to have me lose it. I was 21 and had led a life of relative serenity when I married the most intelligent, articulate and endlessly driven man I had ever known. He had my head, my heart and then my entire life caught in a spin. He became our country's youngest mayor, and then governor, and then again its youngest Senator and I had to keep in step as the politician's wife.

That was the beginning of the end of my days and nights of quiet and peace.

Ironically, it is to a dictator who upset the established, if hectic, pattern of my life, that I owe my search and attainment of the deepest, most satisfying inner peace I was yet to experience. And Ninoy owed this to him, too. We found this under a climate of persecution during the dictatorship, in the confines of Ninoy's prison cell where he was isolated for almost eight years.

Little did the dictator know that by throwing Ninoy into jail, he actually set him free. The yoke of Ninoy's cares, career and ambitions were abruptly lifted from his shoulders. This was painful, for Ninoy had grown attached to these things which weighed on him, indeed, but had imparted a certain ballast and meaning to his life.

In his cell, Ninoy became a man of prayer and reflection. His endless search for the summit of political achievement became a quest for the center of peace within. It was in prison where he developed his own unshakeable personal philosophy. Its central values were reconciliation, non-violence, religious faith. And the yield of all these was peace.

I on my part had to cope with the world from which he had found a retreat. I found myself the pioneer of the opposition cause, a rather lonely state of affairs considering there was to be no significant opposition to the dictatorship for the next ten years. I, too, shed quite a number of encumbrances: a large collection of fair weather friends and associates, my family's place in the center of political and social events, all easy means towards emotional and psychological well-being.

In adversity, I found the strength I needed to cope, the grace not to be bitter, the wisdom to cling to the moral values and political ideals that Ninoy in prison symbolized and that many Filipinos privately espoused, though they were devalued currency in the New Society. The secret source of this fortitude and renewal was, like Ninoy, our Faith. For even in our poor country, that was always in abundance.

But it was during the worst of times, at the height of my anguish over Ninoy's suffering that I found the core of real peace. Ninoy had completed a gruelling 40-day hunger strike, and a military commission had sentenced him to death

by musketry. Left with nothing, and facing the bleakest prospects ahead, we found the most unexpected and unshakeable peace. We had also discovered the limits of power.

It was that same perspective, that same grounding in adversity and Faith that must have galvanized my countrymen when we opted for peaceful political change last February. We were a people who, after 20 years of suffering and shame, had come to terms with ourselves. When the troops of Marcos and the unarmed forces of our people stood face-to-face on the streets last February, we saw in each other's eyes not pride, or zeal for our respective causes, but a mutual love and a common yearning for peace. That was all we had, and all we wanted to keep.

We gave peace a chance then, as we continue to do so now. At this stage, we are striving to promote peace in the cities and in the countryside, using methods the Peace Corps is most familiar with. We are employing emergency measures and economic incentives to immediately alleviate hunger, disease, homelessness and poverty. We are trying to bring such resources and services as the government has to the grassroots level.

Simultaneously, we have opted to pursue ceasefire negotiations with the communist rebels as an initial measure, rather than escalate hostilities.

Peace has a chance in our country. We have all made a great investment, individually and as a people, in order to see it work.

May I close by commending the various activities, objectives and sacrifices made by your organization. You are fortunate indeed, for peace is a great and worthy cause.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Democracy by the ways of democracy : speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, official visit to the United States of America, September 15-24, 1986*. Manila : [Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Time Inc. Distinguished Speakers Forum

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Time Inc. Distinguished Speakers Forum**

[Delivered in New York City, September 19, 1986]

THE POWER OF THE MEDIA

Media is effective as the instrument of truth, from which it draws its real power. Media does not make or unmake governments, tanks do that, and, more rarely but surely, people do. And, even armed with the truth, media is a frail power. Without the people's support, it can be shut off with the ease of turning a light switch.

I am delighted to be able to accept *Time's* invitation to speak before this distinguished audience. When I was first featured on the cover of *Time* magazine, my youngest daughter, Kris, who was 14 then, excitedly proclaimed: "Mom, this is the ultimate! Now you can die." Thank God I am still around to be with you today, and to thank you, the media, for the invaluable role you played and continue to play in the transformation of my country.

That role, as I said, was invaluable for it was truth that set us free. In the early years of the dictatorship, it was the truth about the suppression of rights and the abuse of dignity that were taking place beneath the dictatorship's pretensions of working for its progress. In creating public opinion through your reporting, the media inhibited, I believe, the even more brazen oppression of the poor and powerless that could have easily happened. In the last three months of the dictatorship, you revealed the truth of its inevitable fate under the peaceful but unrelenting assaults of People Power.

The assassination of my husband was the turning point of the Marcos regime. You helped make it the historic and galvanizing event that it was. The images of my husband, apprehensive but courageous, being led out of the plane by soldiers in one moment, and the next moment sprawled on the tarmac, and then thrown into the back of a van, revealed the notion of an ordinary day's work for a murderous regime. The images became the icons of our revolution. They gave the full measures of the regime's arrogance of power and contempt for human life, while the bare narration of the funeral march attended by millions prefigured the end of the regime.

The images and events during the elections and the revolution are deeply etched in the memory of our people and give inspiration to the other nations of the world: men and women linked arm-to-arm guarding the ballot boxes; computer technicians hired by the government to do the official count walking out of the fraudulent tabulation; tens of thousands of men and women, with their children about them, in vigil, half in fear half in joy, guarding with their bodies the small detachment of rebel soldiers; nuns kneeling in the path of oncoming tanks; a nation rising to a new dignity. These images and more chronicled for all the world the courage and pride of a people, their deep faith in the rightness of their cause, the protection of God, and the ultimate triumph of democracy.

And so, you, the foreign media, have been the companion of my people in its long and painful journey to freedom.

But even as I briefly recount these momentous events, one should recognize an underlying reality that they reveal. And that is why I thought the half-joking remark of my daughter carried with it a grain of wisdom. For with the transparent insight of the innocent, she expressed the reality that you, more than others, should recognize: the liberating virtue of truth and the power of the media to make it happen.

It is a power, it seems, that feeds one man's hunger for truth, a hunger that accepts no substitute, neither promises of material progress nor safe and comforting lies, and will overcome the most intricate and comprehensive web of censorship. Although the Marcos regime effectively controlled the Philippine media, there was never a period when some kind of "alternative press" did not attempt to report the facts and challenge the misinformation published by the government. In the later stages of the Marcos regime, such alternative press took the form of small newspapers that operated from day to day under the constant threat of closure or arrest or para-military terrorism. But throughout the whole Marcos regime, there was always what may be described as the "xerox media" and the "Betamax media." News items and opinion columns in US newspapers and magazines were widely photocopied, and US national newscasts were lifted in videocassettes, smuggled into the Philippines, and reproduced over and over again by innumerable and spontaneous networks of Filipinos hungering for the truth.

The rebirth of Philippine democracy is undoubtedly the showcase of media power, but less obviously, it is also a demonstration of its limits.

Fourteen years of lies in the controlled Philippine press, once the most respected institution in the old Republic, did not dull the appetite for truth or save the dictatorship from it. Marcos had the media and the guns, we had the truth.

Eleven years – up to the death of Ninoy – of the foreign media's sporadic attention to Philippine events, and its occasional dismissal of the prospects of a democratic restoration in the face of a "firmly entrenched dictatorship," did not deter Ninoy or "the increasingly small and irrelevant opposition" – another phrase familiar to you, I believe – from carrying on the fight.

Media is effective as the instrument of truth, from which it draws its real power. Media does not make or unmake governments; tanks do that, and, more rarely but surely, people do. And, even armed with the truth, media is a frail power. Without the people's support, it can be shut off with the ease of turning a light switch. An official threat to your advertisers, a grip on your paper supply or a squad of soldiers at your doorstep, and your last issue becomes your paper's valedictory.

These things are inconceivable here because the enemies of democracy believe that the people won't allow them to happen. But study what happened in the small version of your democracy and media that was my country on September 21, 1972. The people did not protest the shutdown of the media, and there was nothing media could do about it. But from the assassination of Ninoy onwards, the people demonstrated massively against any attempt by the government to shut down the alternative press and Radio Veritas. The media did not restore democracy in the Philippines, the people did. They made the Revolution and protected their media.

A few months ago, I gave a brief speech to the foreign media on the occasion of the book launching of *Bayan Ko*. I told them that they had been privileged with the story of a lifetime and the rare opportunity to live up to the highest standards of journalistic objectivity and yet be part of a moral and, on top of that, victorious crusade. They all looked a little sad that it was over. But I could not share their sadness. They could go off to other crusades. But I had become the leader of a nation working to rebuild a house worthy of its new-found pride. And that is another story. It will be many years from now before its success deserves a headline.

We have a long way to go and it will be a hard climb uphill. I hope that just as you sympathized with us in our hard days of struggle, so will you support us now in our efforts to build a country to match our pride. As you channelled your power to undo a dictatorship, so may you channel it now to help create an enduring democracy. In short, I ask that you use media's tremendous power to build up rather than to tear down, to create rather than to destroy.

I would ask you to report the truth about the Philippines within the full context in which alone the truth is really true. And the context, for the Philippines, is that of a developing nation ravaged by years of mismanagement and abuse by the Marcos regime, of a people struggling under difficult circumstances to arrive at the maturity and self-sufficiency of a sovereign nation. Do not despair too easily, for that is as infectious as courage proved itself contagious. Do not be too hasty in projecting the failure of other post-dictatorship societies onto our future. For you write about a unique people. They put their lives on the line to take part, just for the principle of the thing, in an election they expected to be rigged from the start and, on top of that, they defeated the effort. These people, who lived under

military terror for 14 years, offered their lives, without the least hesitation, to protect the forlorn revolt of a handful of men in uniform. Give them the benefit of the doubt, and the justice, that they can preserve the democracy they restored with such distinction.

It is these qualities of a people, that will be present in the Philippine scene, more and more visible as we return to normalcy. Do not turn a cynical eye on them: for every corruption you will also find instances of generosity; for every inefficiency, you will also find dedication; for every foolishness, there will also be a flash of greatness.

We have nothing to hide in our country. On the contrary, we take pains to reveal the full extent of the devastation we have inherited and the difficulty and confusion of rebuilding from it, given the little we have left to build with and the democratic principles that we are pledged to abide by. Do not be hasty to judge us by the efficient principles of a dictatorship, whose inefficiency, cruelty, and waste you yourselves did so much to expose to our people.

And so I ask you to report the truth, the whole truth, about the Philippines. Of the truth, which made us free, we have obviously no fear.

You can look at our problems. But you can also look at our solutions: to restore faith in the administration of justice we named good judges. We are cleaning up the electoral process, the perversion of which led to widespread disenchantment. We are setting a very high moral tone in government. Many men and women are serving us for nothing or next to nothing. We are professionalizing the military. We are reaching out to the rebels and the disenchanted. We expect to have a new constitution soon. We shall have elections early next year at the national and local levels. We are rebuilding our economy. We have regained our respected standing in the community of nations. We can look anyone in the eye and say we are Filipinos.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Democracy by the ways of democracy : speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, official visit to the United States of America, September 15-24, 1986*. Manila : [Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce and the New York Club
Speech
of

Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines

To the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce and the New York Club

[Delivered at the Hilton Hotel, New York, New York, September 19, 1986]

A NEW VISION OF THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines has risen from the ruins of a 14-year tyranny, stronger in faith, politically united and thus able to fashion a dynamic economy. To bring about economic growth, the country is cutting back on the role of government even as it is setting up the basic conditions for entrepreneurship and industry. The three main areas of concern are outright assistance for start-up costs, money to produce and markets to sell in, and more liberal terms for debt-servicing.

Investors will find in the country a raft of business opportunities: an English-speaking, educated, cost-efficient labor force, renewable natural resources, some \$7 billion of idle and under-used assets to dispose of.

Filipino economists propose an idea that foreign investors should find worth considering: putting the country's foreign debt to work by allowing investors to buy discounted Philippine paper and use it, at full value, for peso-equity in the Philippines.

Since I have come to America to talk to the private sector as well as to your government, it is not only a pleasure to be here tonight but a need as well.

I suspect there are two thoughts uppermost in your minds tonight: curiosity about the unlikely looking revolutionary you see before you, and concern how a people's power revolution can be a good basis for business.

You may feel that, while what happened in our revolution was true to American ideals, we remain a political risk. One woman's people power could be another man's mob. You watched in suspense and sympathy the birth of a new Philippines, but you wonder now how it will grow up. So, though you share our hopes, yet, as experienced observers of risk, you know how unstable post-dictatorship governments can be.

So tonight, you are looking for reassurance from me. Your hearts are with us but your minds are still uncertain. Well, I think I can reassure you. But I want to do more than that. I want to describe a new vision of the Philippines rising like a phoenix from the dust and ruins of a 14-year tyranny.

It is a vision of a Philippines strong in faith, united behind its political leadership, and thus able to fashion a dynamic economy. Once the second wealthiest Asian country after Japan, we have since plummeted off the charts. We call our economic malaise "crony capitalism." You would call it state capitalism. Neither phrase captures its essence. It was plain theft, plain but incredible. Only a tiny fraction of the \$26 billion Mr. Marcos borrowed actually ended up in productive local investment. You have heard of capital flight, my predecessor broke the sound barrier – with a cargo plane.

When we went to the polls and then to the streets to oust a discredited regime we were fighting for many of the same economic goals that business America has embraced in recent years. The same objectives that have marked the Reagan revolution here – getting government off the backs of people and out of the pockets of business – are behind what we hope will prove to be a second or economic revolution.

Now, I don't want to overdo the parallel. Our revolution was rooted in the religious, political and cultural context of the Philippines. Although religion is a strong force in your national life, I doubt you would call your revolution a miracle. We believe ours was. For there is no other explanation for unarmed people standing against tanks and guns.

Nor do I expect you to understand the depth of our nationalism. A lot of what is now happening in our country is about recovering our self-respect. It would be hard for a proud and independent nation like yours which has never suffered tyranny to imagine the sense of degradation we Filipinos have felt in recent years.

This faith in ourselves which was reborn along EDSA is essential to our economic recovery. Don't let it make you nervous. You only have to look at Japan, Korea, Singapore and Indonesia to see that a strong nationalism was the inspiration to success.

What you now see in us is a nation experiencing a rebirth of pride and freedom. To a puzzled outside world, we may appear at times to be a trifle intoxicated with freedom; the changeover seems confused. But in fact, we enjoy more stability than we had when our country presented the monolithic facade of a dictatorship to the world. Behind that facade an armed insurgency grew from a mere 500 to over 16,000, and its 14 year-old dictatorship fell to a three months' siege of peaceful people power. Now government in the Philippines has recovered legitimacy and can pursue a credible twin-track policy towards the Communists: the olive branch of negotiations and the insurance of military reform.

The Filipinos believe in their government and are committed irrevocably to democracy. Over the past 14 years, we learned a hard lesson. Nothing is worth trading off freedom. It is this underlying stability that should reassure you. Do not be misled by the froth and antics of a handful of malcontents in Manila. We are moving forward steadily and on course. We have restored integrity to the Supreme Court and honor to the Armed Forces. The draft of a new constitution is about to be completed. A plebiscite is next and national elections after that. All in the next six months.

Like you, we, too, are cutting back on the role of government. We, too, are putting faith in the private sector. But the costs of doing so are high. Two-thirds of our nation live beneath the poverty line. The remaining one-third requires government to set up the basic conditions for entrepreneurship and industry. For ours, unlike yours, is not a land of virgin promise, amber waves of grain and fruited plains – but a country emptied of hope and stripped of its riches.

But we still have our respect for one another. Our people is our greatest asset, and our new economic order will be built on basic human values and rights. There will be no trading off freedom for prosperity.

This common path we are treading as two proud and independent nations gives us a basis of friendship that we have rarely had before: mutual respect. And it is on this basis that my message to you is made tonight. Invest in the Philippines. Not because we need your money although we clearly do; not because our people are poor although they are. Invest in the Philippines because it is to our mutual advantage.

Ours is an English-speaking, educated, cost-efficient labor force. Others took away our price advantage, now we are getting it back. Our wealth rests on our renewable natural resources, our agricultural abundance, despite the past neglect of this sector, and on a high level of human skills that have shown a remarkable capacity to innovate, copy and move quickly into new markets and products.

The escape from the repressive labor laws of the dictator has resulted, quite naturally, in more strikes than in the previous seven months, but these were settled more quickly. Why? Because the political consensus that underlies good labor relations has been restored. Filipinos believe in their country again. So what we now have in the Philippines is a committed workforce and a free one. One which understands that it must deliver a competitive cost advantage over its international competitors.

The astounding victory during our February revolution where we stood against tanks with our children around us, tells us that the country can now politically afford a liberal decentralized economy. At every level, this confidence factor is telling in our favor: our international reserves have nearly doubled the past six months, the peso has

stabilized against the dollar, the foreign exchange black market has virtually vanished, and there is a positive GNP growth rate. For the next year, the IMF expects “a substantial recovery of six to seven percent.” That will be a dramatic turnaround, but my economic ministers will tell you that that is just the beginning.

Another business opportunity is to be found in our idle or underutilized productive capacity. As the government gets out of business, there is some \$7 billion of idle and underused assets to dispose of.

I invite you to join us. We have fair and clear guidelines about foreign investment. I am keen to encourage joint ventures because this seems to me the way to ensure the long-term acceptance of foreign investors. We have sectors like public utilities, where, like any independent country, we wish to preserve full Filipino control but there also remain pioneer and export-oriented sectors where we give an equally warm welcome to 100 percent foreign ownership.

In conclusion, allow me to restate briefly and clearly what are our three main areas of concern.

First, outright assistance. We badly need what you call in business start-up costs, and we badly need funds to modernize our agricultural industry and provide jobs that will in turn energize our own local markets. I realize only too well, in view of your new tax laws, how constrained your budget is. Can you, however, match our miracle with one of your own and help us get started?

Second, trade. All the economists tell us we must export. But export requires two things: money to produce and markets to sell in. Yet almost everywhere we look, the markets are closed to us.

Third, debt. As a sovereign nation, we will honor all our legitimate obligations. However, given the many national needs that we have to fill, it wrenches my soul to think of using 50 percent of our foreign trade income to service interest payments. The monkey remains on our back. That monkey is the only thing we ever saw from the \$26 billion.

Our own economists and financiers have proposed an idea that is worth considering. We will put the debt to work by allowing investors to buy discounted Philippine paper and use it, at full value, for peso-equity in the Philippines.

Earlier, I used the image of the phoenix, the mythical bird that dies only to rise again, more brilliantly, from its own ashes. Out there on EDSA, when my people placed their bodies against the tanks, when a single curse, a single act of violence would have pushed us beyond recall and forgiveness into calamity, our nation experienced a kind of death and rebirth. We died to our fears and were reborn to courage, and thereby recovered our freedom. We face our future with confidence because we are moving towards it with courage. This quality is not unknown to American enterprise, nor is the attraction of a great challenge. With the surety of success that courage gives, I invite you to join us in meeting the challenge of Philippine recovery and progress.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Democracy by the ways of democracy : speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, official visit to the United States of America, September 15-24, 1986*. Manila : [Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Benigno S. Aquino Foundation

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines To the Benigno S. Aquino Foundation

[Delivered in Boston, Massachusetts, September 20, 1986]

MY DREAMER'S DREAM

Non-violence was the wellspring from which flowed the current of the Filipino's yellow revolution. The current swept Corazon Aquino to power and the Philippines to freedom. It was not a destructive flow, as revolutions are wont to be, but rather a cleansing tide without a spot of blood to stain in the brightness of the future.

The word "Foundation" has such a ring of finality to it. When the Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., Foundation was setup after my husband's death, I was honored but sad. It seemed then that Ninoy and all he fought for were now to be buried and relegated to history. How could I have known then that years later, and to this day, we would still be involved in the making of history?

And so the Aquino Foundation did not serve, as I feared it would, as a marker on a grave, as a memorial of a solitary struggle and a passing outburst of public sympathy.

Your Foundation, and I hope I do not sound too presumptuous as I say this, might now function as the word "foundation" suggests. It serves to commemorate Ninoy's sacrifice, his principles, ideals and faith. For these have served, as much by Provident design as by his deliberate intention, as the foundation of that series of glorious actions by our people by which they recovered their pride and restored their freedom.

Last August 21, on the third anniversary of Ninoy's death, one of the afternoon events involved the laying of a plaque on the tarmac of the Manila International Airport. A memorial slab was placed on the exact spot where Ninoy was sprawled in a pool of his own blood. Earlier that day, at Santo Domingo Church, I had summed up the meaning of this image that served as the icon of our Revolution.

"One man sprawled on the tarmac; one seed fallen to the ground, watered with blood. Tyranny had sowed a bullet and reaped a revolution. One man had worked the reluctant field of his people, finally threw in his life, and brought us home a harvest of freedom."

Coretta King, widow of American martyr and hero Martin Luther King, had joined me on the tarmac. It occurred to me, as we watched the plaque being fitted in its place, how Coretta and I were so privileged. We had walked with our husbands as they sowed their message of liberation and watched them moisten the seeds of their ideals with their own blood. And then they had left us and our people to reap and enjoy what they had planted so well.

Coretta King spoke of both Martin Luther and Ninoy, "Both of these men," she said, "shared a passionate commitment to the philosophy and strategy of non-violence. And both men knew they would pay the highest price for their commitment to freedom. They proved that the forces of repression and brutality can slay the dreamer but not the dream."

That founding philosophy, revolving around the ways of peace as the means of change, with brotherhood, justice, freedom, as the fruits of that change, was the wellspring from which flowed the current of our yellow revolution. That current, as you know, swept me to power and our nation to freedom. It was not a destructive flood, as

revolutions are wont to be, but rather a cleansing tide without a spot of blood to stain the brightness of the future. Indeed we reaped, not the nightmare predicted by so many, but my dreamer's dream.

I had never before that day seen that place on the tarmac where Ninoy fell. The traces of his blood, certainly, were gone. A permanent marker, cut of stone and metal, had taken its place. As I stood above the marker to read it, I felt myself on solid ground. My standing as chief executive of our recently liberated country is moored on Ninoy's legacy and sacrifice. My role is to nurture our people's commitment to reconciliation, unity, peace and democracy. These are the offshoots of the seed sown on August 21, 1983.

In that task of helping these ideals take firmer root, I am glad that Ninoy is my foundation. I have used what I had learned observing him as a brave correspondent, a young and fast-rising politician and already the champion of democracy against the growing threat of dictatorship, and then as a prisoner of that dictatorship, an exile from it, and finally as the victim of its arrogance and the nemesis of all its victims.

It was here in Boston and in the fellowship of his expatriate countrymen that Ninoy found the comforting community and the tranquil surroundings needed to refine his vision and prepare himself for the final struggle. And it was in Harvard, in its libraries and among its students, its learned fellow and faculty, that he found the wide perspective and the intellectual rigor to fully understand the nature of the struggle he had been waging and the further requirements for its success. Certainly, his respect for American libertarian ideals was strengthened here, where the seeds of modern democracy were first planted. It was here in Boston where Ninoy had his first taste of the good life, the free life, after almost eight long years of suffering. It was here that he had his last taste of it. Forgive my immodesty if I point out with pride that my husband went willingly to his death, not to escape desperate circumstances, but from the joys of freedom and family.

I must thank the Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. Foundation for remembering my husband, for preserving the memorabilia of our years in this Camelot of a city that was the last home he knew. For Ninoy was snatched away at the last moment before he could step into his old home again and spirited away to the pantheon of our heroes. I must thank you for giving me this opportunity to be among you once again. Ninoy is no longer with us. But as he was wont to be in life, he is once again the center of attention, the life of the party, the dominant figure in this gathering. In only one aspect have I managed to outdo him today. For once, it is I, and not he, who has done most of the talking. But he will forgive, as long it is he who is the main topic of all conversation. And that, I think, we will gladly oblige.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Democracy by the ways of democracy : speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, official visit to the United States of America, September 15-24, 1986*. Manila : [Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Conferment of an Honorary Degree in Boston University Speech
of**

**Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines**

At the Conferment of an Honorary Degree in Boston University

[Delivered in Boston University, September 20, 1986]

A SUPERHIGHWAY OF JUSTICE

There is a community of aspiration that unites all of humanity in one single-minded effort to lift up the quality of life everywhere. There is a link between the tragedy that struck down Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy and Robert Kennedy, and the tragedy that took Jose Rizal and Ninoy Aquino in the Philippines. A tortuous road which has led from Montgomery to Manila to Massachusetts is a road over which millions of individuals have traveled to renew their sense of dignity. The Philippines and the United States can help widen that narrow road into what Martin Luther King referred to as a superhighway of justice.

In receiving me here today and giving me this very high honor, I know only too well that it is the people of the Philippines whom you really honor. And I know that in paying them this tribute you do so in recognition of the ideals we share despite distance between us.

Therefore I will respond in behalf of all my countrymen: we deeply appreciate this expression of your regard. We accept it in all humility, conscious that the fight for democracy and freedom is never won once and for all, least of all in the soil of ferment and change which is the Philippines today.

To be honored in this way by this distinguished University in this famous City of Boston has for us a very personal meaning and importance. For Boston for a time was the home in exile of my late husband, Senator Benigno Aquino, and our family. At a time when the prospects for change in our land still looked forlorn and distant, your city and its great institutions of learning provided us understanding and support, and enabled us to keep the flame of hope alive, the hope that we could go back home in freedom.

Standing again in your company, almost seven months after that hope was fulfilled, we are encouraged to believe that our present labor to rebuild a devastated nation will just as quickly find fulfillment.

The story is told of your Reverend John Winthrop, upon first sighting the land that would be Boston, said: "we must always consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill – the eyes of all people are upon us."

Something close to that is the challenge we now face in the Philippines. The eyes of the entire world are upon us. Before us the way is daunting and perilous, and uncharted in some parts. But we do not intend to fail.

I long to be able to tell you that there will unfailingly rise on Philippine soil a community as strong, as stable and as progressive as you have here in Boston, in Massachusetts and in America. But this is, as you say here in your country, "a tall order." But our present labors – resolute, unyielding and total – will fill out the rest of the story, a success story.

Remember if you will, that, not too long ago people were telling us that effecting a peaceful change of government in the Philippines was an impossible task. Yet we have done the impossible!

Who is to say that we cannot do it again? That we cannot carry the rebirth of freedom in our country to a new day of peace and progress in our land?

Boston University calls to mind Martin Luther King who received here his divinity training and degree. He too had a dream which in his lifetime looked impossible of realization. Yet we now see how he brought that vision before the conscience of America and gave it life, and how it lives on as a standard for millions to carry and live up to today. You did yourselves proud in erecting a monument to his memory.

This city and state call to mind another martyr, John F. Kennedy who raised before this nation and the world an image of government placed in the service of the highest purposes and ideals. Violence struck him down, but his legacy has never been lost. Camelot is not forgotten, and as Senator Edward Kennedy has said: "the work goes on, the cause endures and the dream shall never die."

There is a community of aspiration, I believe, that unites all of humanity in one single-minded effort to lift up the quality of life everywhere. There is a link between the tragedy that struck down Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy and Robert Kennedy and the tragedy that took our own Jose Rizal and Ninoy Aquino in the Philippines. And there is a link between the triumphs that these tragedies all brought to fulfillment.

We are "riders on the earth together," as the poet Archibald Macleish memorably put it, "brothers in the unending night." While the everyday world may bear to us tidings of conflicts and divisions from all corners of the globe, something else incessantly unites us in our common humanity, cutting through the boundaries that separate nations from one another.

No human institution better fosters this thread of union than our universities and places of learning. For it is here, I believe, where the kinship of people is sustained and enabled to grow.

Here at Boston University you have a center for democracy, whose work, let me say now, has been of the deepest relevance to what has happened and is happening in my country today. I take this opportunity to acknowledge publicly on behalf of my people and government the center's and the university's support for us. And let me say also that I have asked our own University of the Philippines to formally take part in the inauguration of the proposed "Democracy Hall" being put up by the center and the City of Boston, by providing an exhibit of our experiences, at once unique and universal, in bringing democracy back to the Philippines.

After nearly a century, relations between the United States and the Philippines have become the subject of many clichés. There is one, however, that seems to me to have survived time and abuse, and lives on in the experiences of our two peoples. It is that one which says that Americans and Filipinos drink from the common fount of democracy.

This is so because there will always be people like Martin Luther King and Ninoy Aquino who belong to their dreams. Our peoples will always respond to leaders who can agree with what Dr. King said: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," or be inspired by what my own husband said of his oppressed people: "The Filipino is worth dying for."

Dr. King's principle of non-violence was often mentioned in the dying years of the dictatorship in my country, when we would go back to him, Rosa Parks, Gandhi, and Henry David Thoreau, all the way to Antigone, for models of peaceful protest. Thus we can paraphrase him and say that the tortuous road which has led from Montgomery to Manila to Massachusetts is a road over which millions of individuals have traveled, to renew their sense of dignity. And after this morning's touching occasion where you honor my country, let us do what we can to help widen that narrow road into what Martin Luther King referred to as "a superhighway of justice."

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Democracy by the ways of democracy : speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, official visit to the United States of America, September 15-24, 1986*. Manila : [Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at a dinner hosted by Boston City Mayor Ramon Flynn

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At a dinner hosted by Boston City Mayor Ramon Flynn**

[Delivered in Boston, Massachusetts, September 20, 1986]

A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

To the Aquino family, Boston is a special city. It gave them the last home that they shared together. But beyond personal reasons, President Aquino is endeared to Boston because it is a cradle of freedom.

For me, this is a sentimental journey home.

Once I made up my mind to come, there was no question I would visit Boston, which gave us the last home that Ninoy and I and our children shared. And Boston, of course, gave him his first taste of freedom after almost eight years in a tiny, windowless cell. That was a God-sent gift to feel free at last in the mother city of American freedom. Boston gave us the happiest years of our lives together.

But Boston and the Great Commonwealth of Massachusetts has more than a personal meaning for one Filipino. As early as 1796, a vigorous trade was carried on between Salem and Boston, on the one hand, and the Philippines, on the other. No Salem boy thought the Philippines were canned goods! Indeed, it is recorded that “four and a quarter million pounds of sugar were landed at Boston in 1843.” What a change for the worse since then for Philippine sugar in the United States! But while direct trade in goods between Salem and Manila ceased in 1858, a nobler trade in ideas developed.

We recognized this even greater contribution. Ninoy was in love with this city, its history, and its institutions that are so congenial to reflection and learning. Not for nothing, he would say, is this city called the Athens of America. Boston was in his Athenian exile, the fount of liberty; the city on the hill that beckoned to him in his thirst to know more about freedom and the rights that protect it. For me, Boston was just the plain loveliest city I have known, and, of course, the home of the Celtics, in the State that gave birth to basketball.

If sugar and liberty were our historic links, basketball is what brings your fair state to vivid life for many Filipinos, who are even more fanatic about the game than you are. Indeed, some people might want nothing better than for us to pirate Larry Bird, a household name back home, to play in Manila. However, this might wipe out our foreign exchange reserves and imperil my talks with the New York bankers on Monday. And the last thing we can afford at the moment is a two-front war, against communist insurgents at home and Celtic fans over here.

Let me acknowledge the contributions of your learned statesmen, judges, writers, educators, businessmen, and politicians to the effort of everyone and every country in the world, mine especially, to achieve freedom through the liberating power of truth and progress through freedom. It was with the words of one of them, Ralph Waldo Emerson, that I consoled myself when Ninoy was killed. The shot, I prayed, would be “heard round the world” and rouse at least my people.

Despite some nitpicking as to the background of some guests at the Boston Tea Party, that great social event was the great inspiration of our passive resistance, even as your Thoreau was our teacher.

And today, as the leader of a people who yearn for peace so they can bind their wounds and rebuild their house, I take the counsel of your bold son whom Filipinos loved and admired as much as you did. “Let us never negotiate out

of fear, but let us never fear to negotiate.” And in my desire to have peace at last, I am as determined as he was to “pay any price, bear any burden, and meet any hardship.” With those words, I overcame the objections of my advisers and security officers and went to the site of our country’s most bitter conflict to talk peace with the chief of the secessionist movement.

Clearly some of the world’s broadest and most penetrating intellects were from here. It is a little ironic that it should be said that the streets of Boston are laid out along 17th century cow paths and that to drive around here you have to think like a cow. The fact is, no more forward-looking and broad-perspectived citizens, who see the world without blinders, are to be found than here.

I therefore stand extremely honored and awed in this cradle of freedom.

I think I have gushed enough over this city of happy memories for me. Let me just conclude by saying that I believe that the Boston Red Sox and Roger Clemens will continue to be on top of the American League: they will win the pennant, the playoffs and the World Series. And I wish you many splendid autumn memories this winter, and as happy as those my children and I will always have of Boston.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Democracy by the ways of democracy : speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, official visit to the United States of America, September 15-24, 1986*. Manila : [Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on remembering Ninoy Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On remembering Ninoy**

[Delivered at the St. Ignatius Boston College, Boston, Massachusetts, September 21, 1986]

REMEMBERING NINOY

Ninoy's life had run its full course. Not a minute or day could be added or subtracted. He left exactly at the appointed time, in the fullness of his development, a worthy sacrifice to a noble cause: the rebirth of democracy whose time had come.

I am glad to be here again among familiar faces: in this church that offered a place of solace and meditation, in this city that provided the last home Ninoy, the children and I would ever share.

I wish now to speak less about myself than of Ninoy. Since many of you were his friends and you miss him as I do, I thought you might want to spend a few moments of remembrance.

I have stood, for the past ten months, in the vortex of political events, first as the challenger to the dictator and then as the President that took away his place. If I had plotted the scenario of those events, I would not be at the center but Ninoy. I would have given to Ninoy the role of populist leader and revolutionary. After all, he was the star of the family. And he was better rehearsed for the part. Ninoy had been our country's youngest mayor, governor, and senator. He was the chief challenger to Marcos' ambition. He seemed the logical choice for next president. He became, at any rate, Marcos's logical choice to be the first in jail.

But scenarios in the real world, I've learned, do not unfold as we expect them to. People have remarked what a waste of a life Ninoy's was, what a waste of brains, of political savvy, of vast experience and knowledge, of sheer energy that flowed through him more abundantly than most other men. But perhaps no less than the sacrifice of a man for all men was needed to give freedom back to a whole nation.

Still the question: Why should others, who did not push the plow and sow as tirelessly as he had, enjoy the harvest?

Faced with questions like these, I am glad my foundations are in my Faith. For I am certain that Ninoy is savoring the fruits of his labors with greater relish than any of us. For Faith tells us that men of faith are meant for greater ends and richer rewards than we can imagine. And adding to Ninoy's joy is the knowledge that he pulled a fast one on me. Once again, he has gone his merry way and left me behind to pick up after him.

Thanks to my faith also, I can see that Ninoy's life had run its full course. Not a minute or a day could be added or subtracted. He left us exactly at the appointed time, in the fullness of his development, a worthy sacrifice to a noble cause: the rebirth of democracy whose time had come.

Ninoy was a man in a hurry, rushing through his incarnations as local politician, national leader, and champion of the opposition, to meet his appointment in jail so he could begin his education as a man fit to be the liberator of his people.

For it was during those seven and a half years in a military stockade in Fort Bonifacio, most of it spent in solitary confinement, that Ninoy grew to his full measure as a man. It was in that empty, windowless cell, that Ninoy saw the things that had eluded him: the vanity of ambition, the true meaning of freedom, the limitless endurance of the human spirit, and the real purpose of his life. By shutting one door on Ninoy, Marcos opened the other one to his destiny.

From the teachings of the Bible, which he read and reread, Ninoy formed a new strategy for political change. It was a strategy of mercy, peace and gentleness, of the Christian virtues of forgiveness and self-sacrifice. The pragmatic politician in Ninoy remained to work out the means, but it was his Christian conscience that shaped those means for their noble and gentle purpose: the return of freedom through reconciliation.

Still there are those who would say what a waste of manhood Ninoy was, to be cut down in his prime, the perfect leader for his country and time. But it is said in the Old Testament that only the most pleasing sacrifice would move heaven to give an abundant harvest. I would like to believe that in a very similar way Ninoy was such a sacrifice. He came from our people, and thus atoned for our apathy. He came from the discredited world of democratic politics, so no one else or less could redeem it in the eyes of our people. We had failed so miserably to protect our cherished freedoms that only the best of us could make up for our neglect and failure. I would like to believe that his martyrdom is an assurance of the abundance and prosperity that might someday be restored to our land.

Perhaps I read too much into recent events, in which case I hope you will forgive me. Like Ninoy, I find so much hope and strength in my Faith. Also, I know I speak before an audience of his friends; and who else will indulge and be patient with me, than you who were so supportive and indulgent during our years here in exile? Among you he regained his good cheer and confidence. With the resident professors and wits of Boston academe, Ninoy matched and sharpened his wits. In this liberal and reflective atmosphere, Ninoy found the space and atmosphere to work out and refine his vision of non-violent change in the Philippines.

In the lives of those who are committed, nothing happens by accident. Even when Ninoy won too many rounds of mahjong, I knew there was more to it than luck. In fact the word is out that those of you who played with him would let him win to lift him out of his occasional depression. He would never have admitted that. But I suppose, with the victory of his cause, he can afford to be magnanimous. And so, in his behalf, I thank you for these little things and for the big things; for making Ninoy's stay here so pleasant, for helping to fill his cup of joy before he went home to drain it in sacrifice, and for extending to me the same familiar warmth and acceptance.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Democracy by the ways of democracy : speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, official visit to the United States of America, September 15-24, 1986*. Manila : [Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights**

[Delivered at the New York Westin Hotel, New York, New York, September 21, 1986]

HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL

The rule of law is the only human order. Its perversion, going by the name of “law and order” or “national security,” should fool no one except those willing to be fooled. To think of human rights at all, to be concerned about them, should be to think universally of human rights for all.

Exactly 14 years ago to the day, my predecessor proclaimed martial law, jailed my husband, deprived us all of our freedom and made us conscious of what human rights were all about.

It seems only fitting then that I should begin by paying tribute to some of those who helped us regain our freedoms.

The Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, was for many years, supportive of our struggle. In the dark years of the dictatorship, these lawyers would go to the Philippines to offer assistance and good cheer to the human rights movement there. It is one of several organizations world-wide which contributed to our liberation. These groups enabled the world to have a window on the gross violation of human rights in my country.

To speak of human rights to those whose Declaration of Independence holds the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness as unalienable, may be presumptuous as it is unnecessary. But, what is familiar is taken for granted, like breathing, until it is taken away. Then the heart stops. Then it is realized too late that one cannot live without it.

My late husband used to say, in moments of introspection, that one reason we have to be grateful for martial law is that, by it, we came to appreciate our cherished freedoms.

On August 21, 1983, the forces of evil violated my husband’s human right to life, as well as his right to return to live in his homeland. But the soil watered by the blood of our numerous martyrs – my husband was only one of them – soon reaped for us the blessing of freedom.

The spectre of “salvaging,” and disappearances, we hope, will soon be gone completely. We are committed to respect the right to human dignity, the right not to be tortured, the right not to be held incommunicado, of everyone.

We likewise guarantee the basic human right to take part in the political process, by way of free speech, free assembly, voting and being voted for.

Our government sponsors a liberal atmosphere. Here, you may have three or four newspapers. We have about two dozen back home.

I am confident that the whole world learned something from our peaceful revolution, a vindication of the principle that one can only continue to govern with the consent of the governed.

My predecessor arbitrarily imprisoned tens of thousands without charges, for merely opposing or criticizing him. For my part I have not caused to be arrested even a single person for merely espousing dissenting or critical views, no matter how intemperate or vulgar.

Where my predecessor thrived on secrecy, I have an open presidency. If I have taken steps that might seem to some remarkable, kindly note that I could not have just taken over as if the transition from a dictatorship to a democracy were the most ordinary, routinary thing in the world.

True, democracy is subject to pressure by all sorts of interests, some enlightened; many, if not most, grossly not. Lobbies are a democratic institution. In my country the gap between the rich, who are not many, and the poor, who are not few, remains, and it is the purpose of the new government to close or at least narrow it. It cannot be done in a few months or even years, but surely not never! In any case dictatorship cannot do the job at all. Terror supports greed.

The record of our government so far is mixed, given the complexity of the problems we inherited. Some things are however totally within our control without having to be bothered by objective conditions at home and abroad. Setting a high standard of public morality depends on us. Corruption at the highest levels permeated the previous regime. We have reversed this.

The vast majority of our people reject insurgency and have kept faith with the democratic principle. As President of the Philippines, however, I am the leader of all Filipinos. Therefore, I am obligated, while trying to eliminate the insurgency, to be careful about how rebels as human beings should be treated.

As has been said, one does not defend democracy by totalitarian means. And only last September 5, our Supreme Court once more cautioned the authorities against committing human rights abuses in its campaign against rebellion and subversion, saying that these do not help in solving the problem.

“A cavalier attitude towards constitutional liberties and protections,” the court said, “will only fan the increase of subversive activities, instead of containing and suppressing them.”

This has created some problems and tensions, but this too we will solve, in our own time and in our way.

The rule of law – not of one man, junta or party – is the only human order. Its perversion, going by the name of “law and order” or “national security,” should fool no one except those willing and eager to be fooled, perhaps expecting to profit from the cruel masquerade.

Democracy is the worst form of government except all others, as Churchill put it. We live as human beings, not as objects to be manipulated at another’s whim. We are subject only to impersonal law. We are not subjects but persons of inherent worth. But we may not enjoy this status all by ourselves. No man is an island, to quote John Donne. We are involved in mankind.

To think of human rights at all, to be concerned about them, should be to think universally, of human rights for all. I need not quote Donne again about the tolling of the bell. You know for whom it tolls.

Do continue your efforts then until your kind of human rights lawyering becomes almost unnecessary. But today, the struggle for human rights is far from over. A lot remains to be done all over the world.

Our Constitutional Commission now in session has an admirable Bill of Rights, containing lessons distilled from the bitter crucible of Martial Law. And we say, “never again.”

This we intend to insure with the help of all our golden friends like the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights.

If I may be permitted, I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge at the same time the splendid, continuing efforts of other groups and individuals who are helping us extricate ourselves from the mess we inherited.

In my first Executive Order, after the February Revolution, I created the Presidential Commission on Good Government. I tasked it with recovering the enormous wealth that had been stolen and concealed, not only in the Philippines but in the other countries of the world, including the United States and Switzerland. In this country, where a good portion of the ill-gotten wealth is located, we needed – and fortunately obtained – the *pro bono* services of distinguished lawyers connected with the Center for Constitutional Rights. They represent us with skill and vigor in various courts, without thought of material reward. In addition, we obtained the counselling service of an eminent group of international law experts associated with the best law schools and law firms in this country. These men and women of the law have sent a clear message everywhere: no dictator may pillage his country and retire unchallenged on the spoils of his corruption.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Democracy by the ways of democracy : speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, official visit to the United States of America, September 15-24, 1986*. Manila : [Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Asia Society

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Asia Society**

[Released on September 22, 1986]

NINYO'S LEGACY

By Ninoy Aquino's death, he gave a new life and added new force to the Filipino people's longing for liberation. As he predicted, Marcos had to step down and thereby make it possible for the Filipinos to lay the basis for national unity.

The Asia Society will always be close to my heart. It was the first major organization to give my husband, Ninoy, a forum when he was in exile. Early this year, in its desire to provide Americans with an accurate basis to assess and understand important events in Asia, the society also sent to the Philippines a very distinguished study group. It came out with an authoritative report on the February elections and on the events leading to the departure of the dictator.

When Ninoy Aquino came here as a politician in exile, he spoke to you of convictions that we both shared. Those convictions did not die with him. I treasure them because they are his legacy not only to the Filipino people but also to me personally.

The strong convictions that the Filipino people and I have should not surprise you. They are the same ones Ninoy Aquino had already articulated before you.

He spoke to you about the right to elect the officials of the people's choice in free, orderly and honest elections. Only when this right is respected can there be a peaceful transition of power. And any tyrant who makes a mockery of this rightful exercise of freedom would suffer the consequences of his arrogance. This is the path the country took and events have vindicated both Ninoy and his people.

This vindication did not come without pain and sacrifice. As fate would have it, his challenge to again willingly face death in a freedom struggle was taken only too literally by a government that refused to heed the voice of conscience and moderation. By his death, he gave new life and added new force to my people's longing for liberation. Thus, as he predicted, Marcos had to step down and thereby make it possible for us to lay the basis for national unity.

He came here six years ago to express to you how much he dreaded the prospect of mothers weeping over their sons being sacrificed at the altar of revolution. Because he placed the highest value on human life, he did not relish the prospect of Filipinos dying senselessly in a revolution where everyone suffers because in the end, there can be no true victors, since the cost in human lives is unaffordable and even the apparent victors end up inheriting a graveyard.

The mantle of leadership of the Filipino people has fallen on my shoulders. In moments of loneliness, under pressure, I find solace in Ninoy's faith in the Filipino. I draw comfort and confidence from his assurance that I am leading a great people: one that he died for, one that I must live and work for!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

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Speech of President Corazon Aquino at a special meeting with friends of the Philippines

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At a special meeting with friends of the Philippines**

[Delivered on September 22, 1986]

AN OPEN ECONOMY

The Philippines has a strategic vision of what it must do in order to build a strong national economy over the long term. In the same way it runs an open government, the Aquino Administration opts for a more open economy – one that welcomes any legitimate investor, regardless of nationality, provided he shares the Filipino's interest in developing the Philippine economy.

My friends, I wish to thank all of you for accepting my invitation to come to this special meeting of friends of the Philippines.

I had already talked about the past and about the many problems we inherited from the previous administration. I have also given an indication of the solutions we are trying to implement to resolve our many problems. But I want you to know that we cannot limit ourselves to simply putting out fires from the past. We must also have a strategic vision of what we must do in order to build a strong Philippine economy over the long-term.

In trying to formulate such a strategy, we in the Philippines have found out it is not enough to secure peace in the labor front. We also have to put in place all the necessary infrastructure at standards of efficiency that modern business demands. Our telephones must work. Our electricity must be available and affordable. All public utilities must be kept in proper working order.

Allow me to tell you, however, that based on our experience, it is not only the technical aspects of economic policy that determine the business environment in the Philippines. It is also the sincerity of the government itself, and the integrity of government leadership. I know we have to win your respect and keep our credibility. I can only assure you that we are trying our very best.

Please do not doubt the commitment of my administration to a program of reforms that will make our investment climate favorable to private business. We are committed to a strong, independent financial system, freed from the abuses of the past. We want to speed up our privatization program. We are putting back market rules. We are removing unnecessary regulations that only stifle and strangle business initiative. We are liberalizing all aspects of our economy, not only because it is good for us, but also because we are fully convinced it will attract the investors we want.

I am running an open government, one that is open to the wishes, aspirations and advice of my people. I would like a more open economy also, one that welcomes any legitimate investor, regardless of nationality, provided he shares our interest in quickly developing the Philippine economy.

It is in an open economy that investors best thrive. It is there that you can be of most help.

Your help can come not only in the equity funds you are trying to raise for investment in the Philippines. Your help can count the most if you can come and interact with us.

We can openly tell you what our problems are, what we are trying to do about them, what our progress is, and what our difficulties are as we travel up the path of growth and development. But we recognize there are other views, other perceptions, other suggestions we can listen to with profit.

Your advice will be welcome; but also your understanding and support. As friends of the Philippines, in a spirit of candor, you can tell us what we can do to further improve the conditions under which business thrives and investments flow in. You can help monitor the consistency between our words and deeds; and you can tell your friends as well as your respective constituencies of our problems, our programs and of the business opportunities we have to offer.

I deeply appreciate the efforts you are making to bring equity funds into the Philippines. But I am even more appreciative of the openness you have shown towards our offer of friendship.

In closing, let me emphasize that we would like the Philippine economy to work, and that I want you and your friends and constituents to work very closely with us.

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Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Non-violence as the Key to Peace

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Non-violence as the Key to Peace

[Delivered at the Saunders Theater Memorial Hall, Harvard University, September 22, 1986]

NON-VIOLENCE: THE KEY TO PEACE

Non-violence is not the only force that can collect the power of the people and bring it to near overwhelmingly on an object. Religious fanaticism, class hatred, and military patriotism can serve as well. But only non-violence can achieve a moral purpose without compromising it, especially if that purpose is peace.

I am most grateful for your invitation to speak at Harvard. It was in Harvard where Ninoy found the leisure and atmosphere to reflect on the meaning of his prison years for his country. And it was from our home in Newton, so close to Harvard, that he made his final trip to bring home the fruit of his reflections.

He had written out his thoughts for an arrival statement. His statement said in part: "I have returned of my own free will to join the ranks of those struggling to restore our rights and freedoms through non-violence. . . . According to Gandhi, the willing sacrifice of the innocent is the most powerful answer to insolent tyranny that has yet been conceived by God and man." He did not have a chance to read that statement. Instead he lay on the tarmac of the Manila International Airport, his head in a bright pool of blood, a vivid statement of his final testament on non-violence and a stark image of insolent tyranny's response to it. Allow me therefore to tell you the story of non-violence in my country. It is the story of a man, my husband Ninoy. It is the story of a people who, with that stark image before them, still took the course of non-violence. And it is the story of Faith, our faith, that gave us the courage to take it to the end.

Ninoy, before he came to Harvard, had spent seven years and seven months in prison, each day an eternity to a man of his restless energy. It was there in his lonely suffering that he found himself. And it was partly what he read: Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and others. Much more though, it was the personal revelation that came to him as a result of struggle and prayer.

He came to Harvard to rest his thoughts in an atmosphere so different from his tiny cell in Fort Bonifacio. His conclusion remained the same – I shall return of my own free will to my troubled land to join the ranks of those struggling to restore our rights and freedoms through non-violence. It was the hard-earned gift he was bringing home to his people when he was shot down at the airport.

His assassins meant to steal that gift. Instead they ended up playing their part in a chain of non-violent events that was to purge our nation of dictatorship. Two million people threw aside passivity and fear and marched for ten long hours in his funeral procession. Until then, non-violence was the "unpopular alternative". After that day of mourning it was the face of the Philippine revolution.

The ground swell of non-violent activism grew by leaps and bounds. Demonstrations multiplied. Already one of its strongest elements was emerging: the women. The women in the demonstrations reached across wire and human barriers to the impassive soldiers who kept sullen guard on what was happening. When you touch the humanity of your opponent, you find a way to his basic decency. That is the central part of non-violence change.

In late 1985 the announcement came of "snap elections." In conventional political terms the opposition was not ready for snap elections. We did not have a unified political ticket. The Marcos political machine – with its guns, goons, and gold – seemed unbeatable. The regime also controlled television and most of the radio and press. It had

control of the Commission on Elections and of everything else needed by a dictator who considered elections a public relations exercise for foreign consumption and not the essence of democracy for his people. But for non-violence the timing was correct. Any longer and the forces of conflict and polarization that were building up might have been uncontrollable. And Marcos lacked the one thing he needed to keep power when confronted by the full force of non-violence. He did not have the people.

The Filipino people offered their lives to deliver the election from Mr. Marcos. In the case of Evelio Javier, an alumnus of Harvard's Kennedy School, the offer was taken after he won his province for us. One of my campaign leaders was brutally gunned down; his thumbs and forefingers were slashed off so he could no longer make the Laban "L" sign. Across the land ordinary people, volunteer poll-watchers and campaign workers, offered themselves for the ultimate sacrifice. Women tied themselves to ballot boxes. Still the cheating went on. Authorities announced the results without counting the ballots. A desperate regime sought to construct a win for itself within the secret world of computers. But People Power was everywhere. And from the inner sanctum of the regime's computer center, computer operators walked out in protest and sought sanctuary in the protective walls of a church. Nervously huddled together, they announced the fraud to assembled newsmen and foreign election observers.

Rally continued to follow rally. And when Mr. Marcos's paid parliament announced his "election," a million people assembled at the Luneta Park, where our national hero, Jose Rizal, another advocate of non-violence, was shot, to proclaim their true victory. I announced to them a campaign of boycott and passive resistance. To some it seemed tame. People's blood was up. Yet what was irresistible was our determination and our numbers; what was irrevocable was his fate. I was advised to capitalize on the nation's rage and direct it towards a confrontation with the Palace. But I believed that the path we chose to victory must continue to prefigure the end we had proclaimed: non-violent change and reconciliation. Marcos had claimed a hollow electoral victory; and in the final act he fell to the unique force of People Power.

On February 25, seven months ago, I took the oath of office. Across town, Marcos clung on for a few more hours. As I placed my hand on the Bible to take my oath, I knew deep within me that Ninoy's death was indeed; as the Bible says, the dying seed that had to fall to the ground to bring forth new life. I don't think that I need say how much I wished for myself and for my children that it had been Ninoy standing there bring sworn in. Yet I understood why it could not be.

Let me now examine more closely with you non-violence, and particularly its Filipino manifestation, People Power.

Imagine if we had come to power through the barrel of a gun. Yes, we could still have emptied the prisons of political prisoners; but would we not have had to fill them again with our new sworn enemies? How indeed could we have effected violent change without creating an opening for the communist insurgents? How, with two-thirds of our people below the poverty line, could we have asked them to come out to fight and then sent them back to their *barrios* when there was still not enough food in their stomachs and no decent set of clothes on their backs?

I make these points because it is wrong to see non-violence as somehow being the amateur political option. Despite all the wars that have been fought in the name of democracy, may I say that democracy's essential values are peaceful and are best preserved by peaceful means. Yet I must also admit that a war conducted through non-violence cannot succeed merely through efficient organization. In our case, one has to look to wider roots in Philippine society.

Inevitably one starts with our faith and our Church. People Power is prayer power. That is the force that lifted it up and gave individuals and the mass the courage to do what they did. If you ask ordinary Filipinos for their recollections of the weekend of revolution, more likely than not, the images they recall will have a religious metaphor. For example, there is the story of the old man, with his lunch box in the crowd outside the military camps, breaking bread with a soldier. There were the indomitable nuns at every stage of the election and revolution. And it was the Cardinal's call that sent hundreds of thousands into the streets to make themselves a human shield for the military revolt. There is the image of the military who joined us, clinging to the statue of the Virgin, for the protection that the guns slung over their shoulders could not give them against the impressive deployment of Marcos tanks that surrounded them.

The non-violence movement began, as I have said, with Ninoy's funeral procession. From then on masses, religious rites on the anniversaries of significant dates, and a strong religious symbolism throughout, kept non-violence entwined with our Catholic faith. We believe that the revolution was a miracle. By that we don't mean a flash of divine intervention. That would negate everything I have said about the steady build-up of the non-violence movement. But how, if not by a miracle, did a people find the courage that had eluded them throughout 14 years of abuse and shame? An aborted coup attempt by a brave handful of military leaders who had seen the light was not a promising start for the final act of the struggle. I, myself, had suspected we would have to pursue our campaign of boycotts and passive resistance through two or three difficult months before the dictator would topple from his throne. As one of our bishops has written, "The fact is that the revolution was a remarkably extraordinary event and when it ended four days after it began, no one – absolutely no one – could say that its results were what he or she had expected them to be four days earlier, when it all began."

That may not amount to a miracle that will satisfy a theologian's standards. But for the man or woman in the street and for us, politicians, at the center of the struggle, I cannot think of a better word.

Now let me offer some thoughts and predictions on the future of the philosophy of non-violence in the Philippines. My government, you will say, faces an armed and determined communist insurgency, an army impatient to get at them with military means, and the remnants of the right still loyal to Marcos. Faced with these, am I not going like a sheep to the slaughter by espousing non-violence and harmony as methods of government?

Non-violence is a strategy that is politically sophisticated, or I would not have entered the political fray with it. My political strength in the Philippines rests on my popular support. No traditional politician let alone Communist leader can come anywhere close to it. Despite the intimidation and fraud, the conclusion of the international observers, who have reconstructed the genuine electoral vote, is that I won by a historic landslide. Anybody who joined us in the campaign trail will know there was a quality of fervor that is absent from normal politics.

This comes from the niche I occupy as the result of my husband's life, the circumstances of his death, and the nature of the political movement that grew from it. In other words, my support is rooted in People Power and what made it: the non-violent approach. It would be a foolish politician who jeopardized all that by reaching for a gun whenever he or she is challenged. Other people need guns precisely because they have not got my People Power. In the elections, Marcos had money but I had what he wanted and couldn't buy: the support, the power of the people.

Does this mean that I reject the use of violence to solve political problems? Let me turn to the words of Archibald MacLeish: "How shall freedom be defended? By arms when it is attacked by arms; by truth when it is attacked by lies; by democratic faith when it is attacked by authoritarian dogma. Always and in the final act by determination and faith."

I believe in the Christian doctrine of the just war. But that is a war that People Power would never oppose because it would be on the same side.

Let me outline to you the conditions under which I would resort to arms. The moral imperative of my Presidency is that we do not resort to violence where there is a peaceful way. There must be no slippage in our commitment to human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. For on these rest our moral authority and our power. When a handful of drunken Marcos supporters set up court for a few days at the Manila Hotel, the military, as a reflex action, brought up artillery. I could have drowned their revels in its thunder and still have been widely applauded for it. Instead I talked them out of their silliness. More significantly, we have tried all means at our disposal to strike up a dialogue with both the Communists and the Muslim separatists. There is a tacit contract between myself and the Filipino people: I would be the President of all the people and would keep power as I had come to it; through the popular will and the pursuit of peace.

Obviously it is a terrible strain on the military when they are asked to honor a suspension of active hostilities that the other side seems reluctant to follow. But the success of any later military action depends on the moral basis of a sincere effort to explore the path of negotiation to the utmost.

Non-violence is not the only force than can collect the power of the people and bring it to bear overwhelmingly on an object. Religious fanaticism, class hatred, and a militant patriotism can serve as well. But only non-violence can achieve a moral purpose without compromising it, especially if that purpose is peace. For all its unwieldy size, it cuts through to its objective with the precision of a surgical knife, neatly excising the cancer from the body politic without damage to the surrounding tissue. The healing comes faster as a result. Let me pursue this medical metaphor. Non-violence is suited to the political surgeon who wishes to heal the body and not punish its failing. If revenge is the purpose, then a blunter instrument is necessary. That was not our purpose. We wanted a change for the better and the swift healing of the wounds of the past.

Let me close with what would have been the last sentence of Ninoy's arrival statement. It sums up and predicted the non-violent formula of our victory.

"I return from exile, and to an uncertain future, with only determination and faith to offer – faith in our people and faith in God"

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Democracy by the ways of democracy : speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, official visit to the United States of America, September 15-24, 1986*. Manila : [Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 41st Session of the United Nations General Assembly

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the 41st Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

[Delivered in New York City, September 22, 1986]

A MESSAGE TO THE UN

There are many ways to run a country: but there is only one way to treat people – with decency and respect for their uniqueness as individuals. Only if those who have the responsibility of leadership respect their fellows and the essential right to find fulfillment in their lives can they hold their head high at the UN.

It is the irony of the United Nations that so many new leaders have stepped to this podium, as I have today, with mixed feelings. Yes, we took power to implement so many of the ideals that the UN stands for. We have restored human rights; and liberated our people from the oppression and corruption of a government that had long since lost their support.

Yet, like so many other leaders before me, I am obliged to say that we did this by ourselves. It was the Filipino people alone who braved intimidation and cheating at the polls; and when their victory was stolen from them, turned out in the streets by the millions to reclaim and secure it.

Indeed, as our country bled at the hands of a government that had lost all respect for the rights of our people, its leader's wife came to this podium piously to call for a new human order. This, when thousands of Filipinos were political prisoners. And, in the final months of the dictatorship, international solidarity was expressed by ordinary people everywhere who sat in front of their television sets and watched and cheered our revolution.

In this year of all years, when in so many parts of the world we see people struggling to establish their human rights, I believe one must be frank to be relevant.

I mean to use this occasion to share with oppressed people everywhere my own experience of how change is brought about.

My basic conclusion can be stated very simply: to be free, you can, as a people, appeal effectively to international standards of human rights set by others such as the United Nations. Yet, in the end to vindicate those rights, to achieve freedom, you are on your own.

The UN has stayed out of the internal affairs of nations. Its charter orders that that should be so. Obviously, this is wise insofar as it prevents abuse of the sovereign independence of nations. Yet, it has also been an invitation to hypocrisy. The value of this chamber should rest on us, its members, doing what we preach.

To my mind, that requires both realism and concern when we address the affairs of others: realism in that we should not promise more than we can deliver. We should acknowledge what the Filipino people have learned: there is no substitute for action by an oppressed people themselves. But there should be concern about allowing this chamber to be abused by those who claim one standard of behavior and behave according to another back home. Don't

misunderstand me – the UN should never be an exclusive club for one ideological model. For that would defeat its primary purpose, to keep peace in an imperfect world.

There are many ways to run a country, but there is only one way to treat people – with decency and respect for their uniqueness as individuals. Only if those of us who have the responsibility of leadership respect our fellows and their essential right to find fulfillment in their lives can we hold our heads high here at the UN.

The UN would lose all purpose if it were to set about judging one political system against another. Yet, equally, if the UN does not notice how governments treat people, it is nothing. I need only go back to the rousing words of the UN charter. The UN is about people. If it fails them, can it be any better than its most corrupt and oppressive member state? Even diplomacy, which is preeminently about states, cannot ignore, without peril or embarrassment, how states treat their people.

And so, as the leader of a country which has this year enjoyed the sweet taste of freedom, again let me reconfirm our support both for what the UN at its best stands for: the peace, freedom, dignity and partnership of mankind. But let me also serve warning to those denied freedom and dignity: don't look beyond yourselves to find them.

We in the Philippines were strengthened in our resolve by knowing that people around the world shared our struggle. On their televisions and in their newspapers, they followed our drama. Further, we know that the rights we fought for are universally sought after; they are enshrined – not entombed, mind you – in the UN conventions. The importance of such international support should never be dismissed. It helped us knowing we were not alone.

But even when the authors of the UN Charter stopped short of endorsing any right of interference in any nation's internal affairs, they were responding to more than the jealous realities of inter-governmental relations. Rather, they were reflecting a more lasting truth about how man prefers to order his life on this planet.

People must be masters of their own fate. The Filipino people have known and been grateful for liberation at the hands of others: in 1898, a liberation that was swiftly betrayed, and in 1946, one which we promptly wasted. Yet now, having known the exhilaration of throwing off our bonds ourselves, I think every Filipino would agree there is only one real liberation.

Only a people, already sovereign in their hearts and deeds, can win and keep their independence and freedom: this is not a pessimistic conclusion because, additionally, I believe that no government can indefinitely resist a people united against it. It may have the guns, the goons and the gold. Yet, as we found in the Philippines, there is no government that can indefinitely resist a people determined to be free.

And so, while the UN may not intervene to bring the sovereignty and freedom enjoyed by nations to the peoples who are denied them, it should carefully avoid becoming an unwitting partner of their oppressors.

I turn now specifically to the great moral issue that confronts this General Assembly: the situation in South Africa. To Nelson Mandela and his wife, Winnie, and all South Africans, my prayers are with you. Mr. Mandela's long incarceration in prison, separated from his wife and family, inevitably reminds me of the imprisonment of my own husband, Ninoy.

The lesson in my country and so many other places such as Argentina, whose President Alfonsín recently visited Manila, is that every act of repression reaps its final return. In the end, human values cannot be held down. They couldn't be in Argentina; they couldn't be in the Philippines. They won't be in South Africa.

It is right that we all play our part in creating the environment for change in South Africa. The Philippines will support any action the international community takes to hasten the advent of peace and freedom in South Africa and to show solidarity with its people. But it would help the case a great deal if this forum were to make equal note and action against oppression wherever it occurs, wherever people are abused and degraded, be it blatantly or in their

name. I do not believe that the force of moral action is diminished by being spread wherever it is needed. It is strengthened by exercise and weakened by neglect.

Let me say directly to the millions of victims of apartheid in South Africa, to the families of those who have given their lives. Don't waiver in your unity. Look only to your own strength and determination.

If there is one tactic that served us above all others in our movement for freedom, it was espousing a program of action that kept us united. In our case this meant the use of non-violence and constant vigilance against the provocation of the authorities. Often, I was urged to go further: to call for a more confrontational line. But my constant concern was to keep the wide coalition of forces that backed our campaign together. Often, I disappointed some of my supporters by approving only limited actions against the government. Yet, it was the rock-like unity of the opposition and the enormous support it enjoyed that overwhelmed the government. That meant not going faster than any of our supporters were prepared to go. This allowed us to overcome where more narrow-based opposition challenges had failed to dislodge the dictatorship.

Perhaps, the UN cannot go faster than its most reluctant member towards its stated goals of peace, freedom and dignity for the peoples of all nations. And perhaps, for its more significant achievement, we should look rather to the peace it has helped preserve, and the cooperation it has fostered, between nations already friends, than to the peace it has failed to keep between nations bent on war. In the same light should we regard the salutary influence of its freedom-practicing members in the counsels of the world. Even so have I come to appreciate the achievement of our own regional organization, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Asean's faltering steps towards economic cooperation and complementation, in the name of peace and stability in the region, are meant to serve and express the abiding peace and amity among its members that were there from the start.

To nurture a vigorous peace wherever it abides and strengthen long-standing friendships: perhaps, this is all that lies in the power of international organizations to do.

I have always been a firm advocate of peace. Perhaps it is only the tragedy of conflict that teaches us the true value of peace. Let us, who are the loyal friends of peace, continue to resist the temptation to exploit the conflicts of our neighbors. Those of us in Asean understand the crucial importance of these goals. Each of our countries has passed through periods of crisis when great rifts of weakness appeared, yet none of the others, for all our differences in political systems and beliefs, exploited the occasion. On the contrary, they rose to it with encouraging expressions of sympathy and offers of help and mediation, ever respectful of the integrity of their tragic neighbors.

And so my message today is an effort to bring this mission of the UN into sharper focus to the end that there shall be no more disappointments over unwarranted expectations. There will be no more wasted hopes on the part of those who must save their strength for the long and difficult struggle for peace and freedom. There will be, on the other hand, a clearer recognition by the UN of its irreducible commitments and values, a more jealous regard for their integrity, and, for that reason, perhaps, a surer prospect of realizing the UN's goals of peace, freedom, dignity, and the partnership of mankind.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Democracy by the ways of democracy : speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, official visit to the United States of America, September 15-24, 1986*. Manila : [Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Stanford Research Institute and the Pacific Basin Economic
Council**

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Stanford Research Institute and the Pacific Basin Economic Council**

[Released on September 23, 1986]

**A NEW FRONTIER FOR FILIPINO AND
AMERICAN BUSINESS**

The Aquino administration will refrain from going into business where private initiative will be adequate. It has done two things to create long-lasting and attractive conditions for investment. The first is the liberalization of laws to make them conform with the free climate of the new Philippines. The second is the preparation for the disposal of the large number of enterprises, about 250, that the government inherited from the previous regime and its cronies. There is a lot in store for those wishing to help develop the new frontier that Filipino courage opened up when it restored the freedom where free enterprise and initiative can flourish.

I am about to conclude a brief visit to your country, which I hope will strengthen the bonds of friendship between our two nations.

I believed that it would be fruitful if, before returning home tomorrow, I meet with a group of businessmen operating in the West Coast of the United States, who recognize the vast potentials of the Pacific. I thank the Stanford Research Institute and the Pacific Basin Economic Council for arranging this meeting.

I don't have to sell the potential of the Eastern Pacific region to you, the members and friends of the Council. Instead, I am going to make a pitch for a specific place where you should invest: my country.

The Philippines now has a government that sees private enterprise as the engine of the economy. Private initiative helped to effect the country's immediate recovery from the Second World War and placed it second to Japan in economic growth. Under the last administration, it experienced a local variant of state capitalism, called crony capitalism. It was 90 percent theft and 10 percent ineptitude. We were left with a \$26 billion dollar debt, only a small portion of which went into productive investment while most of it can be seen gracing the New York skyline. So I can say with confidence that we pretty much disagree with the notion that the state has any business being in business in the Philippines. The Filipinos, and the government they have set up, believe that the greatest latitude given to business offers the best prospects of growth for everyone, capital as well as labor.

We have essentially done two things to create long-lasting and attractive conditions for investment. The first is the liberalization of labor laws to make them conform with the free climate of the new Philippines. Right after we assumed power, labor activities increased. We expectedly had more strikes in the past six months than the country had during the same period a year ago. The strikes however were resolved more quickly, with less man-hours and efforts wasted, and in a more lasting fashion. This was labor stretching its limbs after being confined in the vise of Martial Law for 14 years. You may think that a vise is the best place to keep labor in. I hope you don't belong to that breed of businessmen, because the AFL-CIO will have something to say about that to you. While the restraint of labor by state terrorism did induce a surface calm, it nevertheless intensified and encouraged the radicalization of the labor movement. If the law could not protect the basic rights of labor, it would rely on a revolution to vindicate

them. That was the logic of the Philippine labor movement under Marcos. The return of democracy brought things back to proper focus. Hence, the increased agitation but also the wide consensus of labor that law and due process must again be depended upon to protect their rights. I might point out one statistic. Labor unrest barely touched multinational businesses, which generally paid their laborers a little better than their less privileged local counterparts. The hardest, most frequently hit were the sweatshops. But even in that area, I have taken measures to reconcile the rights of labor with the constraints under which a capital-starved local business community operate.

The second thing we have done is prepare for the disposal of the large number of enterprises, about 250, that my government inherited from the previous regime and its cronies. I invite you to study these enterprises with a view to buying and operating them jointly with local investors. My government will refrain from going into business where private initiative will be adequate, because I so pledged during my campaign. But more importantly, because my people want it run no other way. I won't say more to encourage you to invest. Study our offers as hardnosed and sensible businessmen because that is the type we want to join us in rebuilding our country and setting it on the road to progress. We want pioneer stock; brave, smart, and enterprising, for the Philippines can be a new frontier for Filipino and American business.

I will add the assurance, however, that you will be operating under a lean and strong government, rather than under one that will lean on you with all the weight of bloated operations. We have cut state expenditure to the bone. We have reduced the budgetary deficit in the second quarter to one billion pesos. Compare that with the budgetary deficit of 10 billion in just the first quarter of this year, the last quarter of the Marcos regime.

We have also reduced inflation from 50 percent to near zero. Interest rates have fallen from a peak of 50 percent to the present level of 14 to 15 percent. The exchange rate has stabilized. The black market for foreign currency has virtually vanished. For two consecutive years under Mr. Marcos, our economy posted negative growth. Now the IMF expects "a substantial recovery of six to seven percent" next year.

While Philippine labor duly regards its rights and dignity as priceless, it maintains its cost comparatively well, one-fifth the levels prevailing in Taiwan, South Korea and Singapore. Add to that the benefits of its English-language proficiency and high level of skills.

With all these advantages, we stand on the doorstep of China and its vast markets. We are the gateway to Southeast Asia and the lynchpin of stability and security in the region. The Philippine economy will recover because Filipinos believe in themselves and in their country again. I invite you to join us in developing the new frontier that Filipino courage opened up when it deposed the dictatorship and restored the freedom where enterprise and initiative can flourish.

Let me tell you this, in closing. People will continue to speculate about the short term future of the Philippines. We were sold short for the past 14 years. Old habits die hard. Well, it won't happen. The Philippines has a long and bright future ahead of it. The Filipino people will overcome! They have the skill, the resources, and, more importantly, faith in their strength and confidence in their country. We will recover from the economic disaster that is our legacy from the late dictatorship – we will recover and prosper. And in that prosperity we invite you to join us.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Democracy by the ways of democracy : speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, official visit to the United States of America, September 15-24, 1986*. Manila : [Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on her official visit to the United States

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On her official visit to the United States

[Delivered at the Manila International Airport, September 25, 1986]

THE TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW

President Aquino reports on her official visit to the United States. “Our friends understand and sympathize,” she says, “but let us not hold our breaths for total answers coming from anywhere but our own efforts.”

I am so happy to be home again. It was a long and exhausting trip but also and always exhilarating. We were met everywhere with great warmth and much respect for what we Filipinos have accomplished. This respect and admiration are the reward of our heroic struggle. Poor as we are, we already have that for which great nations bend their greatest efforts: the admiration of the world.

I met with President Reagan and I believe I have established a personal rapport and sympathetic understanding for what we are trying to do.

I addressed the Congress of the United States and laid before them the painful sacrifices of our struggle, the glorious moment of our victory, the enormous problems we have so unfairly inherited, and the great promise that our new democracy represents not only for us Filipinos but for the free world as well. But over and above that I tried to convey the great pride of the new Filipino and the only basis of Filipino-American partnership: the mutual respect of those who, though not equal in progress, are certainly so in pride and in the sacrifices they have made for democracy.

I met with our creditor banks and got them to understand the imperatives of Philippine growth, which will be as much to their advantage as to ours.

I laid bare our plight and I did so, I believe, with some effect. Our friends understand and sympathize. We have done our part. I have worked with all my might, prayed with all my heart and the rest I leave to God and to you, my people. Let us not hold our breaths for total answers coming from anywhere but our own efforts – by which we won our freedom. The main effort is ours to do, so that the greater honor will be ours again. Let us get on with it then. What else is there to wait for? The time for talk and hesitation and criticism is over. The time for action is now.

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Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Berkeley University

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines To the Berkeley University

[Delivered at Berkeley University, California, September 25, 1986]

SALUTE TO BERKELEY

The Philippines and Berkeley have much in common. Berkeley has provided a “model,” if a controversial one, for protest action. It was protest action of a peaceful kind that drove the dictator out of power in the Philippines. Berkeley can look at the Philippines’ problems today and be reminded of its beginnings as an institution. But it can also look at some of the Philippines’ solutions. Like the University, the Philippines will keep asking, seeking, inquiring in search of answers to some of the seemingly “permanent problems” of the human race.

As some officials in this university know, one of the very first invitations I decided to accept was from this distinguished institution. It is hard to say no to Berkeley.

First, let me salute you for your long commitment to human rights and to action in support of what you believe in. This university has never been a laggard in the area of human rights, or for that matter, in other fields.

President Kennedy said in his inaugural address, “Americans are unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed. . .” For some time, we wondered whether the word “always” had lost its meaning. We are glad that in the end, America’s political leadership decided, as Jesse Jackson puts it, to be on the right side of history. As Senator Ted Kennedy said the other night in New York, human rights violators have reason to fear visits by human rights groups – or by Senator Paul Laxalt.

We realize how Berkeley has provided a “model,” if a controversial one, for protest action. But a university must not shy away from controversy. And it was protest action of a peaceful kind that drove the dictator out of the power last February in our country. To the students of Berkeley, our people power revolution must have recalled some of the glorious excesses of your university’s famous “radical” politics. Yet without wanting to sound competitive, I must say that student power is only a shadow of people power. What makes our people power is that it is everybody: young, old, rich, poor, nun, soldier and student. All came together to turn out a dictator. And they were welcome. Ours was a broad coalition. Yet one selfless devotion to a higher goal, one spirit restless for freedom. These kinds of ideals that drove our revolution are the ones you share.

There is some irony in the fact that someone whom my predecessor derisively referred to as “Cory who?” a year ago, is now known to many Americans. But I am not alone. Another of your great Presidents, Abraham Lincoln, knew the feeling and was candid enough to admit: “Nobody has ever expected me to be president.”

So it is that we see mysteries in the political life of a nation.

This has been a long trip, but a refreshing one.

I do not wish to add much more to what I have been saying all these days.

After all, as we have been reminded, President William Henry Harrison spoke at his inauguration for nearly two hours, caught pneumonia and passed away within a month.

On the other hand, the first President of your country delivered an inaugural address of just 135 words and is now remembered as a great president.

Let me just give you a capsule version of the changes that can now be seen in our country. For perspective, kindly note that we have been in power barely 200 days, not enough time to rebuild what was hardly a Rome to start with, and that was systematically ruined and looted for twenty years. Allow me to examine parallelisms between the beginnings of this university and the country seeking to rebuild from the ruins left by my predecessor.

I understand that it was the Rev. Dr. H. W. Bellows, a noted Minister from the east who exhorted, “mind before mines,” as soon as he had surveyed the dismal prospect in these parts more than a century ago. He then wrote back to Yale and Harvard for suggestions.

I have also been informed that the original plan of this university to admit “men only” was changed by the regents in 1870, and eight women registered that fall. Four years later, President Daniel Coit Gilman was to remark that the proportion of women who ranked high in scholarship was greater than that of men.

So what else is new? There are other parallelisms.

It was never easy going; “The university’s financial problems seemed endless for a long time,” so wrote the university historians. So might one write of my country’s problems today. The problems seem endless, the going won’t be easy. However, Berkely, whatever its financial headaches, was spared from a \$26 billion debt. That is a special burden of our nationhood, a legacy of our recent sorry past.

You can look at our problems today and be reminded of your beginnings as an institution. But you can also look at some of our solutions: you can, for instance, look at our attempts to restore faith in the administration of justice by naming good judges. We are cleaning up the electoral process, the perversion of which led to widespread disenchantment. We are setting a very high moral tone in government beginning with the presidency. Compare this with the massive corruption of the past. Many exceptional men and women are serving the country for nothing or a fraction of what they could get in private life. We are professionalizing the military, we are reaching out to the rebels and the disenchanted. We expect to have a new constitution soon. We shall have elections early next year at the national and local levels. We are rebuilding our economy. We have dismantled the monopolies. We have a free press. We have regained our respected standing in the community of nations. We can look anyone in the eye and say we are Filipinos.

Yes, we too will be a success story by virtue of hard work and the help of our friends.

We are never too proud to look to others for models, inspiration and guidance. However, where there is a home-grown solution that fits the culture, we will do it our way, in the same manner that we did it our way last February. For like this university, we will keep asking, seeking, inquiring in search of answers to some of the seemingly “permanent problems” of the human race. For as long as the human spirit can soar, nothing is impossible. In this, your institution and our country can share the same vision validated by experience.

In this spirit, I humbly accept with deep appreciation the highly coveted Berkeley medal.

Tonight, we head for home, physically exhausted but emotionally exhilarated.

Summing up, I feel I have achieved what I have set out to do on this trip. I have met the top political leadership in this country. I have met people from all walks of life, in the private sector. I know I won’t be spoiled by the outpouring of warmth, kindness and affection shown me at every stop of my working visit. But have no fear that my feet are now, firmly planted – in mid-air.

We go home confident that we have the best wishes – of the American people. To them I say thank you.

I could only wish that for their part, my own beloved countrymen in this country would rise above party and faction. I intend to be President of all Filipinos, and hear out everyone, if only for the sake of those who will come after us. Our country needs the help of everyone who continues to care for it and our people. We cannot afford division, for even in unity, candor requires that we admit the road ahead is a rough one. But I am not new to crises and challenges.

May I conclude by recalling the words of a law school dean amidst the student crisis of the Sixties: "Like a family, we must survive our crises, mend the ruptures of our discord, and continue to live and function as a unit."

For my part, I will, more than ever, pray with all my heart, work with all my might, and the rest, I leave to God.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Democracy by the ways of democracy : speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, official visit to the United States of America, September 15-24, 1986*. Manila : [Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

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Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the FINEX Dinner

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the FINEX Dinner**

[Released on October 9, 1986]

OVERCOMING THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

Fresh from several state visits, the President outlines the many tasks before her and the Filipino people: We have to restructure our \$26 billion debt under easier terms and conditions, generate jobs, improve the material welfare of the people, “pump-prime” the economy, win markets for our exports products, and strive for greater self-reliance on options other than more debt.

Here I am, just recovered from a long journey, and now having to plan for my next official visit. Were I a member of a frequent traveler program, I would have amassed by now enough mileage points to take me on a vacation in some islands, but I assure you, not Hawaii.

Many of you have counted the dozens of thousands of kilometers that I have logged these past six weeks. Many of you have commented that my first six months in office were a period of confinement to get our initial homework done. But the past six weeks have been a period of wide travels: First, for a call on our close neighbors within ASEAN; then, for a pilgrimage of peace to our very own estranged brothers and sisters in Jolo and in the Cordilleras; and lately, for a working, grueling, but also exhilarating visit to America.

I hope more than a few of you will agree that I cannot solve the problems that face our nation and discharge my duties as President by merely sitting in my office or presiding over Cabinet meetings in Malacañang. Now that we have laid the basis for a new Constitution, for a new economy, and for a new full-term Administration, I have to go out and bring to bear the full weight of the Presidency on the problems wherever they are, and behind prospects where they may arise. Next week I shall be going to Negros and Iloilo to continue the nationwide consultations I pledged to carry out, and which I started on in Region XI and then in Region X. Confinement to one's desk can narrow one's vision and deepen the disquiet one gets from the press of problems that come pouring in. You and I know how important it is to look real people in the eye and talk with them in person.

I have been given a tonic by President Suharto and Prime Minister Lee who freely shared their experiences with me. For as long as we have our priorities clear and our focus trained, we should not worry if in six months we have not been able to solve all the problems bequeathed by more than 20 years of official theft and incompetence. Nur Misuari and Conrado Balweg also gave me more hope for peace and for the non-violent approach to settlement of differences than the briefing papers and official documents had allowed me to entertain. I shall seek out meetings with other leaders out in the regions to explore with them paths to the peace and development we all desire.

President Reagan, the Congress of the United States, American business and financial institutions, and the American public at large were receptive and mostly sympathetic to our cause. After all, we Filipinos reflected in the Campaign, Election and Revolution the ideals that are their meaning and purpose. Poor as we are, we gave them the inestimable gift, as they told me, of seeing again the living reality of democratic commitment, thereby strengthening

their own. They grasped our message: Yes, we are heirs to a mountain of debts and an earful of problems that can fill the pages of all our 26 newspapers and magazines that, to put it mildly, add flair and color to them every single day; but we are biting the bullet and have been doing our homework.

That homework has been detailed and specific. We have gone way past general policy pronouncements and broad statements about programs. International reserve targets are clear and time-bound. Commitments to reduce our budget deficits are firm. Our fiscal program is in place. All outstanding issues concerning the rehabilitation of the DBP and PNB have been cleared. Policy statements for the strengthening of our weakened financial system have been drafted and agreed upon. The program for public sector investment spending and for export promotion by industry have been finalized. We have covered the whole breadth and width of the agenda for economic reform. We have not been shy nor slow about doing what must be done. It is no surprise therefore that both President Conable of the World Bank and Managing Director De Larosiere of the IMF agreed with me that the green light could be flashed for the 508 million dollar stand-by loan from the IMF and the 300 million dollar economic recovery loan from the World Bank.

You already know that these are only the first steps. They can now be followed up by steps that will set the stage for our recovery. We now are in a position to formally negotiate with the consortium of our creditor banks. We have to restructure our 26 billion dollar debt under easier terms and conditions that will permit our economy to grow, jobs to multiply, and the material welfare of our people to improve. We have to reopen the channels of normal financial relationships between our economy and the economies of our trading partners. I have talked with the members of the Advisory Committee of our creditor banks: they gave me more than applause; they also assured me of their understanding and support.

Within this more favorable environment of trust and confidence in the new Philippine government, we are seeking to defer 3.25 billion dollars of principal payment for the next 5-6 years. Since interest rates have gone down, we are also consolidating the 1984-1986 rescheduling into the 1987-1991 rescheduling. In this way, our overall interest burden on some 3.25 billion dollars should be lightened. Another three billion dollars should be affected by rescheduling a portion of our trade facility and by extension of the trade facility beyond December 1986. The bottomline result we seek is the reduction of our annual debt-service payments to a level that will allow our economy to grow and enable us, among other priorities, to pay our debt. We will achieve this not by fiery rhetoric about unilateral interest caps, although the injustice of our debt legacy should entitle us to indulge it, nor by running away from the responsibilities of a sovereign government whose animating spirit is honor. Rather, we intend to get to this result by quietly doing our sums, patiently but firmly presenting our positions, and above all, by working effectively to make our economy grow out of our debt.

Our economic strategy however calls for much greater reliance on options other than more debt. While it is essential for us to normalize our relationship with international financial institutions, it is even more imperative that we work in other fronts.

We have to win markets for our export products. The prospect is good that our sugar quota in the U.S. market will be increased by about 30%. A whole range of trade questions with the United States is to be examined. GSP items are up for review. The United States has made a commitment to a "Buy Filipino Policy" for U.S. defense facilities in the Philippines and elsewhere in Asia. We are also setting up a business promotion council to continue to explore and exploit more opportunities for Philippine exports to the United States. Let me make this clear: We cannot achieve a real economic growth of 6 to 7% per year, unless we succeed in our export drive. We must be ready to do everything possible so we can effectively compete in many more markets to which we must gain access.

In the meanwhile, as we begin to get out of the depth of our economic crisis, we count as a welcome bonus any help we get from friends. We have to prime our economic pump. We have to spend on programs that create jobs and help us win peace. We have to get on with the task of industrial rehabilitation and especially of rapid agricultural development. All these require financing, and we have been very short of resources. The 100 million dollar Economic Support Fund signed by Secretary Baker and Minister Ongpin; the 50 million dollar military assistance grant; and the 20 million dollar donation of medicine to our military and civilian sectors; and the 200 million supplemental aid package, favorably voted by both houses of the U.S. Congress: all these are helpful, not because of the sums involved, but because of the goodwill and broad support they express. No proud and sovereign people,

however great their need, would measure friendship and understanding by dollars and cents exchanged and given. Rather, it has to be in the warmth of their mutual respect and in the substance of their mutual dealings in matters of business and government where the true measure can be taken.

As Senator Lugar told me after the Senate vote on the aid package: “This is convincing testimony to the extraordinary success of your visit to the United States. Even more importantly, the vote is proof of the strong underlying faith Americans have in the endurance and resolve of Philippine democracy.”

Having said all this, must I depend on the words of a foreign friend to say: “And who says we haven’t done anything?”

But more remains to be done. And by you. We are building a new economy – one where the government provides the framework for growth but where the private sector must flesh out the full potential of this great country of ours. I stand here hoping that I do not end up merely telling you what transpired during my trips abroad but getting you to answer the call to take up your part in our thrust towards economic recovery. I said it when I arrived: Doleouts won’t bail out our economy; our own efforts alone will do that. And that is how it should be so that the credit and honor, and the major profit, of our recovery shall be singularly ours. My government can do only so much in loading up the bases. In the private enterprise economy that you demanded and fought for and won, it is you, private business, that must hit the homeruns and pile up the scores. It is now your turn at the bat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the members of the Manila Overseas Press Club

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the Members of the Manila Overseas Press Club**

[Released on October 15, 1986]

ISSUES BEFORE THE PRESIDENCY

In brief but wide-ranging remarks before the members of the Manila Overseas Press Club, President Aquino comments on the draft Constitution which she describes as merely the stage for the real effort that must be made to transform our country; the “economic miracles” of South Korea, Japan, and West Germany; the PCGG; and, finally, her own term as President.

The draft constitution I received this afternoon is an experiment, as all life is an experiment. In this particular case, it is an experiment in liberty, progress and justice; whether we can arrive at and work together towards common goals, solving our many problems along the way, within a democratic context. I barely had time to go over the text but I am satisfied that we have here the essentials of a democracy: the institutions that give voice and effect to the popular will and the guarantees that protect our inalienable rights. It sets forth also some of the deepest concerns of the forces that propelled us to freedom, the fears that continue to haunt us about the perishability of freedom, and the ideals that fired our revolution.

I am told it is not an elegant document. But democracy is not an elegant affair, it is just the best thing yet devised by men for the arrangement of their affairs consistent with their dignity. It does not try to cut through differences or hammer them by oppression into conformity. Instead it provides the mechanisms by which these differences and the energies that uphold them can be drawn together in compatible goals that can be achieved by collective effort. It is not the answer to our many problems, but it is the indispensable instrument for meeting what we would prefer to call the challenges that confront us: the challenges of peace, justice, and progress for all our people. As I said this afternoon, democracy is safe with this Constitution. Safe in regard to its necessary institutions and in regard to the inalienable rights of our people. The powers of government are wisely divided in the time-honored fashion of enduring democracies, where the energy of the single hand, as one would refer to the executive, finds its counterpoise and guidance in the collective wisdom of an elected Congress and in the strict accountability of all elected officials. More than safety, democracy finds in this Constitution the firm ground from which to step upwards to the other goals of our nation: its material progress and the well-being of our people.

There is nothing in this Constitution that gives reason for fundamental differences among reasonable men, differences that would argue strongly against its ratification. I see nothing here that endangers the deeply held values for which our people struggled with such distinction, but on the contrary much that protects those values. Yet, I am sure that in the ratification campaign there will be attempts to becloud and distort the issues. But the essential rightness of this document will come through to the people in whom I have always reposed my final confidence.

Even as I am confident that the people will receive this attempt to give enduring form to their values and effective expression to their aspirations with gladness and approbation, in the spirit of candor that has marked my administration, I must say that it is merely the stage for the real effort that must be made to transform our country.

Yesterday, Vice President Laurel reported to the Cabinet on his recent trip. One of his salient points was that the No. 1 factor behind the phenomenal success of South Korea is HARD WORK. This country must support a huge military effort to answer a perceived threat to its integrity, and yet has risen from the depths of war ruin, underdevelopment and poverty to challenge the modern economies of the world. Today, Japan, another Asian miracle, still has the so-called MacArthur Draft as its constitution. Its foreign provenance did not dampen the efforts of this extremely proud race to outdo any country on any terms. The West German Constitution was adopted when

the Allied powers held sway over it. The Japanese and the West Germans never used history as an excuse for failure, for not giving their all to the reconstruction and progress of their countries. Little politics and much hard work would explain the fantastic success of these countries I have mentioned.

There have been suggestions that I lift the ban against the members of the Constitutional Commission running in the coming elections. I am strongly inclined against it. And I reject any insinuation, made without the least effort to investigate, that I struck a deal with the honorable men and women of the Commission to lift the ban. Contrary to what some critics believe, there are honorable Filipinos. And they are legion. I would have thought that the Philippine Revolution of 1986 proved this beyond all doubt.

But yes, there was a deal struck between myself and the Commissioners which was that the integrity of this document, as attested by the self-sacrifice of its drafters, would never be put in question by suspicions of selfish motives. They took the commission to draft this constitution together with the prohibition to appointment or election to public office. I stand by that deal and reject any suggestion to remove the ban.

What will I do should the people vote down the draft? Frankly, I am persuaded that the vast majority of our people are sensible citizens, who will go beyond the narrow, partisan, personal, and parochial points of view of a few, and will examine the great question on the basis of what is good for the country, now and in the future.

There is concern about the PCGG. The country must make up its mind whether we should continue to go after those who stole the country's wealth, who emptied our future, who condemned us to working hard for many years to come only to pay off what they looted. Today, in other parts of the world, they are still looking for war criminals. I believe that our people will support the continuing effort to go after those who plundered our nation's wealth. This is not vendetta but plain and simple justice. Yet, at the same time, this reaffirmation on my part to continue the quest for justice in this area should not be construed as a license to disregard the basic values for which we fought, of which due process is eminently one.

Finally, what about my term? You will recall that the Batas Pambansa Blg. 883 under which Doy Laurel and I ran had been condemned as unconstitutional because there was no vacancy. But the Supreme Court said in effect: let the people decide. And so they did. That law gave them the opening to freedom and the government of their choice, the government of Cory Aquino. The event that established my claim to the Presidency, and Doy's to the Vice-Presidency, was our election by the people. The act that put the reins of power in my hand was the rising of a people to defeat the attempt of my predecessor and his unlamented Batasan to frustrate their will.

A new Constitution does not negate everything that preceded it, when that Constitution builds upon the cornerstone of the people's victory in my election to the Presidency. This constitution will not close the book on one phase of our history and start another, but will rather establish for posterity the link between that glorious moment when the people took the fate of the nation into their hands and this when you and I, the government and the people, must build upon what they accomplished. My election by the people is the one certain landmark we have as we move towards the future. The people spoke so clearly, the whole world heard them. But I am not surprised that some people in this country could not hear them as the walls of tyranny they had helped to build crashed around their ears. That is their problem. As the Chinese saying goes: Despite the barking of the dogs in the night, the caravan moves on.

And so we shall. From the ratification of this constitution to the election of Congress until all the familiar landmarks of a democratic country are in place to guide us on our way to the future we have dreamed of.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Constitutional Commission

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines To the Constitutional Commission

[Released on October 15, 1986]

AT LAST, A NEW CONSTITUTION

Presented with the draft of the new Constitution, the President declares that democracy is safe with this document. It is a Constitution which distributes wisely the powers of government; it is the framework for the house of democracy that we hope to build.

The last time I stood before you was on your invitation to witness the opening session of your Commission to draft a new constitution for our people. I stood there and declared the absolute independence of a body I had appointed, an independence I would respect but for two pieces of advice I offered for the Commission to take or leave as it chose. First I said, be quick. For the people are impatient to have a full-blown democratic republic, with all its necessary institutions and safeguards in place, in the shortest time possible. I reiterated my promise when the Freedom Constitution was promulgated that the draft would be ready within three months. My promise was, of course, in no way binding on you, and that is obviously how you took it. But I have heard of the great investment of time and energy that you made to come out with the draft by today. I had received appeals from Commission members to intercede for lenity with Cecilia Muñoz Palma, who was not among those who dropped like flies, to use the words I heard, from the exertions she demanded. Well, she's a woman. So what else is new? I, of course, refused all appeals. Fortunately for the Commission she relented. And so now we have a document after four and a half months of effort whose worth the people will soon judge. And among the standards they will apply, and this was the second advice I gave, is whether the document fits the general conception of a constitution that is broad enough to meet every exigency that arises and yet is specific enough to protect the essentials of a true democracy.

We have here a Constitution that meets these needs. Democracy is safe with this Constitution, safe in regard to its necessary institutions and in regard to the inalienable rights of our people. The powers of government are wisely divided in the time-honored fashion of enduring democracies, where the energy of the single hand, to use Jefferson's reference to the Executive, finds its counterpoise and guidance in the collective wisdom of a representative legislature and in the strict accountability of all elected officials. More than safety, democracy finds in this Constitution the firm ground from which to step upwards to the other goals of our nation: its material progress and the well-being of our people.

With this Constitution, we have the framework of the house of democracy that we hope to build, a house worthy of the great collective act that made it possible: the rising of the Filipino people to vindicate their voice, a rising that continues to be the wonder of the world.

To the Commission members the country expresses its thanks. I said when I called to the task that yours would be no easy task. Those words fail to convey the tremendous investment of time and energy, the sacrifice that went into the making and the timely completion of this draft. In the short span of time it took, you compressed the idealism, the dedication, the patriotic fervor that I said would be the necessary elements of any attempt to give enduring form to the victory of the Filipino struggle for freedom and to our aspirations of a better life for all our people. It was no easy task indeed, but, on the other hand, yours would be no small glory. You have truly deserved it.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on aid for Negros

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On the aid for Negros

[Held at Paglaum Stadium, Bacalod City, October 16, 1986]

AID FOR NEGROS

The collapse of the sugar industry has hit the province of Negros hard. The government, however, is ready with various assistance packages to help the province get back on its feet.

I said when I returned from the United States that the time for talk is over, the time for action is now. I have come here to learn at first hand what your problems are and, equally important, to learn from you how you believe these problems should be addressed. But above all I have come to see the work that you have already began to get your great province back on its feet and on the road to progress and justice. The consultations with the various sectors of Negros society start this morning. But I have done my homework and can say already now some of the initiatives that your government will take.

I have instructed the Philippine National Bank to make sugar lands that were mortgaged to it available to displaced sugar workers. The PNB has told me that it is now prepared to implement my instruction. Some ten thousand hectares will be parcelled out soon and sold to the sugar workers. Some financing will be available, thanks largely to the initiative of your own governor, but the ultimate decision of ownership will depend on you, the sugar workers, on your industry, on your determination to prove that the Filipino farmer can hold his own.

I know that land reform isn't just parceling out land. It means just as importantly providing the means to make it productive. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food stands ready to extend technical expertise to the new land beneficiaries. And I am assured by your governor that the private sector stands equally ready to pitch in with its assistance. The PNB is studying the possibility of extending crop loans to new farmers under a special financing scheme for the crop year 1987-88.

Your government is ready to do more. We have programmed some P6.13 billion to finance the building of infrastructures such as roads, bridges, ports, and wells over the next six years. Not only will this program improve your productivity and access to markets, it will by itself generate the jobs that are so desperately needed in the countryside.

And we are striving to bring you peace, the peace in which to work without fear, the peace to enjoy the fruits of your labor, and build a future for your children. You know of our efforts to bring the insurgent leadership to the negotiating table, to call for a ceasefire so that the killing will stop and we can save our sons and daughters for the nobler task of rebuilding our country together. Nothing is lost by making the effort to find peace by the ways of peace. Instead we gain time and save lives. And contrary to what some critics say, there is evidence of some success in our efforts. There is peace in the Cordilleras and peace in the Muslim South. I continue to pray that we shall have peace throughout our beloved land. At any rate, we have made the first moves, we have signaled our sincere desire to stop fighting, and use the democracy we achieved to reach the goals we all desire: progress and justice.

Yesterday, I received the draft of the new constitution. The campaign for its ratification starts here in Negros. This new Constitution enshrines the ideals we sacrificed for in our Revolution. It gives us the form of our new democracy, the permanent framework of our freedoms, and the general direction we must take to achieve justice and progress for all our people. I urge you all to campaign for its ratification. It will be one giant step towards the stability we need to work single-mindedly for the reconstruction of our country.

Before I conclude, I want to express, out here before Negros, the gratitude of your government and of our country for the generous assistance extended to the people of Negros by foreign governments and institutions, and by private corporations and civic groups. As I said about the recovery of Filipino freedom: it happened by our own efforts, but the help and encouragement of friends of democracy abroad strengthened our determination to stay the course. It will be the same in the rehabilitation of Negros. You, the people of Negros, will bear the main burden, but the sympathy and understanding of friends are always welcome. My countrymen, we showed last February what courage, faith and perseverance can accomplish. The task here in Negros is daunting. But we shall make it. We shall succeed in this as in anything the Power of the People sets its mind to.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino to Governor Lacson at the testimonial dinner

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To Governor Lacson at the testimonial dinner**

[Delivered in Bacolod City, October 16, 1986]

REBUILDING NEGROS' ECONOMY

President Aquino calls on the middle forces to rally to the aid of Negros.

I think that Governor Lacson and I have a few things in common. When the situation all over the country, just as conditions in Negros, were reaching crisis proportions, we were both called upon to lead. And we both did not want the job.

In my case, a petition of a million signatures gave me no choice but to take on the dictator for the Presidency. In Bitay's case, I petitioned him for an hour at my Guesthouse office, after which he too was left with no choice. I can tell you it gave me great pleasure to do unto Bitay what Filipinos in the opposition had done to me.

Governor Lacson and I have now been some time in our respective government positions, and I suspect we continue to share similar experiences and perceptions. Our people desperately want change. And we, as their leaders, have the burden of affecting it. But we both know we cannot do it alone. There is a price that must be paid for change. And those with more resources and opportunities must shoulder the better part of it. To quote Governor Lacson: "What is freedom worth to us? What percent of what we have?" Whether that percentage be a percentage of our land, our time, our expertise, or our caring and concern.

In Negros, as in the rest of the country, the huge debt of past excesses and neglect, of a previous complacency, must be paid. The old pace of life is lost forever. If we move forward too slowly, we could be overwhelmed by developments whose trends are clear for all to see. If we move too fast, we leave behind a great part of the population still rooted in the habits of the past and unaccustomed to taking matters into their own hands.

For Negros, for the nation to survive, the middle forces must take the initiative: the private sector, the Church, the middle and upper classes, and outdistance the counterforces of anger and despair. I do not envy Bitay the enormous demands and perils of his job, as I am sure he does not envy mine. We are both racing against time and hoping the people are following behind us. I pray for the governor and his new wave of concerned and activist Negrenses – that they may forge ahead in their race against time.

I just received word from DBP Chairman Jess Estanislao that the Bank has allocated half a billion pesos to the province of Negros Occidental for short-gestation projects such as palay, pineapple, cassava, or ramie production, prawn culture, and broiler contract growing. The amount is available now.

The DBP is also putting together another half a billion pesos for Negros Occidental for long-gestation projects: black pepper, and coffee production, and agro-forestry.

I want to mention this as government's contribution to encourage the transformation of the Negros economy.

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Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the Military

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines Before the Military

[Delivered at a Military Camp, Iloilo, October 17, 1986]

STAND TALL, MY SOLDIERS

The fight for democracy is not yet over. The Armed Forces should remain vigilant – particularly against those who seek to subvert and destroy our freedoms.

In the way of soldiers, I, your Commander-in-Chief, have one direct message for you. You are needed and you are appreciated. The new democracy that you helped establish, you are now called upon to defend. The enemies of our new democracy, the friends of the deposed dictator, have tried to demoralize you by saying that our peace initiatives derogate from the indispensable role and honored place of the soldier in our Republic. But I know your intelligence is proof against their lies. I am pursuing the path of negotiation with the insurgents because I want to spare our country further bloodshed and the loss of precious lives we need for the reconstruction of our country. Every Filipino life is inestimably valuable. This is not appreciated by those who oppressed and murdered many of their own countrymen in the satisfaction of their limitless greed. But you, whose daily life it is to protect the lives and liberties of your fellow countrymen know the worth of the Filipino. Your belief in that value is what justifies in your eyes the daily sacrifice you make. The path of negotiation that I am pursuing finds the best hope of its success in the continued vigilance of the Armed Forces, in its increasing capability to overcome the forces that seek to subvert and destroy our precious freedoms. The end of Communist Insurgency in our country, as I have said, again and again, lies in provision of hope to all our people by the development of our economy and in the insurance of a Reformed Armed Forces. And so I say to you, stand fast, my soldiers by the Flag and the Republic for which it stands, stand vigilantly for the safety of our people, stand tall with pride in your indispensable part in the rebirth of our nation.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino at a public rally Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At a public rally**

[Delivered in Iloilo, October 17, 1986]

A CHALLENGE TO ILONGGOS

The President calls on Ilonggos to forget the wounds of the past and move forward under the force of People Power. Iloilo has lands and natural resources that are the envy of the North, and the province holds the promise of prosperity.

I am here in Iloilo province for three reasons. First, I want to thank you for your support, your courage and your prayers. Second, I would like to witness for myself people's power, Ilonggo style. And third, I would like you to know that the revolution that began in Manila must continue in your province as it has throughout the country.

My challenge to all Ilonggos is to step forward and forget the hurts, the resentment and the hopelessness of the recent past. I know that even here, Marcos managed to cast his shadow. But today, thanks to the unity and determination we displayed last February, that shadow has receded. And we can no longer blame the dictatorship for what we are and what we cannot become. Freedom is indeed a bright and unsparing light. In its glow, we are now forced to see where the influence of the Marcos era ends, and where our basic shortcomings and strengths as a people begin. In the light of freedom also, we can better see the work that must yet be done. And the paths that must be cleared so that the forces of people's power can move forward.

I know that here, as in the province of Negros, reconciliation must yet take effect. I know that the memory of repression and exploitation continues to divide you. I know also that poverty and unemployment weaken your strength and resolve. But just by looking around me, I have hope for Iloilo. You have lands and natural resources here that are the envy of the North. And Ilonggos are people with a history of creativity, resilience, and good humor. I also know that Ilonggos look for their strength in the Lord.

More than in other parts of our country, your province and region hold the promise of prosperity. If the people of Iloilo can rebuild and recover, we will look to you as a model and hope.

Your government is here to help. But only the Ilonggo can see and understand what Iloilo needs. And in the final analysis, it is you who will take your province into your own hands and mold it into a better place for your children. I urge recovery effort. God will grant us our reward.

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Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at a business luncheon

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At a business luncheon

[Held in Iloilo, October 17, 1986]

THE END OF SUGAR

The glory days of the sugar industry are over. President Aquino asks the Ilonggos to cut their dependence on sugar and go into new fields.

I bring to you essentially the same message I brought to Negros: You, the social and economic leaders of this island and I, the National Leadership, have essentially the same daunting task before us and that is to dismantle the heritage of the past and build essentially from scratch. As I have encountered opposition and recriminations in this task of national rebirth, so shall you. I have endeavored, and I believe with success, to take down the oppressive structures of the previous regime and abolish the privileges of its favorites in order to liberate the genius and enterprise of the Filipino.

Twenty years of spoon feeding Philippine business by the government ended up with the government feeding itself and its friends exclusively and at the expense of Philippine business. The revolution we fought was not to redirect that spoon back to the mouths of Philippine business but to put it down and let business grow up and mature.

This is the course I have embarked on out of deep conviction that our best bet in the recovery of Philippine economy and the achievement of progress and prosperity lies in the unfettered activity of private enterprise. It is also the course I have to embark on because frankly, twenty years of Marcos, has left nothing to feed Philippine business with. This is the program on which I campaigned, so what I am telling you is nothing new. I do not know if all of you agreed with it. I would not understand why not, since those who profited from the previous way of doing things are enjoying the fruits of their privilege at your expense. At any rate, it is on that program that the people first voted me to the presidency and, when the dictator tried to frustrate their will, offered their lives to vindicate their victory. This program of self-reliance carries the stamp of the people's will. I ask you, share my implicit and total faith in their wisdom.

And here in Region VI, it is not only a matter of accepting the popular will but facing the reality of your situation.

Sugar is finished, not only here but throughout the world. There are just too many substitutes or alternate sources of sugar for the markets of the world to absorb.

Our revolution won us many friends among the world's democracies and they are eager to help us. And yet when I brought up the plight of the sugar industry, I could feel them hold back. They would hesitate to extend any assistance to Philippine sugar that might delude the industry into taking it as a new lease on life. I felt, even among those most sincere about helping the lot of the people who depend on sugar, that they would rather the suffering continue if only to drive home the point that sugar is finished and the sooner we turn away from it the better for our long term good. I had to appeal to them to at least give the sugar industry and its workers the time to develop another kind of agriculture, the time to adjust to another mode of life after over three centuries of singular devotion to sugar, the means to survive, to eat, while all these things are taking place. Such support, therefore, as I received for this industry has been largely a gesture of support during my American visit.

The U.S. Senate approved in the last week of September, two bills that would effectively increase the Philippine share of U.S. sugar imports for 1987 from 13.5% to 34%. Both bills are still pending. But in the meanwhile, the

Senate vote to override the veto of the South Africa sanctions bill effectively adds 23,000 tons for the Philippines. In addition, your Sugar Regulatory Administration is working to get the balance of the South Africa 1986 sugar quota for the Philippines.

Even as we pray, and our friends lobby, to get the Industry this much needed boost, let us begin the work of turning the economy of this region away from its fatal dependence on sugar and developing more productive uses for the richness of its soil and the potential of its labor.

Even as I have asked others to consider the distressing plight of the sugar people, your government will move in care in certain measures for the reform of our economy. While your government is determined to rationalize the Sugar Industry with dispatch, it is aware that even excess sugar mills play an essential role in the viability of the farms around them and in the livelihoods of those dependent on them. We shall consult widely before carrying out any foreclosure of sugar mills, but in the end, you may as well know it, we shall push it through. I know you support this move.

I should like to take this opportunity to reiterate my clarification of the PNB's financing policy. Starting crop year 1987-1988 the bank will extend loans to sugar planters based on their sugar quotas for 1986-1987. Penalty charges incurred during 1984-1985 will be waived and interest rates will be lowered to approximate the mere cost of handling money, somewhere around 21.23%.

Your government will continue to explore other ways by which, given its limited resources, the transformation of your economy can be made less onerous. But in the end we must all bite the bullet and carry through our reforms. It is always painful to cut ourselves off from our past, especially one as rich as the history of sugar. The glory days of sugar are over but remember that a greater future for your region is not foreclosed. The Ilonggos are surely greater than their traditional product. And the exhaustion of the potential of sugar cannot mean the exhaustion of the Ilonggo's potential for growth and greatness in other endeavors. Remember what they said about the Filipino before the election and revolution of 1986: The Philippines is finished, they said. In the confrontation between the armed might of tyranny and unarmed anger of the people the only result can be the self-inflicted destruction of that country and all hope of its recovery. We proved them wrong on the first count. And that was the harder part. We shall prove them wrong everywhere they have underestimated the Filipino.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at a Plenary Session

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At a Plenary Session

[Delivered in Iloilo, October 17, 1986]

NEW DIRECTIONS FOR ILOILO

Iloilo, like Negros, must turn away from sugar and cultivate other areas. The private sector will play a big role in transforming the economy of the region. Government will do its part. It will increase rural employment and income through the community economic development program, and will strengthen the community-based health program, among other concerns.

I have listened to the various concerns of the sectors represented here and share your sense of urgency regarding them. While the various consultations have brought up specific issues and problems, and have proposed solutions which require further study, I have isolated a few basic concerns that I want to address now.

The first is the island's worsening economic situation. To a great extent this has to do with the island's singular dependence on sugar, but the general neglect of this island by its local leaders is equally to blame. For even those areas where sugar is not the dominant crop, poverty, hunger and disease are widespread.

This noon I addressed the business community and read to them the handwriting on the wall; sugar is finished. I have bought us some time to turn this region away from its bondage to sugar. But the work of transforming the economy of this region must start now. I said the work of transformation will be largely the responsibility of the private sector, in whose initiative and industry lies our country's hope for recovery. But the government knows that the economy, especially here, needs a shot in the arm to get it moving. We are going to do our part. I need not tell you that we don't have all the resources we would like, but with what we have, we hope to address some of our most pressing problems, particularly here in this region.

The community economic development program is an example of this. The project aims to increase rural employment and income. A total of 1,461 projects amounting to P227.9 million have been lined up by the CEDP for the region. Another program is the special financing program that involves an initial P500 million to finance small and medium scale industries.

Our best hope of revitalizing the rural economy is through infrastructure projects. Some P6.13 billion has been programmed for 1987 to 1992 for Region VI for the construction of schoolhouses, roads, wells, and ports. With specific regard to power availability and cost, a major project of the National Power Corp. in Region VI is the on-going construction of submarine cables between Panay and Negros which will transmit power from the Palimpinon Geothermal Plant. This should lower the power rate in the region.

Your health problems are an offshoot of the state of your economy, the plight of your unemployed and underemployed. The emergency employment we hope to generate should address some of these problems. There is a community-based health program that we hope to strengthen. But a lot can be done right now by the communities themselves practicing basic hygiene and sanitation in their surroundings. Government will try to provide the basic services; sewage, potable water, garbage collection. But the people themselves must respect how much of the urban blight can be removed without complicated systems as expensive services, just by the members of the communities themselves.

The last concern I shall discuss here is the peace and order situation. I shall pursue the path of negotiation to the utmost. My chief concern is to stop the killing. With every death of a Filipino, our country dies a little. But while that is my chief concern it is not my only duty. My primary duty is to protect the integrity of the Republic and its democratic institutions, assure the safety of my people and guaranty their enjoyment of the precious rights and liberties for which they fought. Let me make this clear, I shall use any means necessary to the discharge of my primary duty to protect our democracy and keep it a nation under God. I want peace. I believe that in the hearts of all Filipinos there is an intense desire for peace, for the peace in which we can work with singular dedication to the speedy reconstruction of our country. On that hope I base my effort to negotiate a peace, but on the continuing reform of our Armed Forces lies our assurance that peace is not bought at the price of honor or slavery.

Before I conclude, let me add one specific thing I have discovered.

The insurgency is not the only, nor perhaps the basic cause of the peace and order problem in this island. A lot of it has to do with the continued presence of gangsters in the hire of the stalwarts of the old regime, with the criminality that has not been addressed although attention has been repeatedly called to it, with failure of local officers to live up to our expectations and of the people that brought us to power. I say to them now, shape up, before you are shipped out. This particular problem will get my special attention.

Let me conclude by wishing you the best. I have learned much from these consultations. So long as we continue to help each other, we shall attain our goals.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Tribute of President Corazon Aquino to the Mother Butler Mission Guilds

**Tribute
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Mother Butler Mission Guilds**

[Delivered in Santuario de San Antonio Parish Center, October 18, 1986]

**PAYING TRIBUTE
TO THE LITTLE PEOPLE**

The Mother Butler Mission Guilds do their work quietly, attending to the little touches: sewing vestments, and providing altar fixtures for poor parishes. In a way, they are like the ordinary people who put food on our tables and clothes on our back. It is a style, the President says, that we must all adopt as we work to rebuild the country.

In government, I have found, it takes different types of people to handle a variety of tasks. There is a President to do presidential functions, there are Ministers to do the ministerial work of the Presidency, protocol officers to handle “protocolar” work, to use Minister Villafuerte’s descriptive word for that sort of thing. And then there are a few persons who iron out the wrinkles in all these things, including in the daily running of the Guesthouse itself; people who, without calling attention to themselves, take the initiative to smooth out the fold in the carpet, so to speak, so that in the sudden rush of a crisis no one falls on his face.

In the same way, the Mother Butler Mission Guilds are self-effacing but indispensable to the Catholic Church in its rituals of worship. You attend to what might be called the little touches, the embellishments – the sewing of vestments, the purchase of liturgical paraphernalia, the provision of altar fixtures for poor parishes, and so on. But without such painstaking attention to detail the practice of the Catholic faith would be wanting indeed.

Mother Butler Guilds do their work quietly, invisibly, but effectively. And that is the working style that I, personally, subscribe to. For as you work, no one gives much noise. But, when you are no longer there, that is when you, all that you contribute, are sorely missed. Fortunately, the Catholic Church in the Philippines has not had a chance to miss the work of the Mother Butler Guilds. After 31 years, you are still here, still working tirelessly, and still growing.

But it is not only our style, but that of plain, ordinary people everywhere, the kind of people throughout our country who put the food on our tables, the clothes on our back. These are the plain people, incidentally, whose multitude of individual, unrecognized acts of courage added up to the sweeping rejection of tyranny and the restoration of our freedoms. It is the style we must all adopt as we work to rebuild our country.

The heroic phase of our new history has passed into deathless memory; now the larger, longer work must start. It is here where the virtues of people such as those that mark your Guilds are needed: the virtues of quiet perseverance and industry; of attention to the details that make up the larger picture; of faith that by our many small acts we shall change the world. They are the virtues to which Robert Kennedy referred when he said:

“Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation . . . It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.”

Ever since my return, my message has been essentially the same: let us buckle down to work, to the tasks we have respectively taken on. Our problems are not the kind that we can split apart as a solution, but the kind that require slow, painstaking and determined efforts to unravel. We inherited a mess of an economy and a political system. We have made great strides in politics, but much remains to be done. But in the economy, the basic work has just begun. After all the discussions both here and abroad, the promises of help, the expressions of confidence in our ability to surmount our problems, the real work must be ours. And it is work that requires the virtues of which I spoke as distinguishing your Guilds.

Here I speak to the converted. So, help me instead to spread the words I uttered when I arrived: the time for talk is over, the time for action is now.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the MILF-Christian Consultations

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the MILF-Christian Consultations**

[Released on October 20, 1986]

IN SEARCH OF PEACE IN MINDANAO

Continuing her quest for peace in the South, the President declares that those who call her weak should not put to the test her commitment to democracy. She is willing to go to any lengths for peace, with no concern for her safety; her fate she leaves to God.

The President also announces that to encourage wider consultations, she will appoint a Commission for Peace and Development in the autonomous region.

In everything I do or say, I am the President of all our people.

I went south personally to reestablish on a firmer footing the uneasy peace that has obtained in Mindanao. I went there hoping to find in one Muslim leader, and later on, in others, the same desire for peace as I have, the same admission that we cannot hope to recover and make progress unless our people are assured of peace.

That meeting was meant to be just the beginning. The beginning of a round of consultations in the areas where Muslims and Christians co-exist so as to bring them together in a common effort to uplift their communities and establish the material foundation of their political and spiritual growth. The intention is to orient the policies of government in your areas in the direction you think best. No one can presume to know this better than you. That is the character of this government, the nature of a true democracy.

This is an open government. Open to ideas and making every effort to be sensitive to the feelings of the people. It is neither in the character nor the spirit of this government to make any decisions behind the backs of the people affected. I speak for this government, and I hope, in so speaking, that my words also reflect the sentiments of those with whom it deals. If this is not the case, then I have been misunderstood. So let me make it clear.

Whatever political arrangements or structure must be made to accommodate the ways of life and beliefs of the diverse people of Mindanao, one principle will never be compromised: we shall have democracy across the length and breadth of our land. Any changes from the general structure of government and laws that special circumstances may dictate for certain areas of our country must bear the stamp of popular approval obtained through democratic means. We took our stand on democracy in the last elections in the face of intimidation and violence, although we were unarmed. Is it conceivable we shall not stand by democracy now that we have the armed might of the Republic in our hands?

There are some who say that it was neither prudent, in terms of personal safety, nor becoming, in the light of my high office, to go anywhere for peace, as I have done. With prudence regarding my safety, I have no concern. I leave my fate to God. You who are Muslims should appreciate this more than others. With regard to the dignity of my

high office, let me say that a higher dignity is found in the good use of the Presidency to bring peace to our land than by standing on protocol. And to those who fear that my willingness to go to any lengths for peace will be construed as weakness, let me say: Let those who want, so construe it. It does not bother me to be spoken of as weak by the ignorant, but let them not make the mistake of putting me to the test: to the test of my commitment to democracy and to the safety and well-being of my people.

Rest assured therefore that any provision against paramilitary protection of the public safety will be respected only after adequate provision is made for the safety of all communities by other means, even if it takes a larger military establishment to do it. We must, in principle, yield to the public clamor for more responsible guardians of public order than the CHDFs have proved to be, but we will never compromise on the safety of our people, and the protection of their rights and liberties. It is unfortunate that the bad elements in these forces have brought a general discredit to the concept of community-based defense forces. But the over-all aim of community protection against subversion and terrorism remains our first priority and the paramount and exclusive duty and prerogative of the national government.

Again, let me repeat. This is a government of the people, pledged to lead them only in the direction they point. It is a government by consultation. The discussions today were animated, to say the least, and this is good for it shows that the idea is taken seriously. We, the government, are, of course, serious about it.

We therefore encourage that wider consultations be held following this, consultations that should involve all groups and sectors.

We shall appoint a Commission for Peace and Development, to be composed of people from the autonomous region and to report directly to me. It is this Commission that will review the problems brought up in the consultations and the solutions proposed, and recommend these to me. Their mandate will cover all issues regarding the peace and order situation in the autonomous regions.

Pending its recommendations, we have held in abeyance any further appointments or replacements of officials in the Regional Autonomous Governments in Regions 9 and 12 after the people have been consulted and I have studied the matter with Minister Pimentel.

We shall continue to disagree on many points. This is the price we must pay for freedom. This is also the chief advantage of a democracy, that we have the benefit of the widest spectrum of views on our many problems. But this diversity must have a center to hold it together. That center is our common conviction that all we do and say in all sincerity must always be for the good of our one and only country, the singular object of our total loyalty.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the women of Sigma Delta Phi

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the women of Sigma Delta Phi**

[Delivered on October 22, 1986]

THE GREATER STRUGGLE LIES AHEAD

During a tense month filled with rumors about a coup, President Aquino reports on numerous important developments: There is no falling out between her and Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile; inefficient OICs will have to shape up or be shipped out; the International Monetary Fund is expected to approve our Standby Program; and she will soon fix a deadline to mark the end of our efforts to achieve peace with communist-led rebels through talks.

It was before you, the women of Sigma Delta Phi, that I announced the rebirth of Philippine democracy by declaring that I would challenge the dictator to the Presidency. It is only right therefore that every now and then I should stand before you to announce how this new democracy is faring.

You have heard many rumors the past few weeks. Rumors of a coup to be staged by Minister Enrile, rumors of counter-action taken by the government. The height was yesterday when, on the one hand, I was told I had ordered the arrest of Enrile and, on the other, Enrile had started his coup by calling on the service chiefs to declare their loyalties one way or the other. This together with a press conference he is alleged to have called, and where he strongly intimated his intentions.

Those of us who actually made a revolution, as opposed to those who merely talk a good coup or revolution, have nothing to gain by falling out with each other. We have, on the contrary, a lot to lose by doing so; mainly the meaning of the sacrifices we respectively made to return democracy to our country and the trust reposed on us by the millions of Filipinos who made the same sacrifices with us.

If we fall out with each other, the only gainers are the enemies of freedom: the Marcos loyalists and the die-hard communists who, by thus far ignoring our offer of peace and our people's burning desire to see an end to killing and fear, increasingly reveal their real intentions for our people, the real character of their regard for our people's well-being.

This is why there is no falling out between Minister Enrile and myself. We are not stupid. We did not sacrifice, and more important than that, we did not ask our people to offer the supreme sacrifice of their lives, just to create openings for their enemies to take control over their lives and their future in the differences that have arisen between us. From the start of our talk last night, this was clear. We are one in seeking the common good, in realizing the potential of our country to recover and to achieve progress and keep its precious freedoms.

Those present at the meeting, aside from Johnny and myself, were Doy Laurel, General Ramos, Joe Concepcion and Teddy Locsin. We spoke frankly about our special concerns, our respective ways of viewing the problems of the country and how to go about solving them. You may say this comes late in the day, but better late than never. It is understandable that we, who had not known each other, who had made our plans to restore democracy, should take some time to understand each other. But now we do. Many differences remain, but the common ground of patriotism

is clearly shared by all. Our styles will continue to differ; we are different people, struck from different molds that were created out of radically different experiences. But we are first Filipinos and committed to democracy.

And those differences, as our discussions went on, were increasingly being resolved in a common impatience over the slow progress of some of our initiatives.

We swept the local political infrastructure clean to prepare the ground for responsible and truly representative local governments. We removed local government officials throughout the country in order to paralyze and hopefully dismantle the deposed dictatorship's electoral machinery to prevent its return by the back door of local governments. Necessarily this meant appointing OICs in place. By and large, our appointments were good. But quite a few, as I pointed out in my speech in Panay where the common complaint was of absentee OICs, have fallen way below our expectations. These officials, who derive their mandate only indirectly from the people who put my Government in place, have betrayed the trust I reposed in them by a gross and inexcusable indifference to the efforts of the National Government to bring peace, democracy and social services to the people. A few of these OICs have the gall to act on the basis of what they say are their personal views of the public good. They were not put in office for their views, but for their assumed competence in carrying out the programs of this Government. When and if they receive a direct mandate from the people, then they will be entitled to their opinions. And in speaking of these particular OICs, let me say that they will never have the opportunity. For the government has set its face against them. Minister Pimentel and I will be going over the list of OICs for those soon to be discharged following on my warning delivered in Panay to shape up or be shipped out. For some of them, there will be no second chance to shape up. They are out.

I expect the fullest cooperation from the local governments temporarily in place in our drive to bring Peace to the countryside. The Peace and Order Councils are hereby instructed to move with more vigor and speed in setting up the structures of cooperation between local communities and the Armed Forces to contain the spread of insurgency and put a stop to the abuses of the rebels and their efforts to exploit the democratic space we have created in order to destroy the democracy our people restored.

Our patience has been worn thin. Our people now know who genuinely share the vision of democracy for which they fought. That vision has no place for the practice of graft and the indulgence of incompetence, nor for the imposition of a foreign ideology whose chief merit is the more efficient enslavement of the people.

As we prepare for more vigorous action in those areas that give our people grave concern, I ask the people, the communities throughout our land, to work out the ways by which they can contribute to the coming nationwide effort to bring peace throughout the land and progress to our country. We have worked silently, and therefore with little public recognition, to put in place many of the programs for national recovery. One of the most important is the debt structuring program.

The IMF Board is expected to approve our Standby Program which will provide \$508 million dollars in additional financing during the next 18 months. Of this amount approximately \$300 million dollars will be available for drawdown by October 31 or November 15. Upon the approval of our program, we will also be able to draw down the last tranche of \$350 million dollars of the new money facility previously negotiated with our commercial bank lenders. The same program will pave the way for approval in December of a \$300 million Economic Recovery Loan from the World Bank, plus a possible additional co-financing of the same program by the Japan Exim Bank amounting to another \$300 million dollars. We will commence negotiations with our commercial bank lenders on October 27 in order to reschedule approximately \$3.6 billion dollars in maturing loan amortizations from 1987 to 1992. We also hope to renegotiate the terms of our last, 1983-1986 rescheduling to obtain better terms and lower interest rates on approximately \$5.7 billion of previously rescheduled loans.

I believe we have achieved the best arrangement in the circumstances. We might do better if we continue to discuss with our foreign creditors, but I think what the people want more than an incremental advantage is a clear picture of the way ahead. A clear idea of the investment climate in the coming years. A clear idea of the peace and order situation immediately. After democracy, we want certainty so we can play wisely. To this end, I must declare my intention to soon fix a deadline to mark the end of our efforts to achieve peace by talk and the earnest start of efforts

to establish it by any means the situation calls for. Any attack on centers of government by the insurgents will merely accelerate the deadline. And here, let me offer this assurance. We have the situation well in hand. Our Armed Forces are ready to take on any challenge to the integrity of the State and the safety of our people. To our people, let me say. Do not be afraid. The government will protect you. But to them also I would like to appeal for cooperation, for the kind of support and courage that brought us freedom.

Again, even as I speak a comprehensive program for the imposition of peace through economic development, social justice, and military action is being fleshed out. We must proceed with the energy, the coordination, the unity of a single hand. Now open in the offer of peace, but soon to be clenched in a declaration of war.

Be steadfast my countrymen, be brave, for we fight for the right. Join with me in my struggle to bring us the country of our dreams. I need your strength and your prayers to bear the burden placed on my shoulders of fulfilling the destiny of God's favored children. Reveal again the power of your faith, your resolve, your numbers. The power that brought us freedom, bring it now to bear on my effort to bring peace to our poor land. I said it right after the Victory, the Revolution has only begun. The greater struggle lies ahead. We have enjoyed to the full the heady brew of sudden freedom. Let us not spurn the cup of our responsibility as citizens of a free country, of our obligation to repay the Lord for the grace of our liberation. Let this day be the first day of another February that will never end until our nation fulfills its cherished dreams.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 7th Annual World Dental Congress

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the 7th Annual World Dental Congress**

[Delivered at the PICC, November 9, 1986]

NEEDED: VOLUNTEER DENTAL SERVICES

It is undeniable that there is greater dental consciousness now compared to a generation ago and that dentistry is now up there along with other medical sciences. President Aquino, however, stresses that dental services must be brought to as many people as possible.

The government is committed to do its part but dental care is expensive and so, to a great extent, the immediate dental needs of the people must be met by volunteer services.

Thank you for the honor of inviting me to address this distinguished body. I cannot help but be reminded tonight about how my husband Ninoy used to regard dental appointments with mortal dread and how martial law changed all that for him, among other things. For a political prisoner in solitary confinement, a dental appointment in prison meant the rare opportunity to see and talk to people from the outside world. I remember only too well how eagerly my husband looked forward to each visit of our dentist, Dr. Primo Gonzales. One of the ironies of life was that both Ninoy and Marcos had the same dentist. Am I glad that that was one of the very few things they had in common!

But many more things have changed, for all of us. For instance, thinking about government is no longer like thinking about going to the dentist. And even real dental appointments are no longer associated with intense pain. This is not to say that dental bills can no longer cause migraine or something else.

But it is undeniable that there is greater dental consciousness now than say a generation ago. For instance, I never fail on any evening I watch television to see former assemblyman and now National Parks Chairman, Orly Mercado, and TV host Ric Puno brandishing their teeth along with a tube of toothpaste. This just goes to show how important dental health has become as a concern and an issue.

I see children, and even teenagers, with braces, head gear, molar bands, brackets, arch wire, and retainers. The idea is to save teeth, make them better, rather than just pulling them out to put an abrupt end to pain and inconvenience. A sort of dental reconciliation, as opposed to confrontation with bad teeth. And I am told that specializations have increased, along with dental schools. Dentistry is now up there along with all the other medical sciences. And we see, as here, dental associations holding international seminars just as medical associations have been doing to share developments in the science. I hope we can go farther and see the dental profession make a concerted effort to bring the services I have mentioned to as many of the people as possible. Services that, as of now, only the affluent can have.

Government is committed to doing its part. But dental care is expensive and so, to a great extent, the immediate needs of our people must be met by volunteer services. You have all heard the rumored plan of "God Save the Queen." Well, this Queen doesn't want to be saved, but proposes instead a better project, "Dentists Save Our People's Teeth." That's one plan, on a nationwide scale, that will get my endorsement and support. We all have to do our share. There isn't enough money to go around for Government to do it alone. Be reminded that half of every dollar we earn goes to pay for servicing our debts.

I make this appeal for your volunteer help because I know of your readiness to sacrifice for your country. Many of you were in the streets to extract the dictatorship from our country and restore our democracy. And that, as you know, went rather painlessly. But more remains to be done. We have to preserve what we won. That is why we have a new Constitution soon to be ratified. It will implant firmly our rights and liberties. I count on your support to get it ratified. And I mean not just your votes, but your participation in the campaign as well. There are those who say I should not campaign for ratification. They are the same ones who say that if the Constitution is not ratified, then it is a rejection of me and I should step down. Now does that make sense? I will campaign. The first law is survival. We intend to win convincingly.

I wish I could be with you longer. My attention has been called to some of the pressing concerns of your profession. These will be studied, along with so many other equally pressing matters that demand our attention. Unfortunately, not all these matters contribute to national progress. The rumors you have heard is one. They take time away from genuine concerns, not to mention discrediting our country in the eyes of the world. But with all these pressures, your concerns will be attended to.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the members of the Japanese Diet

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the members of the Japanese Diet in a private reception**

[Delivered on November 11, 1986]

SEEKING PARTNERSHIP THROUGH AID

On a state visit to Japan, the President informs the members of the Diet (Parliament) that, following the return of democracy, the Philippines is ensuring political stability. Congress will be convened in 1987; in its absence, she is directly consulting the people on solutions to their problems. She appeals to friends of the Filipino people to extend a helping hand, by becoming economic partners.

I am honored by this reception tendered for me by the heads of the two houses of your illustrious parliament.

I hope that after the Philippine Congress is convened next year, there will be occasion to return this warm gesture of hospitality.

The Filipinos look eagerly to the day when the power to make laws returns to a duly elected parliament; a parliament of men and women chosen by the people and accountable to them; a parliament that will make the policies that people want. This is the secret of stability, the strength of democracies. Right or wrong, only the laws that people themselves make through their duly elected representatives will have their acceptance and support. As I said, no one can know better than the people what they want, and what they are prepared to sacrifice for it.

Leadership in a democracy means leading the people only in the direction they have pointed. And that is what I have been doing. Because we still do not have a parliament, I consult directly with the people about their problems and what they think the solutions should be. This makes things a little untidy, but keeps them always on course towards the ends the people desire.

It is in the pursuit of those ends that I am here today.

Our people wanted democracy back. The past eight months have been an effort to restore it as fully as possible. We have completed a draft constitution which will be submitted to a referendum in February. We shall have local and Congressional elections a few months after that. But even while these political efforts must be made, we are working to rebuild the economy that was ruined by the previous government. Because the ruin of the economy was made possible by the state's control of the economy, and because we are committed in principle to free enterprise, the effort to rebuild our economy must mainly be carried out by the private sector, both Filipino and foreign.

I have made the appeal to the friends of the Filipino people and of Philippine democracy to lend a helping hand. I have directed that appeal especially to those, like Japan, who have always stood by the Filipino people, sharing a portion of the fruits of their progress. But the main assistance we hope to get is that extended in partnership, in a cooperative and mutually advantageous effort to bring out the great potential of Filipino skill and enterprise.

We need outright aid, that is true at this point in time, but more importantly we need Japan's expression of faith in the promise of Philippine progress. I ask the Japanese to join us in rebuilding our economy. This will prove as much to their advantage as to ours. It will deepen our understanding of each other. It will strengthen our necessary friendship. My visit reaffirms that old friendship. I hope it will also mark a new chapter of even closer cooperation.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Seibu Ribbon Cutting

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Seibu Ribbon Cutting**

[Delivered on November 11, 1986]

**PHILIPPINE PRODUCTS
IN THE WORLD MARKET**

President Aquino opens an exhibit of Philippine products in a Japanese department store. She takes pride in the workmanship and artistry of Filipinos who create goods that are competitive in the world market.

I know I'm really in government when I enter a department store in Japan, not to go shopping, but to help promote the products of our country.

I would like to thank the management of Seibu for accommodating this special exhibit of Philippine products. You honor us, and I know that in return we will be bringing in more customers and business to your establishment. For you are showcasing here some of the best examples of Philippine materials, artistry and craftsmanship. They are products that will appeal and satisfy buyers anywhere in the world.

And to the Filipinos managing and staffing this exhibition, I would like to remind you that you fulfill an extremely important task. You are helping create a demand for our products in this country which is an ally, and key trading partner of the Philippines.

May I also say that your task should be easy because Filipino products are really outstanding. When we put our hearts and minds to it, we can create goods that are truly innovative, useful, beautiful, and competitive in the world market.

Congratulations for the good work you have put into this exhibition and I wish you good business.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the State Banquet with the Japanese Majesties Speech
of**

**Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the State Banquet with the Japanese Majesties**

[Delivered on November 11, 1986]

**APPRECIATING EACH OTHER'S
CULTURE AND PEOPLE**

President Aquino notes that the intense effort of the Japanese to rebuild their country from the ashes of war inspired the Filipinos to win back their own sovereign pride and independence. Closer cooperation which both people desire should be based on this feeling of pride. Cooperation will not only be in the areas of technical assistance and investment, but also in deep appreciation of each other's culture and people.

The warm reception extended to us by Your Majesty and the magnificence of this banquet deeply honor us. Now I see that at the heart of the strength of Japan is a beauty unequalled, I think, anywhere else in the world. And perhaps I have begun to understand the intense and unflagging efforts of the Japanese people to make and keep their country strong and progressive. But the inspiring quality of Japan has always been felt by my people. It has long antedated my visit here.

It was the image of Japan in the 19th century, the equal of any power in the world, that inspired the Filipinos to win back their own sovereign pride and independence. You showed what an Asian nation could do given the will and a wise leadership. It is again Japan, rising swiftly from the ashes of war, to recover and improve on her former greatness that inspires us today in our efforts to rise from the economic devastation we have suffered. And now Japan, I am happy to note, stands not only as an inspiration but a helpmate in our effort to recover.

The gap between your progress and our beginning is very wide, but eight months ago we closed it in at least one respect. We are on a parity in pride. Yours a pride in an unbroken chain of authority, tradition, noble ideals of self-sacrifice and courage, and brave innovations that have met with unerring success. Ours a pride, like yours, in native courage, in our newly recovered rights, and in the unique way in which we restored the democracy that was the tradition of our nation from its birth. Now, in this pride, we have the common ground on which to work out the closer cooperation that, I believe, both our peoples desire. The warmth of affection is there, and certainly the concern. The Filipinos, and I especially, will not forget the intense interest and concern shown by the Japanese people in seeing justice done to my late husband and freedom restored to our nation.

The cooperation I hope will not only be in the obvious and necessary areas of technical assistance and investment, but equally in efforts at mutual understanding; in a deep appreciation of each other's culture and people. I know it will be rewarding. For myself, I have found, in the practice of such arts of Japanese civilization that I have humbly tried to learn, a serenity that I can only compare with the consolation offered by my faith. I hope that it is in this area, more than in any other, that a stronger bond of friendship will grow between our two peoples.

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to join me in a toast to Their Imperial Majesties, the Emperor and Empress of Japan.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on achieving peace through peaceful means

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On achieving peace through peaceful means**

[Delivered in Waseda, November 12, 1986]

ACHIEVING THROUGH PEACEFUL MEANS

PEACE

President Aquino recalls the events which led to the February Revolution, and eventually, her presidency. She credits her late husband Ninoy for conceptualizing, embracing and promoting the philosophy of reconciliation and nonviolence that became the moving force of the relatively bloodless revolution. The real challenge now is to achieve peace by the ways of peace — for so much can be achieved in peace rather than in war.

I Japan, I understand, it is contrary to custom for women to take the leading role, especially in the realm of politics. For much of my life, in fact until three years ago, I had much in common with the Japanese woman and wife. I had chosen to marry a very dominant man; one who was to become the focus and center of my life, and the vortex of Philippine politics. Ninoy was the kind of man who had to be No. 1 not only in politics but in the home as well. And so my life around his. I was the dutiful wife, silent and supportive; the woman remembered by his friends as the one who served coffee, much as the Japanese woman serves tea. Some of these friends of his are now my ministers. They do not talk about the times when I served them coffee. But all in all I was happy in my role, for I loved him greatly.

Today I am No. 1. Not only at home but over our entire country. Ninoy would have been amazed, but also proud. For he would not fail to say that it is thanks to the many things I learned at his side. And it is true – up to a point.

Ninoy no longer influences the specific directions or decisions I must make as President of the Philippines. But I must say that the reason I am where I am today is because, as was usual between us, Ninoy took the lead and I followed.

It was Ninoy who conceptualized, embraced and promoted the philosophy of reconciliation and nonviolence that became the moving force of our bloodless February revolution. It was also Ninoy who was the first rallying point of People's Power that propelled me to the Presidency, keeps me there, and determines the course our nation is taking today.

Most people believe that People Power was born after Ninoy's death. It was really born in 1978, when he was still in prison.

In 1978, Marcos called for elections in another attempt to legitimize the naked power grab he made when he declared martial law in 1972. He wanted to prove that he and his friends had the mandate of the people. Everyone knew that the elections would be fraudulent, that the results were already prepared. Marcos controlled the Commission on Elections, the media, and the national mint. The opposition, which had none of these things, and whose leaders were either in jail, like Ninoy, or under surveillance or city arrest, clearly did not stand a chance. But Ninoy decided to take up the challenge and ran as the figurehead of the opposition slate from his prison cell. He could not campaign, of course, but our daughter Kris, then seven years old, took her father's place at the platform and appealed to the people during rallies. On the eve of elections, Ninoy was given one concession. He would be questioned on television by a government panel regarding his political views and the accusations that the government had made against him. He was taken straight from solitary confinement and thrust in front of the television cameras. I don't know how he did it, but he bested them all. He answered all the accusations and went on

to accuse the government in turn. Right after the broadcast, the city of Manila exploded in a noise barrage of people beating pots and pans, car drivers honking their horns, and people shouting in the streets. It was as if they wanted to tell Ninoy, swiftly thrown back in his cell, that he was not alone. The government was helpless to stop the non-violent, if hardly peaceful, demonstration. This was the germ of People Power that would hibernate through the rest of the winter of our oppression until Ninoy's willing sacrifice of his life brought the spring of our liberation.

Ninoy would remember this night and ponder its meaning in his cell and later on in exile. This demonstration had shown the limits of tyranny, that could reach everywhere except the hearts of brave men and women. He went on to read the works of men who had also experienced the peaceful but irresistible power of ordinary people to say, No more, and demand a change. He read Gandhi and Martin Luther King. From Gandhi, he drew his arrival statement when he had decided to return to his homeland for one last desperate effort to bring peace and reconciliation to his divided land.

"I have returned of my own free will," his statement read, "to join the ranks of those struggling to restore our rights of freedom through nonviolence. According to Gandhi, the willing sacrifice of the innocent is the most powerful answer to insolent tyranny that has yet been conceived by God and Man." But as you saw on Japanese television, he never read that statement. He was dead before his feet touched the land he loved.

It was after his death that People Power blossomed in all its glory. Two million people accompanied his coffin to the grave, under the hot sun and the pouring rain. Again, the government was powerless. It had issued threats against any who joined the funeral march. It grounded public transport so that people would be inconvenienced. It held a grand ball so that the people would see its indifference to their protest. But the funeral march went on, mournful and silent. Thousands of candles lit the way to his gravesite. As his coffin slipped into the ground, Ninoy's spirit entered his race. But Ninoy dead was more to be feared than when he was alive. For now his spirit was free to animate his people with the courage that had allowed him to face death. Courage, he said, is infectious. That night began the epidemic of bravery, from which the government learned there was no immunity.

The burden of Ninoy's mission to liberate his people in peace fell on my shoulders. I was reluctant to take it on. I was not a politician. And now that he was dead, I had once more to take on myself the role of father and mother to our children. And so I stipulated two conditions before I would take on the leadership of the struggle for freedom. Two conditions I believe could not be fulfilled. One was that Marcos would commit the folly of calling for a snap election. And the other was the impossible demand that one million people would sign a petition asking me to run for President. And that is exactly what happened. In an excess of arrogance, Marcos called for elections to prove once and for all that the opposition was nothing. And over a million people signed a petition to prove he was wrong.

Again, in this election as in the previous one, Marcos had the guns, the goons, and the national mint. With these things, he believed he could buy the people's mandate or, at least, thwart their will by fabricating a victory for himself at the polls. He was wrong. I and my running mate, with hardly any funds and barely any organization, nonetheless got the people. Or rather, the people got us in the grip of their determination to be rid once and for all of the tyranny that had abused and degraded them. Neither his tricks nor his thuggery could stem the irresistible tide of People Power that swept us to victory. Against his corruption, the people pitted their integrity by refusing to be bought. Against his threats, the people pitted their courage as they wrapped their arms around the ballot boxes to protect them from his thugs. Even his computer technicians, who were tasked with fabricating a fraudulent vote count walked out in protest. And against his debased parliament that proclaimed him the victor in the face of my overwhelming victory at the polls, they launched their nonviolent revolution. One million Filipinos gathered in Luneta Park to proclaim me and Doy Laurel as the victors of the election, the President and Vice-President of the People.

From that spot I proclaimed the strategy to vindicate the people's will, to implement their decision to make me President. I outlined a program of passive resistance and civil disobedience that called, as a starter, for a boycott of Marcos enterprises. I could not predict when we would succeed, but we were certain that the end of Marcos was near. Marcos could stay in the Palace but he had already lost the rest of the country. This was so clear to everyone that no one was afraid to join the nonviolent campaign and in the end, even the army stood down. A military revolt called by a brave handful of soldiers under Minister Enrile and General Ramos, who declared themselves for my Presidency was immediately surrounded by a protective wall of People Power summoned by the Cardinal. That wall

stood up to the tanks of the dictator. Marcos had lost every shred of legitimacy and, on the fourth day of the revolt, slipped away into exile.

As I came to power peacefully, so shall I keep it. This is my contract with my people and my commitment to God. The way of nonviolence had not exhausted itself in the struggle for Filipino freedom. It has the potential to give our nation a lasting and honorable peace as well. In that belief, I have called for negotiations with the communist rebels. Some people say I am naive to have done this. I can only say that I owe it to our people, who have lived in fear of the gun for so long, to exhaust every means within reason to give them the peace they so much deserve.

I do not know if I will succeed. I know I must try if only to show that before I take up the sword of war, I shall have stripped the olive branch of peace of every leaf of offering. I am confident of the power of government to deal forcefully with the insurgency in the last resort. The courage and skills of the new Filipino soldier assure us that we shall never lose our dearly bought freedoms. The real challenge is to achieve peace by the ways of peace. This is the best assurance that it will last and serve as the foundation for the national cooperation that is needed to restore my country's wasted fortunes. You have seen this in your own history. You never achieved so much in war, as you did in peace. It is that experience of your country that inspires me to go on trying. I ask you to share with me the hope and prayers that I will succeed.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the economic organizations

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the economic organizations**

[Delivered on November 12, 1986]

DISCOVERING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES

BUSINESS

The February election and the subsequent People Power revolution laid the groundwork for the stability of the Philippines. Now the new government has the opportunity to alleviate poverty and realize the potential of the country for growth and prosperity. President Aquino, therefore, challenges the Japanese business community to invest in the country, saying that opportunities outweigh the risks.

To a Japanese businessman the Philippines must represent at this point risk and opportunity. Risk because you remain concerned about political stability; opportunity should outweigh risk. Let me begin by saying risk is a passing phenomenon and, in this case, the perception of risk is far out of proportion with the situation of real stability that has been achieved. The election in February and the subsequent People Power revolution that enforced my victory as President firmly laid the groundwork for stability. Remember that the backbone of that revolution was the business class. Call them unlikely revolutionaries. It was not done to overturn society but to restore the democracy that is the only true and viable political expression of Philippine society. All we did was kick out a small group who had twisted a once strong economy to their own ends, and in doing so destroyed all the components of a liberal capitalist economy – a free market system, a liberal framework for investment, the rule of law, and labor/management relations oriented toward the shared aim of both sectors for progress and equity.

What we have done in the Philippines since February is give business back to the businessmen. Before I turn to the dramatic results that this economic revolution has already achieved, let me say a few words more about stability. Our revolution has earned us a flattering amount of attention from the world's press, including that in Japan. Indeed although we are a much smaller, less powerful country than you, with far less of a global role, our internal political quarrels are much better known and more fully exposed to the rest of the world.

It is a surprise for a modest country like ours to find our cabinet disagreements are front page news across the world. But nevertheless it is true that we have had these growing pains as we return to full democracy. Although I came to power with the massive support of the people, I have been anxious to govern by consensus whenever possible. There has been no violent assault on the old power structure. Rather, wherever we can we have absorbed it into the new democracy. Inevitably some have found it more difficult than others to settle down under the democratic yoke. For it is a yoke to operate in a democracy, where it is not the naked power of the player but the popular vote that decides the outcome. Laws, rules and a heightened sense of civic duty mark democratic politics even more than the freedom and license which attract so much attention. There is no more arbitrary government in the Philippines. There is now the rule of law. There is no more government by the gun, just government by the ballot.

Not only has this created a much easier and more straightforward environment for outsiders to do business in, it has also created a stable future for our country. We now have the draft of a new Constitution which will be presented for ratification in a popular referendum in early February next year. The day before I left for Tokyo I launched the vote Yes campaign. I hope and believe there will be an overwhelming majority in favor. If it is approved, congressional and local elections will follow a few months later. So we are well on the road to a full recovery of our democracy. We do not take too much notice of the anguished complaints of those who do not relish their political chances under a democracy.

As for the economy itself, despite the damaging cloud of political instability that has hung over it, all the vital signs are good. We have a new standby agreement with the IMF that provides \$508 million to finance our economic recovery program, which it has fully endorsed. The IMF program is based on assumption of a 5.5% growth in our economy next year. My ministers are currently at work on a long-term rescheduling of our burdensome foreign debt. We have also concluded loans with the World Bank and Asian Development Bank. And, going by the past record of Japanese concern for the welfare of the Filipino people, the Japanese Government will be generous in its bilateral assistance.

The special efforts made by donors in this time of need to help us in repairing the economic devastation we inherited is a measure, I believe, of the confidence our friends around the world have in my government. It has also eased our budgetary crisis and enabled us to begin the task of putting our economy back in order.

The support we enjoy from both the private and public sectors internationally shows up in such indicators as the appreciation of the pesos against the dollar. More important perhaps, given the dollar's weakness this year, is the surge in the level of international reserves. From a record low of \$911 million in February, it has increased to \$1.64 billion by June. There has also been a dramatic slowing in the average inflation rate from 35.1% in the first seven months of last year to 1.9% over the same period in 1986.

We have been assisted by the lower oil price, a recent rise in coconut prices and other fortunate economic events. More important though is that with a government in Manila that enjoys international and domestic confidence in the honesty and discipline of its management everything becomes possible. Once more the great economic chances that were ours are in sight again. We see again the opportunity of banishing poverty and realizing the great potential of our country for growth and prosperity.

And obviously one of our greatest ambitions must be a fuller partnership with Japan and other countries in the Pacific Basin. As you cast around for lower cost manufacturing centers from which to compete in the markets of the other advanced economies of the world, you will inevitably examine the Philippines. Our special relationship with one of the most important of the Pacific rim countries, the United States, as well as our advantage of a cost-efficient workforce favor us. So does our openness to foreign investment. Our new constitution creates a framework in this area whose details still have to be worked out by Congress once it is elected. Nevertheless I can already say that what is falling into place is a liberal code that welcomes foreign investment.

It has to be this way. Even those Filipinos who do not share the private enterprise enthusiasm of my government admit that the shortage of domestic capital for new investment obliges the Philippines to look outside for new investment funds. As we set about our task of private sector led growth and development there will be many opportunities for cooperation with Japanese business. The opportunity of the Philippines beckons our neighbors. And may I conclude by saying: You are welcome.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at St. Ignatius Church

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At St. Ignatius Church**

[Delivered on November 12, 1986]

PRAY FOR PEACE

President Aquino praises two peoples, the Filipinos and the Japanese, who were once at war, but can now sit together in peace and prayer. She states that wounds of the past can indeed be healed but she questions the premise that war is necessary, after all, to cleanse a nation.

Today, I see before me two peoples together in prayer who were once at war, and are now at peace. It was almost impossible to see Japanese and Filipinos together, as I see you today, sharing a friendship, common prayers and a mutual faith in the goodwill that binds our nations.

Why was it that only two generations ago, the wounds we had inflicted upon each other seemed beyond healing? That our hatred and enmity knew no bounds? That the causes we respectively fought for superseded our birthright as men to live as brothers created in the same fashion, by the same hand? Why, at certain points in history, does it become so simple, inexorable and justified to fight and kill? How could so many fighting faiths for which so many died become so irrelevant to this generation of the children and grandchildren of war?

For despite what seemed the unbridgeable rifts of the past, this is how it is between Japanese and Filipinos today. We do not face each other and see the nemesis of our fathers and grandfathers. We are not compelled to demand restitution for lives lost and unavenged. We do not keep the grudges of the past, for we have long since abandoned its illusions and vain aspirations. As we sit here today, we do not see one race mingling with another, but Christian brethren, sharing and celebrating the same faith in the love of our saviour, Jesus Christ. Thanks to Him, the plunder and destruction of war is buried and behind us. The future is ours to build, together, and with the choice of the best means – the methods of peace. For He did assure us through his disciple James that “those who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.”

There are those who insist that nations are cleansed, their soil and patrimony nurtured and enriched by floodtides of violence. I saw nations suffer the rites of bloodshed only to find that what has been spilled is rarely worth the victory or defeat. The lesson of war is that wars, at best, should never be fought. But it is a difficult and elusive lesson to learn and apply. And the most progressive nations on our aging earth have tried, and with all the best intentions, but have not mastered it.

And yet, despite the fragility of the dream, the prayers of Filipinos, and surely the friends of Filipinos here in Japan, are for peace. We pray for peace in the world, peace in our region, Asia. But we pray most fervently for peace in our troubled islands. We pray again for the same miraculous, precedent-breaking peace that was God’s unexpected gift to Filipinos last February, during and after our Yellow Revolution. For then, as now, we were a people standing tense and apprehensive, at the end of what seemed like the precipice, when God in His mercy, snatched us from the edge and brought us gently back to freedom.

Then, as now, when the options of reasonable dialogue and settlement by peaceful means has been exhausted, we stand ready for the good, the honorable, the moral fight. But as in those days of groping and hope, we continue to pray that God, if it is His will, might spare us a second time from being drawn into battle. But if we must confront and scatter the perpetrators of an ideology that denies the primacy of God and what He teaches and commands, then we pray that the signal to march forward might be clear and unequivocal. For my highest priority, and that of many others in my country, is to be true to our God who granted us our second lease on peace and life. Without His blessing and grace, our best efforts will lead us nowhere.

The Japanese, I know, have a deep understanding of the value and meaning of peace. For it was in the aftermath of war, when they turned from the way of the sword to the path of industry, that they achieved real victory and power.

I am filled with hope, as I see Japanese and Filipinos sitting here side-by-side. You are the clear and living testament that the wounds of the past can indeed be healed, and healed completely. And if you, who are set apart by dint of bloodlines and traditions, can forgive, forget and unite; then so can Filipinos find it in their hearts to reconcile with brother Filipinos.

For we look to Japan as a model in the achievement of progress. And we know that like our Japanese brothers, we too can rebuild most effectively, and enjoy the greatest prosperity, in the working space provided by unity and peace.

Is an unbroken, continuing peace possible in the Philippines? Must it come only after the trauma of war? We pray not. We pray that the current negotiations for dialogue and ceasefire might continue in all sincerity, and prosper and come to a happy end. But if we must fight, if we must defend our life and future as a free nation from those who insist on taking it by force, then we pray that the forces of democracy might have the strength, and might be given the victory.

We are a nation at the crossroads. But what gives me confidence is that God's people are numerous among us. And God has promised to guide and protect His chosen. As David, who often stood at the crossroads of war and peace would sing: "The Lord is the strength of His people, a fortress of salvation for his anointed ones. Save your people and bless your inheritance; be their shepherd and carry them forever."

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Philippine media

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon Aquino President of the Philippines To the Philippine media

[Delivered on November 13, 1986]

RESTORING IN THE PHILIPPINES

CONFIDENCE

President Aquino informs the Philippine media that Japan, “inspired to respect by the drama of our liberation,” received her with warm hospitality and concrete expressions of support for Philippine progress.

The President reports that Japanese assistance, in the form of credit and grants-in-aid, could total at least 100 billion yen, a significant increase from the aid Japan extended in the past.

Mine have been voyages of discovery. And I think it has been the same for you, my countrymen in media, as you followed me in my trips as head of state. We have discovered facets of other nations that were concealed from us in the recent past, during the shameful years of the dictatorship. In our frantic efforts to find allies in the fight against the dictatorship, in our embarrassed attempts to explain the things that were happening back home, we overlooked the wealth of experience to be found in disinterested friendships with other nations, in international efforts of cooperation towards our mutual advantage and in pursuit of goals rising above our purely national concerns. But now, we see the possibilities for all these – now that we can look at the world with eyes of pride, and feel the world look at us with some measure of the respect that is our birthright. It is different when you are free, when you are looked upon as being well on the way to regaining mastery of your fate.

And strangely enough, it is only then that you find genuine friends who are more willing to help. I suppose this has to do with respect as the only firm ground for friendship, and with the need of the friend who gives to be honored by the gift as much as the recipient is helped and honored by it.

Japan, an old friend and longtime supporter of Filipino efforts to achieve progress, has started a new chapter in the history of our friendship. Inspired to respect by the drama of our liberation, and encouraged by the spectacle of Filipino courage, determination and self-reliance in the reconquest of freedom, democracy, and the control of its destiny, Japan has received us with warm hospitality, tangible expressions of support for Philippine progress, and every mark of honor that one could wish.

My talks with Prime Minister Nakasone were frank and enriching. I told him about the problems we continue to face, and the measures we have thus far taken to solve them. I outlined the program of action we intend to take to recover for ourselves a measure of progress and equity commensurate with our political achievements to date. He listened with great attention and deep concern. I feel we have a dependable friend and ally in him and his government. I believe he has found in the new Philippines a dependable friend and ally as well in the common task of assuring the stability of the region and the shared progress of all who live in it.

From my talks with the Prime Minister and other members of his government, as well as from the talks on the ministerial level, I can confidently say that Japan stands ready to help us, even more than she has done in the past. We are confident that assistance, in the form of credits and grants-in-aid, could reach at least a hundred billion yen. This represents a significant increase from the 49.5 billion yen she normally extended in the past. This assistance package includes the Calaca Power Project Financing, the 14th Yen Loan, as well as specific projects in the form of technical assistance and transfer of know-how, especially in agriculture at which Japan has excelled, as well as a much needed infusion of funds to our rural employment program.

One must, with grace, leave the details of this package to be explained in time by the Japanese government itself. The Philippine side must still do its part in drawing up the specific projects to which assistance will be directed.

There are other dimensions to the renewed friendship between Japan and Philippines that one must not fail to mention. There is, as I said, a new feeling of mutual respect. There is also her unequivocal support for the new government and our new democracy, and a strong desire to see that it succeeds.

From my talks with the emperor of Japan, I have come away feeling enriched by acquaintance with a great and good man, who embodies the civility and wisdom of Japan. In him and the imperial family, I see what has inspired Japanese progress, the center that has held together and directed the tremendous energies and far-reaching enterprises of this great nation.

To His Majesty, the Emperor, to Prime Minister Nakasone, to the government and people of Japan, I would like to express, on behalf of the Filipino people, our deepest gratitude for the hospitality and honor they have extended to us on this visit. Our ancient ties of friendship have taken deeper root as a result of it.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Tribute of President Corazon Aquino to the Japanese Press Club

Tribute of Her Excellency Corazon Aquino President of the Philippines To the Japanese Press Club

[Delivered on November 18, 1986]

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JAPANESE MEDIA

Addressing representatives of the Japanese media during her state visit to Japan, President Aquino praises them for the key role they played in revealing the truth behind the assassination of her husband Ninoy. The President says that Japanese media were instrumental in reconstructing the crime, and providing the evidence and analysis which set “the spark that started the flame of our revolution.”

She adds that the Japanese media will continue to play a very important role in the affairs of nations.

I am honored by your invitation and grateful for this opportunity to thank Japanese media, on its home grounds, for its contribution in sparking the Philippine revolution that restored our freedom and democracy.

Three years ago, my husband Ninoy returned to his country, to join, in his words, the ranks of those struggling to be free but with the specific mission to bring about that freedom through nonviolence and reconciliation. For his pains, he was shot in the head. The immediate reaction of much world opinion was to credit the government's version of the assassination. How could a government with such a reputation for cunning have committed the blunder of a brazen assassination? It was completely out of character, many opinionmakers and reporters speculated. The Japanese media did not speculate. Instead, with the flair of innovation and technology that marks the Japanese character, and with the intense desire to know the truth and the passion to see justice done that distinguish the Japanese people, the media here brought the science and native intelligence of the Japanese to bear on the riddle of Ninoy's assassination. The result of its efforts in reconstructing the crime, in analyzing the evidence, much of which was obtained by Japanese media, was the spark that started the flame of our revolution. The tapes and analysis of the assassination put together by you became the chief weapon of the Filipino people in their struggle to recover their freedom and give justice to Ninoy. That weapon was truth, and against it nothing could prevail: not the lies, the media monopoly, nor the threats of the dictatorship. My brother-in-law, Butz Aquino, would tell the crowds of protestors as government troops moved in to break up the demonstrators not to be afraid. The government, he would say, had the armalites but we had the betamax of the assassination. These tapes that you produce and the news reports that you published circulated widely among the Filipinos, clear indictments of the government's responsibility for the murder. One shot from a gun was answered by you by your shots with your cameras. Events proved which was the stronger calibre.

The Japanese media must, however, share the honor of its contribution to Filipino freedom with the Japanese public it serves. For if that public were not so passionately interested in the truth and in justice, I doubt if Japanese media would have dedicated itself so intensely to search for the truth. You, the Japanese media, serve a noble constituency. Whereas other nations focused their concerns on the political implications of the assassination, which were important, of course, the Japanese public from the way I saw it seemed more intensely concerned with the injustice of taking a man's life. For those of us who took his death as a personal tragedy, this concern touched us deeply and moved us to feel the deepest gratitude for the Japanese people, not to mention the highest respect for a people so committed to moral principles over and above political expediency.

As the Japanese nation, by reason of its still increasing economic strength, moves forward to assume a role of greater responsibility in the affairs of nations, may I say that it has clearly shown the moral instincts to deserve such a role. In this development, the Japanese media will play a very important part. It is you who will bring the great issues that will arise as a result of this new role to the Japanese public, and it is you, the Japanese media, that will

reflect the thoughts and sentiments of your constituency. You will be the mirror of the shining prince that Japan will soon become again.

This visit has been a truly enhancing one for me. I have seen and experienced aspects of Japan that are seldom talked about these days when the attention is focused on its great economic strength. I have seen the beauty that lies at the heart of the strength of Japan, I told the Emperor who embodies it, in his civility and wisdom, to the utmost. Speaking for my country, let me say that we come away greatly enriched and encouraged, both by the support clearly shown by the government and people of Japan for the efforts of the Filipino people to achieve progress and by the inspiring example it presents.

This visit reaffirms our ancient ties of friendship, and makes us eager for the closer cooperation that is promised. On behalf of the Filipino, may I express our heartfelt gratitude for the hospitality and honor extended to the Philippines.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the special role of the Provincial Press Association

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the special role of the Provincial Press Association**

[Released on November 28, 1986]

THE ROLE OF THE PROVINCIAL PRESS

President Aquino cites the special role of the provincial press to influence the hearts and minds of people in the countryside. She advises the press to always give the total picture and to verify their facts.

Once more, the Philippine press is the freest in Asia. But this bit of praise so often heard from foreigners implies a need to temper this new freedom with yet more discipline and responsibility. For to achieve balance in reporting, to deserve an honored place in a democracy, the press must resist control by external forces with special interests. But it must also exercise the greatest self-control to protect its own interest and special mission. That mission is to give the public the fairest, most accurate, and most comprehensive reportage possible on all events that count. This is the public's bottom-line for the press. This is what people in a free society demand and you must supply.

Sensational reporting, like junk food, gives readers the illusion of being filled but gives them no real nourishment. For our people to grow into a true democracy, you must give them more balanced and substantial fare.

Before me today is one of the most potent forces in our society. I refer to you, the provincial press, who wield a weapon no less potent than the sword. The provincial press specially has the capability to influence the hearts and minds, and therefore determine the actions of our people in the countryside. And you are called to exercise that influence at a critical time when our people in the rural areas choose to either drop the plow and pick up a gun or hold on to the plow and work for the second harvest of progress to complement the first of freedom that he enjoys.

You, too, can protect our people in the countryside, protect them against the lies and illusions of the enemies of freedom. You can choose to play up the noise and propaganda of the few, or stand up for the plain truth and the common good. You can work exclusively for the short-term interests of your publications or commit yourselves to the larger and enduring interests of our nation.

I ask you to honor the freedoms allowed in our new democracy by sticking to the highest standards of your noble craft and profession.

When reporting on people or events, check your facts, and then check them again. And always give the total picture. For everytime a personality or institution comes under attack from your typewriters, the effect can be as real as bullets aimed at the heart or a bomb exploding in a public place.

Especially in the provinces, where communications are tenuous, I ask you to use every available space to enlighten our people on the issues. There is much they have yet to know about the new constitution and the upcoming plebiscite, the counter-insurgency campaign, and the peace talks on which so much of our hope of progress depends.

Finally I ask that your publications be open and nonpartisan forums for public views, so that Filipinos even in remote areas can be heard and read, so that they will feel that our new democracy offers many channels for its many voices. I ask that you use media's tremendous power to build up rather than to tear down, to create rather than to destroy.

We in the government have expectations of the provincial press as high as you have of us. May we continue to be fair to each other, and work together towards the progress of our nation and the good of all.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino upon acceptance of the draft Constitution from Constitutional Commission

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Upon acceptance of the draft Constitution from the Constitutional Commission**

[Delivered on November 30, 1986]

**TOWARD
VICTORY OF DEMOCRACY**

THE

PERMANENT

President Aquino formally accepts the draft Constitution from the Constitutional Commission. A thorough reading of the draft assures her that it is a Constitution which will give full recognition and protection of a citizen's basic rights and freedoms. She calls on those who wish to protect the freedoms gained in the revolution, to campaign for its ratification.

With the work of this assembly of the representative sectors of our society, the nationwide discussion of the draft Constitution starts in earnest. Let me add my views on it as a citizen and the leader of this proud Republic.

After the draft was submitted to me and I had gone over it, I declared that democracy is safe with this constitution. Safe in regard to its necessary institutions and safe in regard to the inalienable rights of our people. I have studied it more closely and appreciate more deeply the great length of this document for which it has been criticized.

It is long and detailed because the writers of the Constitution were intent, not only to give full and unequivocal recognition and protection of our basic rights and freedoms, but also of our deepest yearning to be progressive and just.

I said when I received this document that it shall serve as the framework of the house of democracy that we must build to protect the great political achievements of the February Election and Revolution. It does more than that. It sets the direction our nation must take to match our great freedoms with equally great progress and justice.

As you know, we have no shortage in this country of wise people. And already they are saying that the ratification of this draft will not finally solve all our problems. Who says it will? This Constitution is not intended to solve our problems. It is intended to present the greatest challenge our nation has faced. That challenge is how to achieve our aspirations of a just and progressive country consistently with the democratic principles that Filipinos cannot live without.

The Constitution lays down in great detail the basic rights that define the civilized society that Filipinos insist on:

Rights against violations of integrity of the person;

Rights against interference with the sovereign prerogatives of the people to dictate the democratic government they want and to let their voices be heard.

And along with these rights against abusive authority, are provisions that bind the state to the fulfillment of the just aspirations of the nation: progress, peace, security and equity.

This is the challenge of the Constitution that I urge our people to vote “Yes” for. How can we be free without anarchy? How can we be secure without oppression and abuse from our protectors? How can we have the peace and security in which to work for the well-being of our families, the future of our children, the protection of our faith, and the progress of our nation without violating the basic values that proudly define the Filipino today before the world? How can we have a Philippines that is strong and proud and forever democratic?

In going out to campaign for the ratification of this Constitution you are not solving your problems but proudly and bravely proclaiming and committing yourselves to the great tasks that I have just mentioned.

The enemies of Philippine freedom will campaign energetically for the rejection of this Constitution. It is their fervent hope to recreate the conditions of uncertainty and instability in which their evil designs can prosper. It is their burning desire, with the rejection of this Constitution, to create a power vacuum so that the forces of evil can rush again into our lives, destroy our hopes, and again degrade our nation. By recreating conditions of instability and anarchy they wish to convince our people again that democracy is too much for them to handle, that the rule of law is too complicated to work, that they are better off submitting themselves again to the iron authority of force rather than enjoying the difficult but dignifying blessings of democracy.

We shall not let them.

We begin today not only a campaign for the ratification of this Constitution, but the greater campaign for the permanent victory of democracy which is the only foundation of Filipino progress. This is a campaign to hold and preserve what we gained by our Glorious Revolution, and to extend them to every aspect of our lives and every corner of our country. It is a crusade for Filipino pride and freedom and a progressive future under God.

We are soldiers of freedom, fighting still another campaign to consolidate our victory. And we are battle-tested soldiers I might add and proudly bearing the honors of recent victories. But even if we succeed, as I know we will, it will not be the last. There will be others after it. There will be the campaign for recovery from the havoc and ruin wreaked by the enemies of freedom in the past, the same they are trying to impose on us in the future. And the campaign to translate the tremendous potential of the Filipino into progress and prosperity.

The Filipino people gave me the commission to lead them on a six-year campaign to full and permanent democracy and progress. And so I shall until the final victory of all our aims. To our people, I say, March on to the future. God and the strength of our resolve and the tenacity of our courage will clear the way.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Convention of Surgeons

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the Convention of Surgeons

[Delivered on November 30, 1986]

CONTRIBUTE YOUR SKILLS

President Aquino calls on surgeons to contribute their specialized skills to promote the health of the people. She encourages them to spend a month in the countryside to train the surgeons in the field, evaluate the facilities and treat patients themselves.

This is an audience blessed with privilege, economic resources, education, the power to influence, and the power to contribute significantly to national progress. Therefore, in answer to the question, What can government do for your organization and your profession? I say we can get you involved in nation-building. And there are a great many ways you can contribute to that effort.

The job of government, the task of the nation's leadership, is clear. The creation of just social structures and the nurturing of an environment where the barriers of ignorance and alienation are dissolved and the full potential of the Filipino to contribute to his own well-being and the progress of the nation can be realized.

Let me describe to you a specific way you can contribute to national reconstruction.

My Minister of Health, Dr. Alran Bengzon, has more than once told me that in the course of his travels throughout our country he has discovered many good people in government.

He tells the story of a health officer he met in Region 10. That health officer was serving six towns in heavily infested NPA country.

He had apparently only the most minimal training in the art, but he was performing operations that only a highly trained surgeon should be allowed to do. Dr. Bengzon asked him for an explanation. The man answered that there was no one else around to do the work. This doctor was born with a good head and good hands; it was clear at any rate that he had a good heart. He had just never received the training that would have brought out his full potential.

There are many such people in the Ministry of Health.

I look at this audience and I am reminded of this doctor from Northern Mindanao.

This is the challenge I throw to you: Spend a month in the periphery of our country, out in the countryside where the need is greatest for medical care. Let me get specific. We need 12 good men and women among you who are willing to spend a month in a district hospital.

There you can train the hospital's surgeon, evaluate the facilities, and yourselves treat the members of the community.

The discovery of people outside our private worlds leads to self-discovery. We know more about ourselves, and how best we can use ourselves, by discovering others and how they live and work. Action begins with awareness. Know your people in their actual living conditions. To know is to be committed to their improvement.

There is pressing need to offer specialized services to a broader and different public than you are accustomed to treating. This will entail a great deal of sacrifice. It will involve a lot of hardship; life out there is not easy. But your efforts to spread the benefits of your specialized skills and long training can contribute to a climate of caring; an environment conducive to the peace and prosperity for which we long.

I hope that you, young surgeons, will remain here in our country, in the service of our people. There is no question that you will be better paid if you practice abroad, but there is something to be said about a sense of fulfillment and pride in helping your country.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the ADB Women's Club

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the ADB Women's Club**

[Delivered on November 30, 1986]

THE WORTH OF WOMEN

President Aquino acknowledges her country's gratitude to the Asian Development Bank (ADB) which was the first to cast a clear vote of confidence for the country and to the ADB Women's Club which perhaps influenced that decision.

She says that she is bent on proving male chauvinists wrong by showing that a woman can rule the Philippines effectively.

If it is true that behind every successful man, and every major decision a successful man makes, there is a woman, then our country owes much to the ADB Women's Club. We will always remember that the Asian Development Bank was the first international lending institution to cast a clear vote of confidence for our fledgling government. The loan extended by the ADB to our country earlier this year, as well as the continued construction of the ADB Headquarters, was not only a signal to others to invest in the Philippines, it was an encouragement to all Filipinos as well.

I am pleased and rather flattered that the decision-makers in the ADB, who are predominantly men, chose to place their trust in a country led for the first time by a woman, and one that was a housewife at that. Perhaps I had a little help from their wives. For we women know what we are capable of. It has often been said that Marcos was the first male chauvinist to underestimate me. He was not the last to pay for that mistake.

One distinct quality I have observed in the men who would discount my abilities, diminish my role, or who cannot bring themselves to imagine that I shall rule this country for the entire term of a presidency, is their ability to out-talk me at every opportunity.

Take the old dictator. He out-talked me on all television channels, on all radio stations, in every crony newspaper and magazine in every city and province throughout our country. And his speeches, unlike mine, were always longer and more verbose.

And then lately, and I know you must have been aware of this, for they have said mouthfuls on TV talk shows, conventions, radio, print, and bullhorns in public places, there have arisen a crop of garrulous men with better and brighter ideas on how to run my government or what I should do with myself. And again their addresses have been longer, wordier, and delivered with more dramatic inflections, better-placed pauses, more body English than I could ever manage on a rostrum. For those who love to hear themselves talk do work hard at it.

But after all is said and done, or should I say, said and undone, I would like to think that I have managed to have the last word, and the last task of having to put things back in order after these men were finished.

All the bright people in this country, as well as those abroad who followed events here, had lists of those who might succeed Marcos. I was never on any of the lists. And I might add, it is not I who has been consigned to the bedroom of history.

As we women know, we have our own timing, our own ways, and our own worth. And that is why I say that our country owes much to you, and will continue to rely on your support. I speak not only of the civic projects that your association so generously and zealously finances and organizes, but also the help you extend to the country through your men in the ADB. And so I say, more power to you. And may we women continue to stick together in making this country a better place to live in for ourselves, our men, and our children.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the reorganization of the Cabinet

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the reorganization of the Cabinet**

[Released on December 3, 1986]

REORGANIZING THE CABINET

Aquilino Pimentel is appointed Adviser on National Affairs. Jaime Ferrer is named Minister for Local Governments.

As I announced last week, the process of renewal of our Government shall be a continuing one in keeping with our desire to forge a government sensitive to national concerns and truly responsive to the needs of the people.

I have always valued the counsel of Minister Aquilino Pimentel, which was invaluable throughout the period of our struggle for justice and freedom. He was one of the chief architects of the People's Victory in the last election. And he has proved himself a devoted servant of the people, ever vigilant for their rights and liberties. I have therefore appointed him to be my Adviser on National Affairs, with the rank of Cabinet Minister, to help me discharge my responsibilities to the vast constituency of our nation. Mr. Jaime Ferrer will replace him as Minister for Local Governments. Jimmy Ferrer is known to all of us for his great rectitude, his fearless stand against dictatorship, his staunch protection for the integrity of the democratic process. He brings his probity, patriotism, acumen, and long experience in government to the Ministry of Local Governments.

Other changes will be announced by me shortly, as I conclude my consultations with the affected sectors.

Let me say at this point that even as we make these changes in government, the burden of making our new democracy work still rests on all of us, on government and the people, for the task of reconstruction and progress requires no less a truly national effort.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Mother's Day, December 5, 1986

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Mother's Day**

[Released on December 5, 1986]

A MOTHER'S DEED

President Aquino cites her complementary roles as mother and President. She advises mothers on ways to bring up their children to become responsible, industrious and moral citizens.

Thank you for this honor. I have received many awards and citations this past year, but this is special. For before I became President, I was a wife first and a mother. When I lost my husband, motherhood was the role left me that gave my life most meaning and direction.

I am your President now, but I have not stopped being a mother, and I never will, for I am responsible to God for my children. It is my duty to ensure that in their thoughts, actions and Faith, they remain His children first.

What has changed, now that I have taken over the highest office in the land, is that I feel my brood has increased. For I now feel responsible for the entire family of Filipinos. I have been placed in a position of authority and leadership, and I know I am looked up to for guidance and encouragement, for discipline and direction, for hope and strength. My attitudes and actions, whether on a spiritual, moral, political or personal level are no longer exclusively my own.

If I had been an ordinary person, I would have confronted immediately the repeated challenges hurled at me, for my patience is not as long as people credit me for. But I no longer belong to myself. I cannot indulge my temper without considering its effect on the lives of my people. I belong to all Filipinos who gave greatly of themselves to put me in office, so as to give life to their aspirations and dreams.

In the midst of such pressure, I find comfort still. For God is always there, giving me the strength to bear it.

But still I need your help and support. I speak specially to all Filipinos who, like myself, have children to raise, protect and guide. We must always remember the great importance, the sacredness even, of our God-given roles. We are responsible for the new generations of Filipinos that we have brought into this world. It is left to us to mold the values and beliefs and actions of those who will assume, or determine, the leadership of this nation after we are gone.

It is the amount of love and attention, teaching and discipline that we give our young ones, that will decide if this country will enter a new age of enlightenment and peace or plunge again into darkness and violence. As the wisdom of Solomon tells us: "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not turn from it."

Let us complete what we have started in this present age of renewal and transformation, through our children.

Let us teach them the value of respect: respect for themselves, for their parents, for all legitimate authority and the laws of the land, for the laws and teachings given to all countries and generations by a just and loving God.

Let us teach them the value of industry and perseverance, the connection between their ambitions and desires and the work of their minds and hands. Let us not allow them to stand on the sidelines, but urge them to involve themselves in situations where they might improve their lives and those of others.

Let us teach them the necessity for discipline and restraint, that the actions and excesses of the few will produce a harmful consequence on the many; that time, resources and opportunities are precious and should never be squandered.

Let us give them a sense of morality and decency; a concern and regard for those who have less in life and a desire to correct the inequity of this condition. Let us imbue them with a sense of the dignity of all Filipinos regardless of social status, profession or appearance.

Let us teach them to believe that the ways of peace are best, but the surrender of principles is always ignoble and to be avoided at all cost. That the way of democracy, though not without its flaws, is the best, most humane, and most enlightened system of government yet devised by men. And that we should accept no other form of government whatever the price to be paid.

Let us teach our children to recognize what is of real value: that a stable and tranquil land, a society where all people work, achieve, learn and share; that a home where love prevails, are the things that are priceless and lasting. And that for these things and their preservation, we must not shirk from making the last sacrifice; remembering the words of the woman of Sparta as her son went off to the wars: Return with your shield, my son, or on it.

Let us all, as mothers, be worthy of our children by giving them a sense of their worth. And as citizens, let us deserve our God-given mandate to start anew and restore our land, by breeding citizens worthy of the dream.

Huwag sana nating pababayaan ang ating mga anak. Sila'y hindi lamang kayamanan natin, ngunit kayamanan din ng ating Bayan.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Voter's Registration, December 8, 1986 Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Voter's Registration**

[Released on December 8, 1986]

GO OUT AND REGISTER!

1987 will be a crucial year. The draft Constitution will be submitted to the Filipino people for ratification, followed by national and local elections. The President urges the people to go out and register, because the old voters' list cannot serve the purpose of democratic elections. At this time, registration is the highest act of patriotism.

The whole point of the recent heroic and triumphant struggle of the Filipino people was to restore democracy. And the whole point of a democracy is to give effective expression to the voice of the People, the Sovereign Will. That voice finds its most important means of expression in the ballot. The people have a host of other rights and liberties to make their influence felt in the government of their country. There is the freedom of expression, the right to assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances. But all these rights and liberties come to a head in the right to vote for the officials of their choice. The ballot is the most powerful instrument of the Sovereign Will to dictate the future of the nation. This is why I have taken great pains to restore to the highest effectiveness to these instruments for the expression of the popular will. We have revamped the Commission on Elections and appointed to its positions men of the highest rectitude and patriotism. Now we are calling for a new registration of voters. The old voters lists are hopelessly tainted. You have read about ghost registrations, ghost precincts, double-triple registrations. The old voters' list cannot serve the purpose of democratic elections. Least of all can they serve the august purpose of ratifying the new Constitution of the Filipino people, the document that provides the framework for the exercise of our democratic rights. I have therefore ordered a new registration of voters to be held on four dates:

December 6, December 7, December 13 and December 14.

It is crucial to your role as a citizen of a free republic to register yourselves on any of these dates. If you fail, you will be disenfranchised, you will not be able to vote, on issues or for public officials in the referendum for the ratification of the Constitution or in the coming local and national elections. In fact, until another registration is called, you will not be able to vote perhaps for the next six years.

I urge you therefore to go out and register, so that your citizenship in this Republic whose freedom you helped restore can be truly meaningful. I urge you also to go out and urge your friends and neighbors to do likewise. This coming registration is more important to you than any election. It is higher than partisan politics, for it determines how much of the nation will have the right to take part in partisan politics. All Filipinos should desire and work for as complete and accurate a registration of voters as possible, regardless of their political beliefs and preferences. The only ones who will not be interested in it will be those who do not believe that the fate of our nation should be decided by the people but rather by force. I know we are united against such people and their designs.

More than the coming elections, and in a sense more than the coming referendum, it is important that you go out and register, and urge and help others to register also. As in the past election, monitor the process. The best guarantee of the integrity of the voters' list in your area is your vigilance during the registration to make sure that those who do not belong to that list are excluded. Everyone should share in this vigilance, even, and especially, the youth. To the youth, I say, tell your parents to register. And we parents must show that we care enough for our children to want to have a hand in shaping it. And we can do this by registering ourselves as voters.

People Power restored democracy in our land. People Power remains our surest guarantee of enduring freedom and the primacy of the popular will. I have heard people say that there must be a way to make this power of the people a permanent part of our political life. Here is the means to do it. The accurate and complete registration of all Filipinos entitled under the Constitution to vote is the institutionalization of People Power. The voters' list is the sacred text of the people's will, from which, from time to time, in referenda and elections, we shall be able to read the direction that the Sovereign People wish their governments to take.

At this time, registration is the highest act and most signal proof of patriotism. Go out and register. Go out among your friends and neighbors and urge them to join you in registering and in assuring the integrity of the registration.

Once more, my people, the fate of the nation is in your hands.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Welcome Address of President Corazon Aquino on privatizing public corporations, December 9, 1986

**Welcome Address
of
Her Excellency Corazon Aquino
President of the Philippines
On privatizing public corporations**

[Delivered to the Philippine Opportunities for Entrepreneurs and Investors, December 9, 1986]

PRIVATIZING PUBLIC CORPORATIONS

The President reiterates her commitment to strengthen free enterprise. She promises not to commit the previous administration's mistake of practically running the economy. Her government is determined to dispose of non-performing assets and to hand the engine of the economy back to the private sector. She is convinced that that will lead to greater efficiency, productivity and private-sector cooperation.

I warmly welcome all of you to Phoenix, the acronym for "Philippine Opportunities for Entrepreneurs and Investors, '86."

The purpose of this conference is to open before you the path we have prepared for the privatization of government-owned and controlled corporations.

It has been said that the Philippines is merely paying lip service to privatization, with no real intention of implementing it. This conference is the first in a series aimed at providing the necessary vehicles for both buyers and sellers of government business assets and investments.

I am aware that business has wanted stability, coherence and predictability from Day One of my administration. So have we. Many forces however have been at work to prevent us from achieving this.

There are still those who up to now continue to play politics to the detriment of the vast majority of our countrymen who simply want to work and live in peace.

From the start these people had predicted we would not last beyond a few weeks. My predecessor, for instance, dogmatically asserted last April that in a month's time the government would have fallen. The timetable has kept changing since but the mischief remains. Here I am, on my tenth month in office, determined as ever to serve out to the full the term of my contract with my people.

There is a sense of self-fulfilling prophecy which we must resist vigorously,

I am continuing to carry out my part of the bargain. Many of those who supported me came from your ranks, especially, as I had opened my campaign with a pledge to restore to private business the role of being the engine of the economy. Will you now carry out your part?

As of today, four of my original Ministers have been replaced in a manner consistent with my policy of forbearance. They had all helped considerably to bring down the dictatorship. It is possible that there will be more announcements in the coming days as we subject everything to continuing review. We are naturally concerned that

if more changes are made, they will be for the better. Therefore we cannot be too careful in studying and selecting replacements.

We are committed to free enterprise, tempered by the need to see to it that policies do not reflect only the interests of the rich and powerful in our society, but rather that of the nation as a whole.

I created yesterday a body which will take care of disposing of the so-called non-performing assets.

The sale of government corporations is both a necessary measure to alleviate the very heavy strain on the national budget and an imperative of national economic growth and development based on the private sector.

We learned during the Marcos years the bitter lessons of government monopolies, profligate spending, and state intervention and control of business operations and market forces better left in the hands of business. We have learned, and are paying the price of the lesson, that possession of unchallenged economic power deadens initiative, discourages thrift, and depresses energy; that immunity from competition is a narcotic, and rivalry is a stimulant, to individual progress. That the spur of constant stress is necessary to counteract the natural tendency to let well enough alone.

This conference presents the various investment possibilities we are offering to investors. They present a wide range of industries: from shipbuilding to processed foods; from oil refining to hotels and tourist operations. And as we commit to sell, we likewise pledge not to compete with the private sector in these businesses which properly belong to them.

We welcome foreign investments in areas where local investments have proved inadequate for meaningful development. We offer a climate of free enterprise, with a minimum of state regulation and protection. I said it before, we offer an environment where there are no fears and no favors; where some direct correlation is maintained between the growth and prosperity of a business and the amount of energy, pluck, intelligence, and personal investment that are put into it.

But we enthusiastically encourage and prefer investment partnerships with our local capital, because this is where the best prospect lies for long-term and healthy relationships between foreign enterprises and the domestic economy.

The true value of the assets that we offer are not in the balance sheets and the appraisal reports of the corporations on sale, for these reflect the tragic past of profligacy and incompetence on which we have resolutely turned our backs. Rather their true value is found in the hearts and minds of a people who have recovered the will to achieve and the spirit of sacrifice that are essential to the success of any enterprise.

Do not wait until conditions are ideal. To the fainthearted they will never be, and you will always come across them. For a true businessman, a risk is an opportunity.

Come and join us then in this new miracle of economic recovery and progress. Like the miracle of freedom you witnessed, this too will come through our united efforts.

Jobs and justice, food and freedom, to use the words of Senator Diokno, are our agenda. They are the components of that progress we hope to achieve and from which we can all benefit.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at a prayer breakfast at the Philippine Plaza, December 11, 1986

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At a Prayer Breakfast**

[Held at the Philippine Plaza, December 11, 1986]

THANKS BE TO GOD

The President proclaims her faith in the Almighty, thanking Him for the help and guidance He has bestowed upon her and the Filipino nation.

In the past months, in times of danger and crisis, we have prayed for our Lord's mercy, intervention, blessing and grace. Despite our failings, He has always answered. As the Prophets would marvel: The Lord's loving kindnesses indeed never cease; His compassions never fail; they are new every morning. . .

I would like to take this opportunity therefore, to thank our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our saviour and our strength, our guide and the true leader of our nation. His compassions, throughout our bondage, our struggle, our attainment of freedom, and our battle to keep and give it meaning, have been new every morning. As we suffered, He called to us: Come to me, all of you who are heavily laden, and I will give you rest. And we found inner peace through our new resolve, and marched away from slavery with the enemy on every side; He assured us that if He was with us, no one could prevail against us. And now, as we work and aspire, as we grope for answers and reach for our goals, as we battle the enemy without – and within ourselves – the promise is there unwavering: Seek ye first His kingdom and righteousness, and all things will be added unto you.

And even in our uncertain seeking, He assures us that those who are earnest in their search shall find, and doors shall be opened; for where we are weak, He is strong.

And so, again and again, may we thank Christ our Lord.

We thank him for being there when we called in our distress.

We thank Him for holding us up when we were tired or faltered.

We thank Him for reaching out and snatching us from the edge of the precipice and setting us down in triumph and freedom.

We thank Him for His mercy on Filipinos.

And we thank Him for the opportunity to gather together in prayer this morning; and for the pleasure of His company. For Christ has promised that wherever two or three are gathered in His name, there will He be also.

Let us take this opportunity to count our blessings, even as we dare to ask for more. But let us never forget to Whom the credit should go. And in Whom we should trust.

As Paul the Apostle wrote to the proud Corinthians: But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, as He chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong . . . so that no one may boast before Him. For it is from God alone that we have life through Christ Jesus who made us acceptable to God . . . Therefore, as it is written: Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.

May we therefore take pride this morning in the greatness of our God, the God of our Victory and our Freedom. I know we each carry our burdens and face our individual trials as we work for the renewal of our land and our people. But we might take heart in these lines from a contemporary song of praise written to describe Christ, our Lord and Honored Guest of this morning's gathering: If He carried the weight of the world upon His shoulders, I know, dear brothers and sisters, that He will carry you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Armed Forces, December 14, 1986

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Armed Forces**

[Delivered at Camp Aquino, Tarlac, December 14, 1986]

THE PATH OF PEACE

As commander-in-chief, President Aquino commends the Armed Forces for their steadfastness in pursuing the cause of peace in the midst of provocation.

I am pleased to be here in this camp whose name honors an illustrious forebear and Filipino patriot. General Servillano Aquino foreshadowed the brave and tenacious Filipino soldier who stood fast by the flag and the republic – loyal to duty to the end. His career exemplified the martial virtues that will protect our new democracy in the challenging times ahead.

Courage, loyalty, a democratic faith, an unflagging vigilance for the rights, liberties, and safety of our people, an earnest desire for peace and a keen preparedness for war – these virtues will stand us in good stead in the weeks and months ahead. They are virtues already apparent in the New Armed Forces, which has shared my patience under provocation and my abiding faith that the path of peace we have taken only yield us good.

In this period of ceasefire, we have reposed great faith in your discretion and expressed the highest confidence that the New Armed Forces will know how to act. We have not been disappointed.

Equally, we are pleased that the work of reforming the Armed Forces, of honing the sword of the nation, has achieved much progress. Our confidence that the peace initiative will yield us good and no harm rests on the insurance of military reform. Our resolve to see the peace initiative through was strengthened by the promise of Minister Ileta. He said, on the eve of the ceasefire, that the military leadership would see to it that the sword unsheath would stay sharp and shining in its scabbard. Sharp with the willingness to sacrifice, and shining with commitment to protect democracy against its natural enemies.

With unquestioned strength and the lightness of our cause, the cause of freedom and peace, success can only crown our efforts. And no small measure of the credit and honor will go to the Armed Forces when an honorable and enduring peace finally reigns in our land.

As the day of the birth of the Prince of Peace draws near, it is fitting that I should make my first statement, in this week of Christmas, here among soldiers. For no one loves peace more than the soldier, who is always the first to suffer its loss. In this season of peace therefore, let us savor and thank the Lord for its blessings. Let me wish you and your families at least the humble but inestimable joys of this season: the joy of reunion, the joy of sharing a happy and holy event with your loved ones, and the joy of faith renewed in God's providential care that right shall win in the end and that our prayers for lasting peace will be answered. Merry Christmas to you all.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Message of President Corazon Aquino on Christmas Day, December 25, 1986

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Christmas Day**

[Delivered at the Malacañang Palace, December 25, 1986]

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

President Aquino enjoins the Filipino nation to unite as one family committed to brotherhood, freedom and peace.

For the first time in 14 years, we celebrate Christmas, in freedom. We celebrate it also with greater pride than we have known. For, in the triumph of democracy and the vindication of non-violence, we have prepared the fittest offering to the Prince of Peace whose birth we celebrate.

This season of Advent is also marked by a better prospect of an enduring peace than we have known in many years.

Christmas is a time to forget ourselves in the joys of the family. And this Christmas, thanks to the Revolution that brought us freedom, and the freedom that now promises us peace, all Filipinos can indeed become one family.

Our men in uniform, our brothers and sisters from the hills, have laid aside their guns for as long as it is possible. Those of us who have more, in material things, in skills and education, are learning to give from their hearts to those who have less. Those who were indifferent to the welfare of the nation are joining hands, as we did at EDSA, to protect our freedom and to move the nation forward. The beginning has been difficult, but we are on our way.

Those who have not yet joined: those who harbor anger and hate; those who refuse to have hope in the future we offer; those who remain indifferent or cynical of all our efforts — I ask you, in the spirit of this first Christmas in pride and freedom, to forgive and forget, to give democracy a chance to work, and peace the help to endure.

Years ago, Jesus Christ, our King and Saviour, came to join the family of men and give them peace, forgiveness and life. How can we, who are so much less, choose to give less of ourselves? Let us take to heart his earnest message: Let us love one another as He loved us. *Maligayang Pasko sa inyong lahat. Tayo ay magmahalan, magkaisang-puso, at mamuhay ng mapayapa.*

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Family Congress, December 28, 1986

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Family Congress**

[Released on December 28, 1986]

**THE
OUR SOURCE OF STRENGTH**

FAMILY:

President Aquino shares her thoughts as head of two families: her own and the nation. If every family can be strong, she says, so too will the country be. She, therefore encourages Filipino families to internalize the case values of Faith, Truth and Justice, to lead simple lives, to commit themselves to peace, and to get involved in political life.

May I congratulate the seven family organizations for having formed this cause-oriented alliance, *Families for Justice and Peace*. May I also commend you for the successful effort to include family rights in the draft of our fundamental law.

Next to our faith in Christ, our family-oriented culture may be our greatest strength as a nation. But it is a strength that can also be a weakness. Family-centeredness can also mean clannishness, or an almost exclusive preoccupation with one's own family, selected relatives and friends. This is why the aim of your alliance offers a challenging breakthrough. For you see through to the deeper and broader meaning of family – and that is our country which shelters the family. As the unity and strength of the family strengthens the nation, so does the progress of the nation strengthen the family. And beyond the nation there is the family of nations, and the vision of the brotherhood of man which is the family's greatest fulfillment.

The family holds the secret of national power. Its unity prefigures the national strength that will meet any threat, overcome any obstacle, and achieve the worthiest goals. As Ecclesiastes wisely put it: Two are better than one . . . For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow . . . And if a man prevail against him that is alone, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

I will always cherish those moments of family togetherness that my late husband, our children and I enjoyed in Boston, our last home away from home. But somehow, I knew even then that it could not last. Ninoy, and then later I, had to come home to fulfill our obligations to a bigger family, the family of all Filipinos seeking freedom. And now I know and have come to accept what it means to be a "couple-for-others" in loving and serving our people.

Though Ninoy is no longer by my side, the urgency and necessity of the mission we embarked on together has given me the courage to embrace the responsibilities of the Presidency. And here, I believe, the Aquinos are not alone. This is God's mission too, for every Filipino couple and family.

I must confess that there are times when I long to just stay at home and be with my children and grandson. But I have to remind myself that I must divide my attention among a much larger brood. And, as it should be in any household, the head of the home must have the help and cooperation of the other members.

I therefore call upon all Filipino families to join in the formidable, but greatly rewarding task of nation-building.

The first phase of this task is the reformation of our values as a people. And where else must this begin but in the heart of the nation, the families that are its constitutive elements.

Our children are the future of our country. We must patiently and persistently instill and nurture the right core values in their hearts and minds, for, as I have said, the nation can only be as strong as the families that make it up.

What are these core values that are so crucial to the nation and that must first be found in our homes?

First and foremost is Faith. The family that does not center its life on God becomes a self-centered and self-serving family. But the family that turns inwards to God will find itself in the wider solidarity of God's family. It is this faith that gave us the courage to work the miracle of our liberation. This faith that enabled us to overcome the greatest crisis in our nation's history will help us overcome the other obstacles that are set in our path.

What we now need to do is ensure that this faith is real, that it translates into action, so that we can close the gap between the profession and the practice of our faith.

The second core value that should flow from our Faith is an uncompromising commitment to Truth. Personal honesty and integrity are essential elements of reconstruction. Without these values, we build our fortunes, as did the previous regime, on sand. Most specifically, let us not make the security and future of the members of our families the motive and justification for corruption and greed. For our legacy to our children should not be measured by the size of our bank accounts and the height of the position we have attained in society, but the size of the space we make for them in our hearts, and the loftiness of the values and ideals we espouse.

A third core value that we must instill in our children is a deep yearning for and a keen sense of justice. And we can do this best by taking it upon ourselves to right the wrongs before us. I speak of the social injustice in the world, the gross and shameful inequalities between the minority who are rich and powerful, and the majority who are poor and powerless. This condition cannot continue. We are merely stewards, however talented or enterprising we or our parents were. We are answerable to the Creator for the resources that have fallen into our hands, that all may share in their bounty.

Related to this issue is the need for simplicity in our family lifestyles. Self-indulgence and extravagance are the hallmarks of tyranny, not of the republican state we are. Luxury distracts us from the civic virtues we must cultivate to assure the survival of democracy.

A fourth core value upon which we must build our homes is a commitment to the ways of peace as the first, and if possible, last means of resolving conflict. Only as a last resort, and only to defend the ways and values of peace and democracy, should we resort to force to protect them. God showed the way at EDSA. Even the most irreconcilable differences one could imagine between tyranny and freedom could be bridged by compassion and fraternity.

The last, but not the least core value that I urge all Filipino families to commit themselves to is an active involvement in our political life. Again the way was showed in the Election and Revolution of February. It was families that guarded the polls, that took to the streets to protest the theft of the elections, that formed a human barricade to protect a military revolt and our new-born democracy.

It was the Holy Family, whose Feast we celebrate today, who lived up most beautifully to the core values whereof we speak. Their whole lives were centered on loving and obeying the commands of God, their Father. They lived justly and simply, preferring to accumulate a spiritual wealth in heaven to laying up treasures on earth. It was the only Child of that family that laid down his life, for the family of man and the cause of peace.

Let us therefore strive to be worthy members of this larger family for which the Lord laid down His Life. As He tells us in Matthew: "Whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is brother and sister and mother to me."

May Christ bless your Family Alliance so that it may succeed in all its endeavors.

Binabati ko kayong lahat ng isang makabayang bagong taon!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Rizal Day, December 30, 1986

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Rizal Day**

[Released on December 30, 1986]

RIZAL'S DREAM REALIZED

Dr. Jose Rizal, the first man to implant in our national tradition the ideals of reconciliation, believed that freedom is won not through the sword but through the people making themselves worthy of it. He died without seeing this vision come to pass. Today, the Filipinos are at last ready to prove Rizal right as we begin to implement his dream of a self-willed society propelled only by a vision of the good and not by the prodding of the lash.

Let me begin by quoting these lines, spoken by Father Florentino in Rizal's novel, *El Filibusterismo*:

"I do not mean to say that our liberty will be secured at the sword's point, for the sword plays but little part in modern affairs, but that we must secure it by making ourselves worthy of it, by exalting the intelligence and dignity of the individual, by loving justice, right and greatness, even to the extent of dying for them . . . and when a people reaches that height, God will provide the weapon, the idols will be shattered, tyranny will crumble like a house of cards and liberty will shine out like the first dawn."

Father Florentino was wrong to discount the role of the sword in the affairs of the world, speaking as he did on the threshold of this tragic age. Even when Rizal wrote these words, the sword had already been drawn. And in a few years it would be raised to catch on its gleaming edge the first light of the dawn that look his life. But he was right that our age would be marked by a greater commitment to justice and reason, dignity and freedom than any previous age had ever known.

Still, with a premonition of the violence inherent in the order of the world, Rizal persisted in believing that freedom must be won through peace and reason. He held fast to this belief through persecution, exile, and finally imprisonment and death.

Rizal died, but not his dream. To quote another friend of Filipino freedom: The work goes on, the cause endures, hope still lives, and the dream shall never die.

The dream of freedom through peace and reason did not die with Rizal, nor with the many Filipinos who shared his convictions and his fate, all the way up to the last one three years ago whose death presaged and hastened the dawn of true dignity and freedom.

As in Rizal's time, prolonged tyranny and repression had polarized the forces of society. Again, as the men of peace among us watched with dread, a bloodbath seemed the imminent and only solution. Again, a series of martyrdoms, culminating in the execution of a crusader for peace brought the drama to its end. But at last it was the finale Rizal had wanted. As Filipinos stood as one to proclaim their love of freedom and justice, God himself provided the weapon. The idols, garbed in luxury and power, were shattered, and tyranny fell as harmlessly as a house of cards.

And so today, we pause to remember and to honor the first major sacrifice on the national altar of peace. Doctor Jose Rizal, by the ideals of reconciliation he implanted in our national tradition, also deserves credit for the success of our last Revolution. His founding philosophy, as with all foundations, is buried beneath where it cannot be seen. But it is because it is a foundation that we are able to stand securely upon it as we rebuild our nation from the ground

upwards. And even if we should sometime in the future stand poised and tense, ready to draw the sword, Rizal leaves us with a reminder of the broader perspective. Perhaps what he really meant by the words of Father Florentino was that in the last analysis “the sword plays but little part in modern affairs.” True liberty is best and permanently secured “by making ourselves worthy of it.” We cannot hold our society together by the force of laws if these laws are an imposition and not an extension of our spirit. Nor can any President in a democracy rule effectively simply by command, unless the authority behind it is that of a self-determining and believing people.

When Rizal wrote his last farewell to the country he loved, that country was not fully ready to implement his dream of a self-willed society propelled only by a vision of the good and not by the prodding of the lash. Today, perhaps, we are ready. By looking back to Rizal, a hero ahead of his time, we find a comforting continuity to our national purpose, and the impetus to work forward to a nation worthy of his dream.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Philippine-Japan Friendship Society, January 16, 1987

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Philippine-Japan Friendship Society**

[Held at Manila Hotel, January 16, 1987]

NURTURING A FRIENDSHIP

Japan serves both as an inspiration and example to the Filipino people not only because of its economic progress and military might but also because it has demonstrated what a nation can achieve through hard work, courage, and pride in ones culture and heritage.

President Aquino describes Filipino-Japanese friendship as one that is geopolitical, socio-economic, and personal. It can be as intimate as the one between her husband Ninoy and his Japanese friends; it can be the supportive relationship between neighboring countries with a common goal of preserving democracy in their region; it can also be a learning relationship between a more developed country and a struggling one. She gives credit to the Philippine-Japan Friendship Society for keeping that friendship alive.

Through the years, despite profound differences in culture, climate, and our historical relationship, including our tragic encounter in the last war, Filipinos have sought to reach out in friendship to the Japanese, and the Japanese to Filipinos.

Ambassador Jose Laurel III, the President of the Philippines-Japan Society observes that in 1898, our national hero Jose Rizal visited Japan and predicted that close contact and fruitful cooperation might be forged between the land of the setting and that of the rising sun. Laurel notes that initial overtures of friendship were made to the Japanese by General Emilio Aguinaldo in the same year. For Japan, besting the West at its own game of economic progress and military might, had become an inspiration to Asian peoples seeking dignity and independence.

I personally can attest to the depth of friendship and understanding that is possible between Japanese and Filipinos. My husband, Ninoy, in the last years of his life, was cut off from his country and alienated from his countrymen by the terror inspired by a tyrannical government. Yet he found hospitable reception and a warm and unguarded welcome in the homes of the Japanese. Though he stood outside the mainstream of Philippine-Japan diplomacy and politics, he was not treated as an outcast, but rather as one who embodied an aspect of the Filipino spirit and stood for its aspiration for freedom. My husband, in turn, saw in Japanese traditions of honor and courage the prophecy of his fate. And when he gave his life in willing sacrifice, the Japanese took his memory into their hearts with some of the fierce devotion they have shown their own heroes.

The sincerity of this friendship of the Japanese and Ninoy was best demonstrated to me right after Ninoy's death. I, and for that matter, the Filipino people, got our first comprehensive account of the assassination from Japanese media. The painstakingly thorough investigation by Japanese television was not merely excellent reportage. It was a caring and sympathetic gesture by friends outraged by Ninoy's murder.

Of course, the warmest display of friendship I have yet experienced from the Japanese was during my state visit last November. I felt as affectionately and enthusiastically received in Tokyo as I was in our key cities during the campaign. And at Waseda University I got a delightful and unexpected re-experience of people power. I, of course, do not just share such a personal statement as a haiku with just anyone. Yet I found a strong desire to share my poetry with the Japanese people, in the person of their Emperor. And, of course, when I met him, I found not a symbol of a country, but a caring and sensitive person I would wish to keep always as a friend.

After my visit to Japan, I was convinced that the friendship between Japanese and Filipinos thrives on several levels. It is geopolitical; it is socio-economic; and it is also personal. It can be as intimate and relaxed as it was between Ninoy and his Japanese contacts, who later became my very supportive friends. It can be regionally significant: a supportive relationship between two democratic societies working to preserve freedom in Asia. The strategic locations of our two countries makes us each other's defenders, protectors and economic allies. The friendship can also be an earnest and nurturing one: between an elder and developed civilization and a young and growing country.

In fact, we recognize that Japan is to us a "Sensei" — a teacher and inspiration to a struggling country such as ours. The Japanese have demonstrated to us what we can become by working hard, taking pride in our culture and identity, and believing we can be the equal of any nation. From the Japanese code of courage, we applied to ourselves the dictum that success or, at any rate, nobility, crowns the gesture of throwing caution to the winds and advancing fearlessly towards our goal. In our case, the goal of freedom.

In turn, I would like to think that the Japanese, witnessing this living out on a national scale of the code that animated their heroes, will be inspired to a renewed commitment to the virtues that bind us now: courage, a sense of community in the face of danger, a sense of fraternity in the pursuit of a common and noble goal.

Friendships, I find, either grow stale and cold through the years, or acquire depth and nuance with the passage of time. I believe the bond between Filipinos and Japanese shows signs of being the latter. We have transcended and forgotten the transgressions of war. We have kept our ties despite the political and economic strains of recent years. We are becoming less two races apart, and more two nations sharing a commitment to peace and freedom in Asia.

The Philippines-Japan Society deserves a good part of the credit for sustaining this bond through thick and thin, all these years. State visits, such as what we Presidents make, are too complicated a device to use too often. The friendship between our countries is best maintained by organizations such as yours, and by the individuals you honor today. You have helped to bring two peoples, already closely intertwined by history and geography, even closer together. This you have done by forging the day-to-day contacts, pursuing civic, educational and cultural projects that make ours the down-to-earth relationship that is the essence of a mutually enriching friendship.

Keep up the good work.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on working towards full democracy, January 16, 1987

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On working towards full democracy**

[Delivered on January 16, 1987]

**WORKING
FULL DEMOCRACY**

TOWARDS

After 300 days, the Aquino administration gets a new mandate to continue its task of restoring democracy with the ratification of the 1986 Constitution, which not only provides the bases for democracy but also the measures to preserve it. The charter strives for peace and unity with the cultural minorities in Mindanao and the Cordilleras; for the Communist insurgents, it has prepared programs for their assimilation into democratic society.

Labor and private enterprise are given a boost through the Community and Employment Development Program, while lower prices for input and infrastructure support provides for agricultural development.

Education and social services, long neglected but which now enjoy high priority, have been given the means to contribute to the task of national reconstruction through increased budgets.

In the First 100 days, I reported to you the gains of the Revolution. Now more than 300 days have passed since the victory of the people and my assumption to power. Another report is in order.

I have been going around the country campaigning for the new Constitution that I promised would be ready within last year so that we should have a full blown democracy in the new year.

I said that democracy is safe with the proposed Constitution. I was being modest. It is more than safe; it is ensured, strengthened, and amplified in the new charter.

The 1935 Constitution gave us the basics of democracy. The 1973 Constitution and the political order it attempted to legitimize showed us that the basics are not enough. The 1986 Constitution, born of the fight against the tyranny installed by the 1973 Constitution, gives us the basics of democracy and a careful enumeration of the rights, liberties, and even the policies that must be pursued to prevent another tyranny. The new charter is long; it had better be. Despite the best intentions, the finest minds, the bravest politicians, the most vigilant editors, fascism stole a march on us, destroyed our liberties, despoiled our nation, and enslaved us to debt and poverty. This charter therefore enumerates all the abuses of the regime we destroyed and strictly provides against their repetition.

But as we came to power, so have we kept it: peacefully and with the highest regard for the rights and liberties of each and every Filipino, even of those who, unregenerate, to this day plot to bring us back under the yoke of the tyranny and corruption.

The ratification of the new charter sets the stage for two things we must get really started on: the operation of a genuine democracy and the start of the economic recovery of our country.

The new charter will give us Congressional elections in May. While my desire to have truly representative government throughout the land has fixed the date for local elections at August 24, 1987.

I would have preferred to hold them sooner. But the Commission on Elections, to whose opinion the Chief Executive must defer, has argued strongly against it. And I agree. The coming electoral exercises will be the first we shall hold in freedom. They will also be the last for some time to come. Let them therefore be the best in living memory. In this concurring opinion with the Comelec I also reflect the general opinion of the country that simply wants, with equal intensity, a date fixed and the surety of good elections.

But even as we prepared the ground for a vigorous and enduring democracy, we have worked hard to bring about the peace in which to enjoy its blessings.

We have forged an agreement for continued cessation of hostilities in Mindanao with the MNLF, while we work out the basis for a longer-lasting peace among the communities of Mindanao. We are also trying to get the other Muslim factions to join in this effort. The going has been rough, but then the problem is not an easy one.

We have met with greater success in the Cordilleras, and are working with the people of that region to combine the special virtues of their distinctive way of life with the imperatives of economic development and social justice.

We have forged a truce with the national leadership of the Communist insurgency and have opened the way for the insurgents to come down from the hills and rejoin their countrymen in building a new country in the context of a true democracy. We have proceeded not just with talk, but with well funded programs to facilitate their return to democratic community.

To make that community one worth defending, we have instituted sweeping reforms in its system of justice. We have appointed men of unquestioned integrity and competence to the highest courts of the land and enshrined their independence in the Freedom Constitution and institutionalized it in the new charter.

We have made earnest efforts to recover what was stolen from our people by the previous regime. The methods have not always been pleasant, but the injustice we seek to correct, as you know, is enormous.

We are in the process of restoring to labor the rights and dignity commensurate with its contribution to national progress, even as we have cleared away the obstacles which prevent private enterprise from making the contributions it alone can make. And to both sectors we shall give the boost they sorely need through the Community and Employment Development Program, for which we have allocated P8 billion for 1987. In this program, by the way, we seek the help of our citizens to monitor its progress and honest implementation. This participation of private citizens in community projects will create truly responsive local governments.

The basis of our economy is agriculture. Past neglect left in it ruins and the rural sector, to which most Filipinos belong, in the direst poverty. The CEDP program seeks to ameliorate this condition, while our agricultural policies will try to revive our agriculture through lower prices for inputs and more infrastructure support.

In tandem with this, is the effort to equitably redistribute through agrarian reform measures the means and the fruits of agricultural development. If we have not proceeded with the speed that some would like, it is because I will not frustrate our farmers by giving them a mere hope on paper, but a truly effective program of agrarian reform that will give them both land and the means to be make it productive.

We believe in the virtues of self-reliance but believe equally that the people must be given the strength to maintain it. And so we have, along with the programs outlined above, focused this year's budget on education so that the tremendous potential of the Filipino for productive work can be trained and disciplined. The education budget reflects this in its greater size and in the higher compensation we have given our teachers. Again, to strengthen our people for future self-reliance, we have increased social services to make up for the neglect of the past in this area, to heal the wounds that this neglect inflicted on our people, especially the children. We have added P9 billion to the social services budget.

These and other measures too long to relate, and which Budget Minister Romulo and Social Services Minister Mita Pardo de Tavera will amplify, have produced unmistakable signs that the bleeding from the wounds of the past have stopped and that our economy is recovering some measure of vigor. I believe we are ready to make a success of the Medium-Term Development Plan that we have adopted after wide consultations with our people.

We have endeavored to move with as much speed as prudence will allow, so that we do not build in haste and regret at leisure. This is the work of foundation and therefore critical. Everything that follows will take its character from it. And I take pride in saying we accomplished all these in the first minutes of the morning, and against those who sought to return us to the night. The spirit of my message this evening is summed up in the words of Saint Paul, which I address to those who still pine for the past and to those who hesitate to give their share to the future:

“The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumbers because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.”

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Freedom

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On Freedom

[Delivered at the Kalayaan Hall, January 20, 1987]

SAYING YES TO FREEDOM

President Aquino says that the new Constitution not only embodies the ideals of democracy but also the dreams that the Filipino people aspire for as a nation.

The Constitution remembers the tyranny of the past and provides safeguards for the rights that were most abused, those of freedom of expression, and the right to a fair and speedy trial. Furthermore, to ensure that the injustices against civil liberties are not committed again, a Committee on Human Rights is established. A stricter system of public accountability is also provided so that the people are protected from an oppressive and corrupt government.

The people too must be provided the means to enjoy their new freedom, thus there are provisions for free elementary and secondary education as well as a national health care system.

The new Constitution also recognizes the cultural uniqueness of some regions of the country and provides for their autonomy.

I said democracy is safe with this Constitution. In fact, it is more than safe; it is strengthened as well, and made meaningful to the vast majority of our countrymen whose poverty denies them the full benefit of freedom.

The critics of the proposed Constitution say it is too long. It is not. It is only as long as the abuses it is meant to prevent, and the injustices it is intended to correct. I refer to such abuses and injustices as midnight arrests and executions, press censorship, detention without trial, torture, corrupt government, illiteracy, poverty and economic underdevelopment.

Our democratic rights and freedoms are, of course, the first priority and therefore enshrined in the Bill of Rights. These are our inalienable rights that make life worth living. I refer to such rights as freedom of expression, so we can speak our minds without hurt to the reputation and safety of others. There is the right to a fair and speedy trial. There is a right not to be detained without cause.

These rights no one, not even the majority of the nation, can take away from any person, citizen or not. They are inalienable because not even the victim himself can forsake them.

But to be free is not enough. A person must have the means to make a decent living, to improve his life and realize his full potential as a human being. Hence the new Constitution provides for free elementary and secondary education. The new Congress must provide for this.

There is provision for a healthy citizenry, making national health a primary goal of government. Congress again cannot escape the responsibility to provide for an adequate health care system.

The people must not only be protected from oppressive government; they must, as well, be assured of clean government. And so a strict system is created that makes public officials accountable for their acts and mandates punishment for their misdeeds.

We suffered 14 years of terrible oppression. These were years when people were picked up in the dead of night, tortured, and killed. The proposed Constitution brands this experience in our memories and provides for a Committee that will assure respect for human rights, expose their infractions, and remind us ever of our duty to respect each other as brothers and sisters in God.

We are a nation with a long and rich history, in the course of which some of our people developed unique cultural patterns. Just as the Bill of Rights respects our rights and liberties as individuals, the proposed Constitution provides for an equal respect for the uniqueness of certain communities and their right to preserve their special ways of life. And so there is a provision that protects the right of communities to live as their traditions prescribe, and to govern themselves, consistently with democratic principles, in the way they wish.

The proposed Constitution is indeed long. And I suppose Congress could have legislated many of the things that it provides. But is it not better now, while the spirit of the Revolution is vibrantly alive, to have them all written down in a constitution, and binding on our leaders and our people to respect and work for them?

Yes, the new Constitution is long; as long as our experience of oppression, as long as the list of the things we wish to achieve as a nation. We are leaving little to chance. We want to keep the democracy we won; and we want to build upon it the progressive economy and the just society we deserve to have.

For these reasons, I urge our countrymen to come out, and urge your friends and neighbors to join you, in voting “Yes” to the proposed Constitution; “Yes” to the democracy it enshrines; and “Yes” to the future that can be ours.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Mendiola Bridge Incident

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Mendiola Bridge Incident**

[Released on January 22, 1987]

DEMOCRACY TESTED

While commiserating with the families of those who died in a bloody confrontation between farmers and the military at Mendiola Bridge, President Aquino orders a thorough and impartial investigation of the incident. She warns the people against those who might seek to exploit the situation and urges them to remain as the government continues its task of restoring democracy.

I am shocked over the bloody incident at Mendiola and deeply saddened at the lives that were lost. I commiserate with the families of the dead. I grieve equally over what this does to the ideals we stood for in the struggle to bring freedom and peace to our land, ideals we continue to cherish.

The persons responsible for this tragedy, whichever side they belong to, will be held to the fullest account. I have ordered a thorough investigation of this bloody incident and for that purpose I am creating an independent, non-governmental body with plenary powers of investigation, to be chaired by Justice Jose Feria. Brig. General Ramon Montano of the Capital Command and Director of the Metropolitan Police Force has made the offer to go on leave during the investigation. I have accepted it.

In the meantime, I urge our people to maintain calm and sobriety. There will be those who will seek to exploit this tragic incident for their own objectives, among which undoubtedly will be to derail our efforts to bring about full democracy in the coming plebiscite.

In the period before the plebiscite, attempts to destabilize the government and defeat our democratic aim will intensify. We are prepared for this contingency. We shall have law and order throughout our land, even as we pursue justice in this case and our larger aim to complete our democratic mission.

Again may I express my deepest condolence to the families of those who died and my grief over this tragedy that has struck our nation.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Tulungan sa Tubigan Program

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Tulungan sa Tubigan Program**

[Delivered in Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija, January 22, 1987]

WATER FOR LIFE AND PROGRESS

The Tulungan Program, which will benefit 31,000 families in 15 provinces, underlines the Aquino Administration's commitment to make democracy a living reality for the people. The importance of water, whether for agriculture or health, cannot be overemphasized and the Tulungan sa Tubigan Program is one instance when the private sector and the government joined hands to work for progress and survival.

It is a great honor and pleasure on my part to formally accept the completion of these water projects under the Tulungan sa Tubigan Program.

Many of the needs of our people could be met by adequate water supply, whether we are talking about agricultural productivity or individual health, especially the health of our children. The awareness of the critical part that water plays in the survival and progress of our country and countrymen motivated us to launch this Program. I am happy to note that the Program is progressing according to plan.

The completion of these projects, with the indispensable help of the Philippine Business for Social Progress, expresses the concern of both government and private sector for the general welfare of our people.

31,000 families will benefit from these projects, which number 425 in 15 provinces. This shows a program that is definitely on the right track.

I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Philippine Business for Social Progress and its staff for a job well done. I am proud to have you with me in these projects that make democratic government truly meaningful for our people.

Isang malaking karangalan at kasiyahan para sa akin ang tanggapin ngayon ang mga natapos nang proyekto sa patubig sa ilalim ng Programang Tulungan sa Tubigan.

Maraming mga pangangailangan ang ating mga mamamayan ang matutugunan sa pamamagitan ng sapat at maayos na patubig, maging sa ating pagsasaka o sa kalusugan ng bawa't isa, lalung-lalo na ang kalusugan ng mga bata. Dahil sa malaking kahalagahan ng tubig sa ating buhay at maging sa pag-unlad ng ating bayan, ang ating pamahalaan ay nagsikap upang ilunsad ang programang ito. Natutuwa akong malaman na ang programa sa patubig ay pinatutupad ayon sa ating plano at layunin.

Ang pagkakatatapos ng mga proyektong ito sa tulong at pangunguna ng Philippine Business for Social Progress ay nagpapahayag at nagpapatunay ng pagmamalasakit ng aking pamahalaan at nang pribadong sektor sa kapakanan at kaligtasan ng ating mamamayan.

Mahigit sa tatlumpu't isang libong (31,000) pamilya ang makikinabang sa proyektong ito na binubuo ng apat na daan at dalawampu't lima (425) at sasakop sa labing-limang (15) lalawigan. Ito ay nagpapakita lamang na tayo ay nasa tamang landas sa pagpapatupad ng programa sa patubig.

Nais ko ring samantalahin ang pagkakataong ito upang batiin ang Philippine Business for Social Progress at ang bumubuo nito sa kanilang magandang simulain. Ikinararangal ko kayong makasama sa proyektong ito na nagsisikap upang ang ating demokratikong pamahalaan ay maging makahulugan sa ating mamamayan.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Democracy, January 24, 1987

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Democracy**

[Released on January 24, 1987]

PEOPLE GUARDING DEMOCRACY

After an attempted coup d'état and just before a plebiscite to ratify the new Constitution, President Aquino appeals to the people once more to protect their hard-earned freedom from those who seek to destabilize the government. As she invites them to *amiting de avance* for the new Constitution's ratification, she asks them to exercise strength and resolve in preserving democracy. If need be, she enjoins them to reactivate People's Power which proved crucial in determining the results of the February election.

The events of the past week prove two things:

The enemies of democracy agree with the friends of democracy that the ratification of the proposed Constitution is essential to the preservation of democracy in the Philippines. This explains the desperate efforts of the opponents of the Constitution to prevent the plebiscite on February 2.

The attempted coup is only their latest effort. I warned last week that efforts to destabilize the government and prevent a plebiscite will intensify as we near voting day. Equally, our responses to these threats to the life of our democracy demonstrate our unshakeable resolve to complete our democratic mission.

The events of the past week also prove that, in the end, democracy is safe only in the hands of the people, united, acting in consent, and sending a clear signal to all its enemies that they will defend it with their numbers and their lives.

And so I call on the people, on all the friends of democracy, to come out and join the January 31 Miting de Avance at Luneta.

I ask our people also to protect the integrity of the ballot during the February 2 plebiscite. The government and the Commission on Elections are exerting their best efforts to assure clean and orderly balloting, but the enemies of democracy can still corrupt the electoral process, given what they stole in the past and their present determination to destroy our freedoms.

I ask you therefore to reactivate the people's organizations that produced the People's Victory in the last election. If necessary, let us guard the ballot boxes again with our lives.

Let us begin by joining the Miting de Avance this Saturday, at 1:30 in the afternoon, at the Luneta.

Let us show the enemies of our freedom the strength and resolve which they must overcome before they can restore tyranny and abuse in our land.

Let us demonstrate once more the power of the people as the only dependable shield of our democracy. I ask you, my people, to join me on January 31 in demonstrating our unity and strength in defense of democracy.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Coup Attempts**

[Released on January 27, 1987]

**A
AND RETRIBUTION**

TIME

FOR

JUSTICE

The situation is well in hand. People should keep calm.

Their attempt has failed. While these elements were able to take Channel 7, the station is now surrounded by our troops. The rebels are strongly urged to surrender. Their situation is hopeless. Every moment of delay merely compounds the gravity of their crime.

This attempt reflects the inability of some elements, both in the military and in the civilian sector, to face the fact that civilian government is here to stay and that nothing will derail our effort to establish full constitutional democracy in the coming plebiscite.

There is a time for reconciliation and time for justice and retribution. That time has come.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Amnesty Proclamation, January 28, 1987

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Amnesty Proclamation**

[Released on January 28, 1987]

**HEALING THE WOUNDS
OF THE NATION**

In the spirit of reconciliation, President Aquino grants full amnesty to persons who have committed political crimes but who willingly return to the fold of the law. To help these returning rebels become productive members of society, a National Reconciliation and Development Program is established.

We are called by Christ to be free. He has committed us to the message of reconciliation. We believe that all men desire to live in peace with their neighbors, and that joy is promised to those who promote peace.

Therefore, I, Corazon C. Aquino, President of the Philippines, hereby declare and proclaim full and complete amnesty in favor of all persons who have or may have committed any act penalized under existing laws in furtherance of their political beliefs and who, as of this date, the 28th of February, 1987, and for six months thereafter, return of their own free will to the fold of the law.

We have set up the National Reconciliation and Development Program, with centers throughout the country, to provide amnestied rebels, who wish to avail of them, the means and training to resume productive roles in society.

We hope by these measures to reunite families, bind up the brokenhearted, and heal the wounds of our nation. These things are done so that, in the words of Paul, the peace of Christ may rule in our hearts and reign throughout our land, since as members of one body we were called to peace.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on education's role in National Development, January 29, 1987

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On education's role in National Development**

[Delivered at the Far Eastern University, January 29, 1987]

**EDUCATION:
A FREE FUTURE**

ENSURING

President Aquino acknowledges the educator's contribution to national development. Freedom and learning go hand in hand, she says as she stresses that the strength of a democracy lies in the intelligence and maturity of a people. In recognition of education's role in national development, special provisions on education have been incorporated in the New Constitution.

I accept the honor you have conferred on me today with deep gratitude, and with a satisfaction only less than that which I feel over the investiture of Dr. Josephine Reyes as the 7th President of this distinguished university. FEU is her life, the almost singular object of her concern and the focus of nearly all her time, energies and talent. I do not say these things as one sister of another. But as one privileged to see close-up how a life is lived dedicated to imparting reason and learning to the youth of our country, which is like saying: preparing the groundwork for the future.

I say them also as one who experienced briefly, as a law student, the rigor and effectiveness of the instruction, and the wisdom of the faculty of this university.

What I have observed her doing, is a small version of what private institutions of higher learning, in general, do as their contribution to national progress.

Seventy-eight percent of college students are enrolled in private educational institutions, two-thirds of which are non-sectarian like the FEU. But such institutions, at their best, do more than just take up the slack created by the insufficient number of public institutions of higher education. You cultivate the diversity that makes up the wealth of our culture, and encourage the individualism and pluralism that mark a true democracy.

These important contributions that you have long been making have finally found their due recognition and support in the proposed Constitution's provisions on education. This is one more reason why I can ask you confidently to help in the ratification of this charter. For the strength of a democracy grows with the maturity and intelligence of its citizens. Freedom and learning go hand in hand. They illuminate our lives and light the way to a happy future, just as the cultivation of ignorance was the instrument of the tyranny that darkened our land.

And so to you, the Far Eastern University, and to other private institutions of higher learning, may I express the gratitude of our nation and my faith in your continuing success.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on justice and respect for law, January 29, 1987

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On justice and respect for law**

[Released on January 29, 1987]

**JUSTICE
FOR LAW**

AND

RESPECT

After the resolution of a military takeover of a commercial TV station, President Aquino reaffirms the principle of civilian authority over the military, and orders the arrest and prosecution of those involved in the incident. She says that if the law has to be respected, then Justice has to be applied, even as her government seeks to be compassionate.

I am pleased with the peaceful, non-violent resolution of the GMA-TV incident. I commend the officers and men assigned to it for their handling of the problem.

As we govern by the principle of law, I have ordered the Minister of Justice to prepare rebellion charges against the civilians who took part in the act of rebellion. The Minister of Defense, pursuant to my order, shall proceed against the rebel military officers in accordance with the manual of courts martial.

The gravity of the offense is not lightened, and the damage inflicted on persons and property is not diminished by the perpetrators' change of heart. There were casualties and damage to property. Here was a determined attempt to disrupt the affairs of government and that of the nation at large. Here was a clear attempt to overthrow the first principle of democracy, which is civilian supremacy, by those specially charged with its preservation.

It is for the courts and the military tribunal to consider the motives of the perpetrators in mitigating or aggravating the punishment for the clear infractions of the laws that were here committed.

As I announced when this incident took place, everyone implicated in this crime, civilian and military, will be held to the fullest account. While we continue to cherish the virtue of compassion, we shall have justice in this case for we must have respect for the law.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Congratulatory Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Bureau of Customs, February 6, 1987

**Congratulatory Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Bureau of Customs**

[Delivered at the Manila South Harbor, February 6, 1987]

LIVING UP TO EXPECTATIONS

President Aquino congratulates the Bureau of Customs for setting an example of increased efficiency and honesty. It is due to performances such as that of the Customs personnel that her administration accomplished one of its major achievements: reviving the people's confidence in their government.

The President reminds her audience, however, that there is now increased criticism of government because people expect a lot from the bureaucracy. They expect it to serve their best interest and to be accountable to them for any failures.

I congratulate the Bureau on its 85th anniversary.

The Ministry of Finance and its component Bureau of Customs rode the period of transition smoothly. I am pleased to note that revenues have stayed the same despite the drop in the value of some imports and the repeal of certain customs duties. I can only attribute this to increased efficiency and honesty in collection, and the unbending resolve of the Commissioner to punish violations of the customs code.

I have often said that one of our advantages today is the restored confidence of the people in government. This was recently shown in the massive turnout of the February 2 Plebiscite, and in the tremendous vote of confidence that our government received at the polls along with the ratification of the Constitution. It is shown as well in the increased criticism of government.

Under the past regime, there were few complaints about public service. There were even less that made it to print. This was a result of the iron grip that censorship had on media. It was also the result of the general despair into which our countrymen had fallen. Few complained because none expected public service to be good or even forthcoming. Most were glad that a government with a tendency to do bad did nothing at all.

But it is different today. People believe in government. And they believe in democracy. They think that government is there to serve their best interests. They believe, in accordance with the principles of democracy, that it is accountable to them for any failure in that regard. And because they believe, they expect much of us.

The high expectations that the people have of government and democracy puts a double burden on the public official. The burden of doing his or her work with honesty and efficiency, and the burden of convincing the public that this is the case. I noted once that in politics the perception of honesty is as important as its reality.

I said this because the present government, given its limited resources and the problems it inherited, cannot immediately address all the problems that have rightfully been brought to its attention. We cannot move on all fronts

simultaneously, be it land reform, agricultural productivity, industrial growth, unemployment, infrastructure or national defense. Nor can we move with the speed and effectiveness that our people desire.

What then can tide them over until we can reach everyone's concern and problem?

One word: Hope. But hope is possible only with trust. Trust in the sincerity and honesty of the government. For as long as our people believe that we are doing our best and that we are sharing their hardships, they will wait and they will help. But we must earn that trust by an extra effort to be of real service to our people and to avoid the smallest occasion that may give rise to a suspicion of corruption in office.

Your performance in the past year, the probity, competence and patriotism of your chiefs, particularly the Minister of Finance and the Commissioner of Customs, inspired me to start this drive for honesty and efficiency in government here at the Customs Bureau.

We must repay the tremendous vote of confidence that our government has received with a commensurate service to the people. I depend on you, men and women of the Customs Bureau, to set the first example. Again, I congratulate you on your 85th anniversary and your first successful year under the new democracy. I wish you continued success.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Message of President Corazon Aquino upon Conferment of Honor, February 6, 1987

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Upon Conferment of Honor**

[Delivered at a Malaysian Studio via Satellite, February 6, 1987]

A FAMILY OF MAN

President Aquino expresses the Filipino people's desire to become a united family, governed by just and humane laws, and guided by God's teachings and commandments. The nation took the first step towards this goal with the ratification of a new Constitution, which is the embodiment of their ideals for a democratic society. In the quest for universal peace and understanding, the Filipino makes a stand.

I accept with deep gratitude, on behalf of the Filipino people, the honor you have conferred on me today. I regret I cannot be with you personally tonight, but I certainly am with you in spirit as you work and pray for unity, peace and understanding among the peoples of the world.

In the Philippines, as you know, we have peacefully and successfully concluded a national plebiscite that ratifies a new and truly democratic constitution for all Filipinos. We too have long sought to be one, united family founded on, and guided by just and humane laws, and inspired by the commandments and teachings of a just and loving God.

That is why I say that I and my people are with you in spirit as you celebrate the universal brotherhood of men. For as Saint Paul reminded the Romans: All other commandments are summed up in this one rule: "love your neighbor as yourself." Once again, we are a country that seeks to adhere not only to the just laws of men, but to that sweeping and redeeming commandment of God. By the exhortation to love one another, we are bound to join you in the quest to bring all men together as one, loving family. May I ask for your prayers for long-lasting peace and the economic revival of our country, even as we pray that your council and foundation might be blessed with success in all its endeavors.

Thank you for the honor you have bestowed on me. I will truly cherish it and share it proudly with my countrymen.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 86th Founding Anniversary of the Western Police District,
February 9, 1987**

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 86th Founding Anniversary of the Western Police District**

[Delivered at Philamlife, February 9, 1987]

**CHANGING THE IMAGE
OF MEN IN UNIFORM**

There are two battles waged by men in uniform, the one fought by the soldier against communism and the one fought by the policeman against crime and violence. Both battles will ultimately be won not by mere force but by the integrity, dedication and moral courage of the men who fight it.

Thus, on the 86th Foundation Anniversary of the Western Police District, President Aquino asks the members of the police force to review the principles of their profession, principles which are founded on the very ideals of society. She also exhorts them to live up to the people's expectations of them, the expectations of keeping peace and order in the community, and of protecting the lives and properties of citizens.

Among the battles to preserve and protect our newly won democracy are two waged by men in uniform. These battles will ultimately be won not by mere force but by the integrity, dedication and moral courage of the men and women in public service who lead and fight them. Of the battles fought by our men in uniform, one is in the field against those who wage ideological, war against democracy. A truce now governs that war while the effort is made to negotiate a peaceful resolution of the issues that divide the State and the insurgency. The other battle is the ceaseless wax of order against anarchy, of law against crime, of harmony and productive community against the destructive violence of criminals. This other battle is fought by you, men and women of our police forces.

We call you, in particular, the men and women of the Western Police District, "Manila's Finest." Perhaps because in championing the cause of order and protecting the peace of our communities, you are expected to exemplify the ideals of our society.

We seek a society where peace and order reign. And we look to you to provide it. We want an environment free from corruption and abuse, and we need you to ensure it. We ask that our individual rights and liberties are constantly upheld, particularly our right to be secure in our persons and properties and free from the dangers that threaten them, and we depend on you to give us that guarantee. Your work is not less difficult than that of our soldiers in the field. The city can be a jungle as well. Other factors make your work equally arduous and dangerous.

Our modern police force evolved from what were once civilian patrol groups. And so, coming as you do from the civilian populace, and working among civilians, you are subject to the same problems and pressures that plague the communities where you live and work. You too must cope with low wages, high prices, steep rentals, and the most modest of living conditions. You too must struggle to make ends meet. The very same conditions that have driven weaker citizens to crime are the conditions in which you must work to fight crime. Indeed, for the average policeman, not much is given by our society in wages and incentives and yet much is asked in the way of sacrifice. That is still another reason why you are called upon to maintain. Given the exemplary roles you must play, the spartan conditions in which you must work, the dangers you daily face, I would say that policework can be no ordinary job. It must be regarded and adhered to as a calling.

And so, on this 86th Foundation Anniversary of the Western Police District, I ask each and every one of you to review the founding principles of your profession and the noble chapters and examples in your history. I ask you to

face the year before us with new and firm resolve. I ask you to bear constantly in mind that your daily work, however routinary and humble and materially unrewarding, is not just your duty but the calling to which God has called you.

As I had promised during the last campaign, I as your Commander-in-Chief, am ready to make the necessary sacrifices and pursue reform no matter how difficult or elusive. We are now working to rebuild credibility and faith in the democratic system that once worked so well for us. We are laboring to kill the notion that public service is the easiest road to private gain, and to resurrect by practice the ideal of public service as a public trust. For in the past golden years of our democracy, that was how the government worker was perceived: hardworking, self-denying, steadfast and ready to serve. In this total overhauling of our bureaucratic system, I also look forward to an even more improved, responsive and responsible police force. One that boasts of men and women whose uniforms inspire respect, confidence and moral emulation in the public; who are seen as fitting symbols of the kind of society we seek to establish.

What I ask is not an ideal never reached but one that, time and again, you, Manila's Finest, have achieved. I am reminded at this point of the true story of the young Col. Alfredo Lim recovering the stolen money of a Chinese woman and turning over the entire amount, to the last centavo, to her. I understand that he was sweating cold while the money was counted in front of her. If the robbers had spent any of it, he would be suspected of having pocketed it. This must explain his white hair. When the last centavo was counted, the woman fainted dead away: shocked that Manila's Finest had lived up to its name.

While this story is a tribute to now General Lim, I hope we come to a time when no one will faint from surprise at the honesty of public servants, when people will cease to clamor that we police our own police.

Remember that a new, more helpful generation of Filipinos looks to you to set the example for integrity, courage, honesty and adherence to the law. The living of these ideals is a greater and more durable treasure than any we can leave our children. Let it be said that the men and women of the Western Police District may not be the best paid of working Filipinos, but they are certainly among the most honorable. In the meantime, I have instructed the National Housing Authority and other relevant agencies to prepare for me a housing plan for our police forces to correct, in some small measure, the disparity between your sacrifice and the public gratitude.

And so, on this 86th anniversary, may I thank you for your efforts to live up to your reputation as Manila's Finest. May God walk with you as you patrol our streets; enforce laws; and bring peace to our families, harmony to our communities; and strength and progress to our nation.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Command Conference, February 11, 1987

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Command Conference**

[Held in Camp Aguinaldo, February 11, 1987]

AFTER THE TRUCE

The ceasefire has ended but at least, peace was given a chance. The government vows to continue to explore all possibilities of a peaceful resolution of the conflict with insurgents. In the meantime, President Aquino orders the Armed Forces of the Philippines to resume operations against the insurgents and to ensure law and order in the land. She instructs them, however, to exercise utmost tolerance and respect for human rights and lives. While the soldier must fight to protect those whose lives he is charged with, he must do so without losing sight of the values of honor, humanity, and the ideals of democracy.

The truce is over. History will decide who is to blame for its end. I know that, for our part, you and I, did our best to explore the path of negotiation to the utmost.

The truce, is over, but all hope of peace is not lost. We shall continue to explore the possibilities of regional and provincial negotiations with the insurgents. We shall soon be implementing a rebel rehabilitation program to attract non-ideologues back to the law.

Our economic recovery program should, over the longer term, significantly reduce the root causes of the insurgency. In the meantime, we are pledged to secure the persons and properties of our citizens.

To that end, the New Armed Forces will resume operations against the insurgents. We shall have law and order throughout our country, so that the people can work in peace and security in the reconstruction of our country.

The New Armed Forces now fight for a new order; an order marked by the highest respect for human rights. In its operations against the rebellion, our soldiers are expected to conduct themselves with honor and humanity against the enemy, and the utmost solicitude for the safety of the people. We are assured by the General Staff that we can conduct a successful counter-insurgency without violating our principles. I expect our soldiers to reflect in their conduct the values for which they fight: honor, humanity, and the rights and freedoms of a democracy. The noble nature of the soldier's calling requires it. The laws themselves demand it.

The truce is over. Send this message out to all our troops so that none may be misled to relax their vigilance — to their peril and that of the people they are charged to protect. They must take care of the people, who will be their best security and friend.

Even as we prepare for the struggle to come, let us continue to pray that God may yet snatch us from the brink of war and set us gently down in peace.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 1986 Constitution, February 11, 1987

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 1986 Constitution**

[Released on February 11, 1987]

A DOCUMENT OF UNITY

The 1986 Constitution was overwhelmingly approved by the people who turned out in unprecedented numbers. With the new Constitution, the people now have one document to unite them in their goal of preserving democracy and making it a living reality.

President Aquino once again expresses the message of reconciliation and urges the people to unite in peace and work for the greater good of countrymen and nation.

Majority rule is the first principle of a democracy. Everyone who believes in democracy is bound to that rule and will abide by its result. The result is clear and unmistakable: My fellow countrymen, we have a Constitution. And we can claim it as never before in our history — with a massive turnout and the overwhelming approval of our people.

One law now channels the unswerving loyalty of all Filipinos to democracy and its ways.

One political order will now govern the ways we work together: to strive for common goals as a people, and to resolve our remaining differences in a peaceful and democratic fashion.

One duty, imposed by the unquestionable command of the Filipino nation, binds us all in the effort to preserve and protect our democracy in this Constitution, and make it meaningful for all our people.

Let me close with a fulfillment of the words of Paul: The night is over; the day is here. Let us finally put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Christ has committed us to the message of reconciliation. Let all Filipinos of goodwill offer each other the hand of peace and friendship. Let every Filipino pledge to work, as God gives him the light, for the greater good of all his countrymen and the freedom and progress of our nation.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Peace Message of President Corazon Aquino on the Commemoration of the EDSA Revolution, February 21, 1987

**Peace Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Commemoration of the EDSA Revolution**

[Released on February 21, 1987]

EDSA REVISITED

Memories of the February Revolution are fraught with wonder, wonder at how people from opposite walks of life — the soldier and the nun — joined hands in denouncing a violent solution to the nation's problems. Despite the threat of death, the Revolution was achieved without, bloodshed but with offerings of peace and friendship.

The real hero of the Revolution is the Filipino, who put his faith in God. The gains of the revolution, however, must be maintained and made to prosper through the people's unity.

As I look around me today, my heart is filled with many memories from a year ago. There is sorrow at the thought of those who gave up their lives for our freedom. One of them was my husband.

But I also remember, with a sense of wonder, other moments. Moments when our people looked danger in the face, yet turned away from the path of violence. Moments when people who thought they were enemies, extended the hand of friendship. Looking at these images of our revolution, we are struck again by its uniqueness. It was a revolution, where the nun and the soldier had an equal place, united by a will to peace. It was a revolution whose color was not the red of bloodshed or the black of night, but the yellow of hope and freedom, the rising sun on our national flag.

Ang tunay na mga bayani ng pagdiriwang na ito ay ang mga Pilipino. Mga Pilipino na nagnasang makaalpas. At ang ating paniniwala na "BAHALA NA ANG DIYOS." Tulad din nang kasabihan sa ating pananampalataya "NASA DIYOS ANG AWA, NASA TAO ANG GAWA." Pinalaya ninyo ang bansang Pilipinas sa tulong ng ating Panginoong Diyos. Sama-sama tayo sapangakong makita ang ating bansang sakdal laya.

But freedom must be rooted in peace, unity, and trust. We cannot rebuild our country when others are trying to tear it down. We say to those who want to see our country strong: Let us make it strong together. We say to those who seek social justice: Together we will find it. Put aside the arrogance of arms. We say to the nations of the world: Respect our quest for peace, and join us in it.

Our revolution taught us all that people linking hands — *kapit-bisig* — are stronger than the tanks, that true democracy is stronger than tyranny. That we are called by God to be free and that peace, in the words of Isaiah, can only be the fruit of righteousness. Let us remember these lessons, and live them every day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the EDSA Flag Raising, February 25, 1987

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the EDSA Flag Raising**

[Delivered at Camp Aguinaldo, February 25, 1987]

THANK YOU, SOLDIER

The February Revolution has a special meaning for the military who, in the past regime, lost whatever honor they stood for as they were ordered to turn against the people they were supposed to protect. When the final test came, however, the soldiers disobeyed a dictator to stand true to their duty of defending a nation. It was largely because of this, because of the soldiers' refusal to fire on their own countrymen, that the February Revolution was bloodless.

President Aquino assures the military of the nation's gratitude and support as it tries to reform itself. As the people turned out to defend the soldiers' lives, she now enjoins the military to defend the people's freedom.

As we raise the flag of our country, I take special pride in saluting you, the defenders of our nation. The February Revolution has meant many things to many people. But it holds special promise for you, the military.

Some called the past regime a military dictatorship, yet it abused and shamed the military.

You, who were sons of the people, were asked to turn against the people.

You, the defenders of our national patrimony, had to stand by as it was plundered and wasted.

Many of you resisted, and for that we thank you.

And, in the moment of truth, when you were ordered to fire on the marchers for peace, for once in your life, you disobeyed. You disobeyed the dictator, in obedience to the higher call of freedom. And for that you will be rewarded.

You have already been rewarded with the gratitude of your people and your government. But deeper rewards are in store. You can now be assured that so long as you are responsible to the will of the people, the people will rally to support you – as they rallied around your brothers in Camp Aguinaldo.

You were, and remain, an essential part of the February Revolution. Let us all remember that its standards bore not the red of bloodshed, nor the black of hatred, but the yellow of hope and courage, the rising sun of the flag you are specially called to defend.

You, my countrymen, hold a special place in my heart. We mourn and honor every one of you who falls in the line of duty. Our people are watching with pride as you cleanse and fortify the institution of the military, and make it both a pillar to hold up our democracy and a sword to defeat its enemies. Our people turned out to defend your lives. It is your part now to defend their freedom.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the First Anniversary of the EDSA Revolution

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the First Anniversary of the EDSA Revolution

[Released on February 25, 1987]

A DAY OF THANKS

The first anniversary of the EDSA revolution is a day of thanks not only for the peacefulness with which it was achieved, but also for the fact that it was achieved by no other nation except the Philippines. The revolution restored democracy. The plebiscite provided the bases for that democracy, and it is now in the people's hands to make that democracy work. For this purpose, President Aquino exhorts the people to unite once more and to dedicate themselves to three economic goals: alleviation of mass poverty, generation of employment and equitable sharing of the fruits of development.

Binabati ko kayong lahat sa ating unang pagdiriwang ng People Power sa EDSA.

Ito ay araw ng pasasalamat. Magpasalamat tayo sa ating kalayaan. Tayo ay ginantimpalaan ng kalayaan, sa isang mapayapang paraan.

Pambihirang pangyayari itong mapayapang rebolusyon at dahil dito ay hinangaan ng buong mundo ang mga mamayang Pilipino. Bakit ba tayong Pilipino ang natutong gumamit ng People Power na mapayapa at bakit ba sa ibang bansa ay hindi pa nila magaya ang ating People Power?

Sa aking paniwala, ang unang People Power ay nangyari noong pinatay si Ninoy noong Agosto 21, 1983. Bakit ba nagpuntahan ang libulibong mamamayan sa aming tahanan sa Times Street? Karamihan sa kanila ay hindi man lamang kilala si Ninoy. Ngunit pumila sila ng maraming oras, kung minsan nababasa sila sa ulan at kung minsan naman ay pawis na pawis sila sa init ng araw. Kadalasan ay nagugutom pa sila. Ngunit wala akong narinig na dumaing. Bagkos marami ang bumalik ng dalawa o tatlong beses upang makita muli ang duguang bangkay ni Ninoy. At alam nating lahat na milyun-milyong Pilipino ang nakipaglibing kay Ninoy. Noong araw na yoon, ang nakasulat sa mga posters ay "Ninoy, hindi ka nag-iisa." Dahil sa sakripisyo ni Ninoy, nagsimula na ang pagkakaisa ng mamamayang Pilipino. Noong ilibing si Ninoy nakita nating nabuhay muli ang katangi-tanging magagandang ugaling Pilipino. Nawala ang takot ng Pilipino. Natutong makiramay muli ang mga Pilipino. Natutong magmahalang muli ang mga Pilipino. Natutong magtulungan muli ang mga Pilipino. At natutong manalangin at manawagan muli sa Panginoong Diyos ang mga maraming Pilipino.

Hindi natin nakamit kaagad ang kalayaan pagkatapos ng pagkapatay kay Ninoy. Kinailangan pa ng sapat na panahon upang mapuntahan natin ang ating mga kapatid sa buong bansa at upang pakiusapan sila na sumali sa ating pagsisikap na maibalik ang ating kalayaan. Kinailangan din na marami sa atin ang magkusang loob na magpakapagod at magtaya ng sariling buhay upang lumaban sa diktador sa mga rally at demonstrasyon sa halalan.

Walang sinuman sa atin ang nakaisip o nagplano ng EDSA Revolution. Kaming dalawa ni Doy Laurel ay nasa Cebu at nagkakampanya sa boycott movement noong Pebrero 22.

Nalaman ko lamang nung gabing yoon na si dating Minister Juan Ponce Enrile at si Gen. Fidel Ramos ay humiwalay na kay Marcos. Natatandaan ko pang sinabi kay Johnny Ponce Enrile sa telepono: Johnny, all I can offer you for the moment are my prayers. And he answered: that is what I need. Nakabalik ako sa Metro Manila mula sa Cebu nung Linggo ng hapon, Pebrero 23.

Ang aking bayaw na si Butz Aquino ay isa sa nangunang magpunta sa Crame at Aguinaldo. Si Cardinal Sin naman ang nanawagan sa mga mamamayan na magpunta sa EDSA. Si June Keithley at iba pa ang namahala sa radyo upang magbigay ng mga balita sa atin. Libu-libo ang nagdagsaan sa EDSA upang bigyan ng suporta ang militar.

Ako'y nagpunta sa EDSA at Ortigas noong Lunes ng hapon upang makiusap sa ating mga kababayan na ipagpatuloy ang pagbabantay sa EDSA. At noong Martes ng umaga sa Club Filipino, kaming dalawa ni Doy Laurel ay nanumpa ng katapatan sa ating bansa bilang Pangulo at Pangalawang Pangulo. Nakiusap din kami sa mamamayan na huwag ng magpunta sa Club Filipino at huwag nilang lisanin ang Camps Crame at Aguinaldo.

Ang People Power sa EDSA ay isang pangyayaring mananatiling buhay at sariwa sa ating alaala,

Today let us recall why People Power at EDSA was successful. I think it was successful mainly for the following reasons:

1. Because the people at EDSA were there for a great cause — the cause of freedom.
2. Because the Filipinos who went there were dedicated and selfless Filipinos. They went to EDSA not for any personal consideration but only for the greater interest of the country.
3. Because the Filipinos at EDSA believed in God and in one another.

We have restored freedom in this country. Now we have to continue with the same People Power spirit of selflessness and dedication in order to achieve our other goals, our economic goals. Let us dedicate ourselves to these three economic goals: alleviation of mass poverty, generation of employment and equitable sharing of the fruits of development.

Sa loob ng isang taon, tayo ay naharap sa maraming pagsubok sa ating pagnanasang maisakatuparan ang ating mga layunin. At ito ay atingginawa sa ilalim ng prinsipyong demokrasya. At sa tulong at gabay ng ating Panginoong Diyos ay nakaya nating talunin ang mga taong nagtangkang sirain ang ating simulain.

Ang matahimik na Rebolusyon noong Pebrero 1986 ay nagbigay sa atin ng demokrasya. Ang Plebisito ng Pebrero 1987, na sinang-ayunan ng 76% ng buong bansa ay naglagay sa ating demokrasya sa isang matatag at ligtas na katayuan.

Tayo ay ginantimpalaan ng kalayaan. Ngayon nasa ating mga kamay kung paano ito gagamitin para sa katarungan at kaunlaran.

Ang ating kinabukasan ay nakasalalay sa ating mga kamay. Ang ating tagumpay ay nasa ating pagkakaisa. Tulad ng nakaraang matahimik na rebolusyon, sama-sama nating labanan ang mga nagnanais na ibalik ang pagsasamantala sa ating bayan. Sama-sama nating itinayo ang kalayaan at demokrasya ng bansang Pilipinas. Sama-sama rin nating pangalagaan ito para sa ating katahimikan at kaunlaran.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Golden Anniversary of the Budget Ministry

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Golden Anniversary of the Budget Ministry**

[Released on February 28, 1987]

**BUREAUCRACY AS
PUBLIC SERVICE**

Without the members of democracy, the people behind the scene who translate into action the plans and programs of government, Cabinet decisions and policies remain but a design for the fulfillment of the people's aspirations. It is largely due to these people's dedication and professionalism — the staff of the Department of Budget and Management in this case — that a successful and peaceful transition from dictatorship to democratic government was achieved.

President Aquino reminds the Department of Budget and Management staff that bureaucracy is meant to help, to provide public service. She advises them to take pride in every task, no matter how humble, and to bring a high sense of purpose to every endeavor because behind each one is a human being and his dream.

It is a pleasure to meet the people who make things work in government. The Cabinet and I have been making important policies and decisions, but it is the men and women of the Department of Budget and Management, as you should now be called, who translate them into action. Your work decides what part of policy remains aspiration, and what part becomes programs that make a difference in the lives of our people. And while we get most of the praise, and if I may add, most of the blame, you have remained behind the scenes, attending to the crucial and difficult details of implementation and justification.

This dependability must be your greatest asset and contribution. It is to the credit of the Department of Budget and Management that the transition from dictatorship to democratic government took place effortlessly, at least on the administrative level. It is largely to your credit, that the new government team, which of course came from out of government, managed to make a go of the bureaucracy. We have learned much from you, even as you have graciously accommodated and adjusted to our new leadership and management style.

I hope that, as our government continues to evolve in the pattern set forth in the new Constitution, you will continue to show the same dedication and professionalism. Budget and Management remains largely intact today because you chose to work for the general good throughout the transition. That is why you are able to look back today over 50 years of service and feel a sense of pride. I and my team of officials and advisers will one day leave Malacañang, but you will remain to serve. And it will be your decency, dependability, and efficiency in this administration that will determine the success of the next.

Meanwhile, let us be reminded that the bureaucracy is meant to help and not to hinder the work of cutting down red tape, of eliminating outmoded systems that waste our precious time and energy. You must bring a sense of high purpose, even to the most mundane tasks of your office. "Keep interested in your own career, however humble. It is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time." Remember that behind every seemingly minor case or insignificant document that demands our attention, there are real people, with real cares and hopes, whose peace of mind and effort we give to their requests. The bundy clock does not tick too slowly for the public servant who is deeply aware of the people he serves.

Remember also that much of the credibility and acceptance by the public of our new government depends on you. A poster circulated by the Philippine Information Agency puts it this way: "The people are not an interruption of our work. They ARE our work." Another poster, tacked on the walls of the Administrative Building in Malacañang, shows Christ washing the feet of his apostles. The message is that those who serve honestly and humbly and willingly will be judged first and greatest of all. In this light, I hope that all of you here will strive to be the first and greatest in government in this your 51st year, and every year thereafter.

Finally, let me say that I will sorely miss the services of your boss, Secretary, and soon-to-be Senator Bert Romulo. My daughter Kris unwittingly gave Bert his first campaign endorsement when she called him her favorite cabinet member. Although we will all miss Bert, especially his wise and temperate counsel in many fields in addition to his own, he leaves us with a sense of confidence that his Department will continue to serve us well. He has, with the consideration and prudence of a good servant of the people, prepared well for his departure. I thank him for his great and good service, on behalf of our people.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the PSG Anniversary

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines During the PSG Anniversary

[Released on March 1, 1987]

PROTECTORS OF THE CHIEF

The Presidential Security Group (PSG), one branch of the Armed Forces, is charged with protecting the seat of Government and its leader, the President. Under the new Constitution, the PSG is charged with protecting only one branch of the government but since the February 1986 Revolution, it has had the burden of protecting practically the whole government because the President has been both the executive and the legislature.

During its first anniversary, President Aquino commends the PSG for the exemplary performance of its members.

To our people goes the credit for the restoration of democracy in our country, but to the Armed Forces go the credit for its immediate defense against its armed foes. Within the Armed Forces, however, a special force is charged with the difficult task of protecting the seat of Government and the person of its leader. That force is the palace guard, which in our country today is called the Presidential Security Group.

In the normal constitutional set up that we shall soon have, presidential security would have the important duty of protecting one branch of the three branches that compose the government. But in the set up we have had since the restoration of democracy last February, 1986, the Presidential Security Group had the even more onerous duty of protecting the entire government itself in the Office and person of the President that combined all its powers. Since the Revolution, I have been both the legislature and the executive of the government. Any threat to me was literally a threat against the State, and the democracy it upheld. That made me an inviting target of all the enemies of democracy. During all this time, however, I always felt safe. Safe because I trust in God to dispose of me according to His will, and safe because I trusted in the Presidential Security to make sure that I did not go before the time He has appointed. Oliver Cromwell told his soldiers to put their faith in God but to keep their powder dry. The Presidential Security has been my gunpowder, kept dry and ready in every season.

Today is the first anniversary of this special guard. One year seems too short a period to honor it. But the past year witnessed an unprecedented number of threats to the Presidency. The work of the Presidential Security Group for the past year compressed the work of protecting a President for the whole of his term in office.

May I therefore express my appreciation and gratitude to the Presidential Security Group for its outstanding performance in this first and critical year of democracy in our country and for the protection it gave not only to my person but to the unity and stability that the Presidency has represented in this period of transition.

The Armed Forces as a whole are the shield and sword of the Republic, but the Presidential Security Group has been the breastplate protecting the Heart of the Republic.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on New Perspectives in Land Reform

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On New Perspectives in Land Reform**

[Delivered at the Kalayaan Hall, March 3, 1987]

NEW PERSPECTIVES IN LAND REFORM

An effective land reform is the key to the country's progress and stability. For this reason, land reform, which could become the Aquino Administration's most important project, is being studied carefully before implementation. What is targetted is not just an equal distribution of land but also a distribution which is founded on justice for both the tenant and the landowner. Land reform seeks two things: more jobs to solve unemployment in the countryside and greater productivity to increase the standard of living and purchasing power of the rural sector.

An effective land reform program is critical to the future progress and stability for our country. I put the stress on the word effective. It must be effective given the state of the economy, the condition of public infrastructure which supports agricultural activities, the availability of adequate extension services to help productivity, and adequate post harvest facilities to enable farm produce to generate a decent income for the rural Philippine population.

My aim has not been just the equal division of land. In our present circumstances, this means the equal distribution of misery. This is why, although I regard Land Reform as a very important program, if not the most important of my government, I have proceeded with great caution. I will not discredit the idea of land reform by simply proclaiming it when we do not have the means to make it work. The ultimate aim of the land reform I envision is a country whose people are at peace with themselves, which means a land reform program with justice for all: farmer and landowner. No one must feel cheated of his rights or neglected in his legitimate aspirations. Land reform as I see it must also produce two things: more jobs to sop up the unemployment in the countryside and greater productivity to increase the standard of living and the purchasing power of the rural sector. It must accomplish these things because land reform, so far as I am concerned, is only a means to justice. And justice demands that our great people, who fought for freedom and stood up in its defense, must live lives commensurate in well-being and dignity to the nobility of their achievements. In addition to being a means of justice through improved living standards for the rural sector, the revival of agriculture is our surest hope of industrial growth. Until we create a wide and stable domestic market, we can never industrialize. The industrial sector of every country in the world depends for its survival on the domestic market. In our case, that market can only be the rural sector. We must therefore tap what I believe is its tremendous potential, so it can support the industrialization and therefore the economic sovereignty of our nation.

As with every program of government, the key is money. Talent counts as well, and especially integrity. Programs must be well conceived and there must be honesty in running them. But without money, they will always remain paper proposals or empty political slogans. There is nothing I detest more than to use so important a program as land reform as a political slogan. That is why I have been reluctant to speak of it, until I was sure of our program and the means to implement it. That program is being prepared. I will not, however, wait for its final refinement before announcing the funds we have found to finance it in part.

As you know, the past regime's economic policy boiled down in real terms to plain stealing. This was done, primarily, through the practice of ordering government financial institutions to lend large sums of money for the industrial projects. Only a fraction of the loan went into the project itself. The bulk of it was deposited abroad. It is the problem of the PCGG to recover that part. The projects on the other hand are here, and we have foreclosed on

most of them. All of them have failed and are inoperative. No company can sustain the burden of servicing debts for in excess of their value. These companies are called non-performing assets or NPAs. They have been transferred from the government financial institutions, like the PNB, the DBP, and Philippine Guarantee, to the Assets Privatization Fund for subsequent sale. The transfer value of the non-performing assets in the hands of the PNB and the DBP is P108 billion. The APT can hope to sell them for no more than around P24 billion.

We are tempted to throw up our hands in despair, but that will serve no purpose. We must make the best of the situation. Here we have bad money. We must put it to some good use. And I can think of none better than land reform.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Necrological Service for Jose W. Diokno

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Necrological Service for Jose W. Diokno**

[Delivered at Mt. Carmel Church, March 3, 1987]

MEMORIES OF A NOBLE MAN

Jose W. Diokno stood for many things: Constitutional democracy, justice and reason, hope for the oppressed, the majesty of the law, a brand of politics which mixes power with virtue, and the commitment to the highest ideals and the willingness to pay a high price for it.

He also taught the Filipinos precious lessons: being right is enough justification and reward; only with personal integrity can one do justice to others; cultural uniqueness is enough reason for nationalism.

Ninoy, in his Senate days, called him the brightest of the Senators. But after years of experience, after his world had widened to include the grief and oppression he shared with him, Ninoy revised his estimate and called Pepe Diokno the most brilliant Filipino. Ninoy would tell his friends that Pepe was “the one man he would unquestionably follow to the ends of the earth.”

Brilliant he was certainly. His power rested in his tremendous intellect and his unshakeable integrity. I remember how disheartened we all felt when Ninoy and Pepe and others who were detained with them were brought to the Supreme Court in the first days of Martial Law. The Government had all the power and had exercised it without limit. Congress had been padlocked. Senators and publishers had been arrested, along with thousands of others throughout the country. The law was our only refuge, but the lawyers had taken cover in that abject dictum of surrender: When the guns speak, the laws fall silent. So even there, in the seat of justice, in the last rampart of right, we felt the limitless power of a Government to hurt. Until Pepe Diokno stood up, a black toga draped over his shoulders. Immediately, one felt the cause of law and justice pass from the Court to the accused standing before them.

I do not remember what his arguments were, but I cannot forget the power he exuded. It was the power of right and integrity. Constitutional democracy had found its proper champion. Here was a man equal to the nobility of its cause.

Pepe Diokno would always be equal to the nobility of any cause he espoused.

Whether it was the cause of human rights, constitutional democracy or nationalism, the argument ad hominem would always fail if Pepe was there to defend it. The name of Diokno was a warrant that the cause he defended deserved respect, and, for many Filipinos, unqualified support. If Pepe believed in it, there was sure to be justice and reason in the cause. Time and the truth never belied this first impression.

For those with longer memories, Diokno, in the days of the Old Republic, prefigured the kind of politics that would be possible in this country only after the painful experience of dictatorship. Diokno represented the possibility that you can mix power and virtue, intelligence and popularity, professed devotion to the highest ideals with the willingness to pay the highest price for such commitment.

For those who enjoyed the hospitality of the dictatorship in safehouses, whose anguished cries were heard by no one except the laughing torturer, Diokno was the name of hope. Hope that his or her case would reach him before they were totally broken in spirit and body.

To the men of the law, who stood by the Law, at a time when it had fallen into the deepest disrepute, he was the living example of its majesty. They tell of his prodigious memory that allowed no precedent or statute to escape enlistment in his cause; of his relentless logic and of majestic eloquence from which the corrupters of the law could find no defense except naked power.

Marcos jailed him after Martial Law. To the uninformed, Shakespeare's saying: 'The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers,' is an indictment. It is in fact a tribute to the profession as a shield against oppression. Those who conspire against freedom can do no better than to silence its best protectors. Marcos knew that jailing this lawyer was the first priority in his scheme of dictatorship.

We have learned a lot from Pepe Diokno.

Why should we fight against impossible odds? Because being in the right is its own justification and reward.

Why should we be nationalistic? Because no other people will really ever see things from the standpoint of the Filipino.

Why should we put such a premium on our personal integrity, when it is so ill rewarded in this world? Because we cannot avoid seeing our own faces and living with ourselves. Because if we cannot do right by ourselves, by our souls, we cannot do justice to others.

We will miss him. As has been said, "When a great tree falls, we are surprised to see how meagre the landscape seems without it. So when a great man falls." And yet the enemies of his ideals cannot rejoice. For Diokno, like the true lawyer, provided well for the contingency of his death. He has left a growing movement to fight on for the ideals of our nation and the principles of our democracy. He has left us his family, whom he has carefully prepared to carry on his struggle. No one can carry the entire burden of his mission, but his wife and each of his children, and each of us who loved him, are here to carry the portion we can bear.

On the personal side, I owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Nena Diokno. She was the pillar of strength and courage on which I leaned in the dark days of our husbands imprisonment. Her brave insistence on our right to dignity and access to our husbands showed me that the end of fear was the beginning of freedom. My gratitude to her and her children must be shared by all who were inspired by the brave work and example of Pepe Diokno, for no man could have borne his sufferings and endured the sacrifices he imposed on himself without his family to support him.

This humble tribute we pay to this noble man and great Filipino must be shared by his wife and children.

To you Nena, and you, Mench, Popoy, Pat, Maris, Maitet, Cookie, Mike, Chel, Maya, and Martin — Pepe's private army for civil liberties, justice and nationalism, my deepest thanks for all the support and inspiration you gave me. For as long as we remain true to his ideals, for as long as we are Filipinos, he will never die.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Address of President Corazon Aquino on using Asian Virtues to Reach Economic Goals

**Address
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On using Asian Virtues to Reach Economic Goals**

[Delivered at the Fil-Chinese Chamber Federation Bldg., Muelle de Binondo, March 6, 1987]

USING ASIAN VIRTUES TO REACH ECONOMIC GOALS

Addressing the largest grouping of trade and industrial associations in the country, President Aquino enumerates her administration's efforts to effect economic recovery. She says that the success of economic recovery lies in the willingness of the people to work for its attainment. In this, she asks the Filipino-Chinese community to help with their characteristic virtues of strength and resiliency, and values of thrift and hard work. She promises to ease government restrictions on business and in return, asks businessmen to abandon their wait-and-see attitude.

An invitation to join this gathering is like an invitation to a homecoming. As many of you may know, the Cojuangcos of Tarlac came originally from Fukien. But less known is the fact that the first Cojuangco who emigrated to this country 125 years ago made his first home in this same district of Binondo. Today I, a fourth generation Cojuangco, come to you in the hope that I will be received in the same spirit of hospitality that welcomed my ancestor to this country.

A year ago, in another forum, I spoke of the urgency of the need to rebuild our country from the ruins into which it had fallen under the Marcos dictatorship. Then, as now, I had no illusions as to the difficulty of the task. Among the things we inherited from that unlamented regime were an economy that had contracted more than 10 percent in the previous two years; a foreign debt in excess of \$26 billion, a huge budget deficit; and an unemployment problem of near crisis proportions.

Ranged against these problems was a government that did not even have a concrete economic blueprint when it assumed power by a revolution. Once in power, we had to move quickly to arrest the deadly deteriorating of the economy.

We therefore made an inventory of past economic policies, reviewed economic performance, and came up with a policy agenda for recovery and growth. This document became the basis for the Six-Year Development Plan that we began to implement this year.

But even as we set the economic growth targets and started the policy reforms and initiatives to support these targets, we never lost sight of the fact that, in the last analysis, it is willingness of the people – in government, in the private sector, and throughout the country – to work with firm determination towards these goals that would determine our success.

I have said a number of times that we are launched on the road to recovery, and we should be on the growth track starting this year. Last year marked the first time we were able to post a positive economic growth after two straight years of contraction. While this economic performance gives us reason for confidence, it also points up the great deal that remains to be done.

Last year, our economy grew by 0.13 percent in terms of Gross National Product. 0.13 percent is not much to crow about, but consider the context in which it was achieved: a sudden change of government, counter-revolutionary attempts to throw us back into dictatorship, the debt burden, and sluggish investment, among other things. Consider

also that economic recovery did not get off the ground until the second half of last year. But, while there's reason to congratulate ourselves, there's more reason to look harder at the areas where we can and have to do better.

In particular, a source of disappointment has been our investment picture. We did not actually expect investments to grow last year, but we had hoped to hold down the decline to something around three and a half percent. We now know that investment actually fell 15 percent in 1986. This was apparently caused by the business community's wait and see attitude.

I don't have the figures with me, but my economic ministers tell me that this attitude of sitting on their hands did not characterize the Chinese business community during this period, and even the worse period preceding it. For a group that has, not only survived but even prospered under far more adverse conditions, it wouldn't have been in character for this community to have waited until things got better. The history of the Chinese community in the Philippines bears this out.

Chinese were trading in the Philippines long before the Spaniards came. They had come here to escape the turmoil of changing dynasties and the ravages of natural calamities.

Today, the Chinese community here is still the smallest in the ASEAN region. But the numerical size of a Chinese community has never been an accurate measure of its economic importance. Why this has always been so is a tribute to the strength and resiliency, and the values of thrift and hard work of the Chinese immigrant — attributes that we hope will be brought to bear on the common effort towards recovery and growth. Especially when you consider the discriminatory attitude of Philippine governments to this ethnic group, beginning with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1902 which the United States extended to its new Philippine territory.

Similar measures followed which kept the Chinese community to 1 percent of the country's population, and yet, increasingly, Chinese took over a greater share of the Philippine retail and wholesale trade.

To every measure to restrict Chinese participation in one sector of the economy, the Chinese responded creatively by diversifying into other sectors, such as manufacturing, commerce, finance and interisland shipping.

The past is past, and I hope it will be forgotten in the larger sense of renewed pride that all Filipinos, regardless of racial ancestry, now share. All Filipinos have suffered, at the hands of outsiders and at each other's hands. And yet it is from a Filipino Chinese and his wife, Doming and Evelyn Lee, that Ninoy and I received the most heartening encouragement and support during Ninoy's incarceration. It is time now to think of what we can all do, together, to make this free country good for all of us. Our diversity is the wealth of our culture and the potential great strength of our nation.

I am aware that the Federation is the largest grouping of trade and industrial associations in the country today, just as I am aware of the collective influence it represents.

I now call on the Federation to exert its moral influence on the Filipino-Chinese community and urge it to give all-out support to our economic growth objectives.

I pledged to get the Government off the backs of businessmen, and I meant it to apply to all Filipino businessmen, whatever name he or she sports, be it Malay, Chinese, Spanish or whatever. Citizenship is in the heart, not in the name.

We aim for recovery and growth, and we are pledged that it shall be led by the private sector.

We have set in place the necessary policy reforms and initiatives to help this recovery and growth. We are a democracy again, where rights are respected, and the State acts as protector and not persecutor, guarantor and not thief of the entrepreneur's and worker's rightful share of the fruits of their labors. We have removed the stumbling blocks to vigorous enterprise, and we hope we have eliminated some of the excuses why business apparently

continues to hesitate. I use the word “apparently” advisedly because I understand that business has not been that bad, but it is best to keep quiet about this in a year where we will have two elections.

I urge the business community to abandon this wait-and-see attitude, because it is an attitude that can only perpetuate itself. Recovery will come when you make the effort to recover. It won’t happen by itself. And I would like to express the wish that this community will once more take the lead. Where angels fear to tread, there the true businessman will make this profits.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Artillery Association

Message of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines To the Artillery Association

[Held at Camp Aguinaldo, March 8, 1987]

KEEPING IN STEP WITH THE PEOPLE

The EDSA Revolution united the different factions in the military. It also united the Armed Forces with the people. Since then, however, there have been differences, differences between the people and the military, the people and the media, the people and the various establishments they uphold. Yet, on the first anniversary of the February Revolution, thousands returned to EDSA to relive the memory, proving once more that People Power is very much alive.

I am glad that, over a year ago, this camp was miraculously spared an artillery attack that might have wiped out not only thousands of innocent civilians and rebel soldiers, but our last hope of recovery and peace.

No one has bothered to record who were the officers and men who defied orders and held their fire. At any rate, history by now would have blurred such details and left us only the broad outlines of what we achieved and how it relates to our present time.

The Armed Forces, regardless of the factions that existed before the Revolution, are now seen as one armed force. And the military, regardless of how its several members stood with regard to the People's Revolution, is now seen as being one with the people.

That, at any rate, is how the people want to see it: Army and People as one under this Government.

Since those days of reconciliation and recovery at EDSA, the people's armed forces, the people's government, the people's media and all the other establishments upheld by the people have had their differences, disagreements and even bitter confrontations. There were numerous disruptions of the peace and mortal challenges to the existence of the government.

But, after all that, we were reminded 12 days ago that our foundations and directions have not changed. Last February 25, tens of thousands of EDSA revolutionaries returned to the scene of their triumph, bringing with them hundreds of thousands of converts to the cause.

One thing, clearly, has not changed: the people still have the power and that power is growing with their numbers and the self-awareness of their critical part in the politics of our country.

You and I who are in the government, whether we be civilian or military, are merely agents of this power. And, in the final analysis, national survival is determined not by whether we agree all the time with each other, but whether we remain in step with the people. Those who misread the national will and overestimate their popular support will fall by the wayside.

That was the bitter lesson history has taught the past regime and the mavericks of the recent past. And that, too, is the reality that confronts a stubborn communist insurgency that has yet to know that it has already lost its heart and soul, that is, the hopes and trust of the people.

The battle for hearts and minds was won here a year ago. It is now up to our men in uniform to protect that victory and extend its gains, hand in hand with the rest of the government, so as to bring peace and progress throughout our land.

Let us not allow those who would subvert our freedoms and return us to slavery convince us that our differences constitute fatal divisions within our ranks. We follow one authority: the People, and have one mission: to be one force for the common good. The celebration at EDSA cannot be denied. People Power is here to stay; democracy will endure; and we can only move forward. What is needed only is to move in step.

Congratulations on your golden anniversary. Thanks to the idealism and restraint of your men who chose wisely to side with the people, we are able to celebrate 50 years of honorable service by the Artillery Association of the Philippines.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Rededication of the Diocese of Malolos Catholic Church

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On the Rededication of the Diocese of Malolos Catholic Church

[Released on March 11, 1987]

REVOLUTIONARIES OF LOVE AND CHARITY

President Aquino lauds projects of love and charity. Among these projects are those of the Diocese of Malolos, which help the orphans and the homeless aged. As surely as a revolution, these peaceful endeavors will change the face and destiny of the nation.

Bulacan is known as the home province of many heroes, fighters for Filipino freedom. There is one hero from Bulacan whom I hold specially dear. His name does not appear in history books, nor was he associated with any historic movement or cause. But he was, to my young mind, a real leader, a great teacher, and a source of inspiration and strength. My father, a true son of Bulacan, was my hero.

Like many other Bulakenos raised in more peaceful times, his love for God, country and countrymen did not find unusual dramatic expression. But he was firm in his faith, true to its values, and determined to put its teachings into practice whether in his place of work or at home with us. His patience, gentleness and steadfastness were to me a form of heroism that had a profound effect on my thinking and behavior, just as the deeds of Bulacan's well-known heroes deeply affected the attitudes and destinies of many Filipinos.

Bulacan today enjoys a greater measure of peace and prosperity than do most other provinces. The sons and daughters of Bulacan are indeed blessed, and for that we must give thanks. But, as my father demonstrated to me, your traditions and reputation for revolutionary fervor have not dimmed or died, they have simply been rechanneled into everyday expressions of charity, self-sacrifice, industriousness, fairness, and care for the poor.

Jesus Christ, who preached and practiced these values, was a gentle, patient, living and forgiving man; a man of love and peace. Yet He was God and author of the revolution that changed the meaning of life itself and set all men free who cared to follow him. His Mother, though set apart by God as blessed among women, led no great battles for her race but lived a simple, quiet, humble life, calling herself "bondservant" of her Lord.

The Diocese of Malolos reaches out and supports orphans and the homeless aged, and involves itself in other civic community activities.

These are acts that will not make our history books, yet are great acts of Faith and Love, and will change the face and destiny of our nation as surely, and even more profoundly, than some of the great battles for freedom in our past. Let us continue with such endeavors, and trust that in time, we will reap the harvest. My father after all did not raise me for the Presidency, but only to be his good daughter and a Christian. And for my present work, I find that serves me well enough.

Let us pray for the continuing progress of this diocese and province that he called home.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Safety for the Workingman

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On the Safety for the Workingman

[Delivered at the Philippine Occupational Safety and Health Center, Diliman, Quezon City, March 12, 1987]

SAFETY FOR THE WORKINGMAN

The Philippine Occupational Safety and Health Center is a manifestation of the Aquino Administration's commitment to provide for the safety and well-being of the people. The worker's health and safety must not be sacrificed for progress and the government is determined to reduce the incidence of industrial accidents.

Today we break ground for the Philippine Occupational Safety and Health Center. This ceremony expresses our double intent: to achieve progress for our nation and provide for the safety and well-being of our people, especially the workingman, on whom that progress so much depends.

We shall not buy progress at the price of the safety of our workers. That determination is what this Center symbolizes: our care and concern for the workingman.

It is a determination that is obviously shared by our Japanese brothers, who have contributed so handsomely to this project. Even as we encourage and hope for increased Japanese investments in our country, we are deeply touched by this Japanese investment in the safety of our people.

Progress has its costs. Every year, millions of men and women throughout the world are killed or maimed because of occupational hazards. The ILO estimates that 50 million accidents occur at work sites year after year. That is 160,000 a day. It is obviously worse in developing countries.

In our country, one out of 29 workers are victims of industrial accidents. And these are only the reported cases. Progress indeed has its costs. But we are determined to cut them.

To the Japanese who share that determination with us, may I express the gratitude of the Filipino worker and his government. May I express equal appreciation for the men and women of the Department of Labor and Employment who worked so hard to make this project happen. This is patriotism: not to talk love of country but to work quietly for the safety and well-being of one's people.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Assembly of Evangelical Churches

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the Assembly of Evangelical Churches

[Delivered at the Quezon City Sports Club, March 12, 1987]

OF FAITH AND GOD'S WILL

President Aquino draws an analogy between her husband Ninoy and the biblical Jonah, whose name means "dove," which came to symbolize the peaceful means through which Ninoy sought to liberate his people.

Just as Jonah spent three days in the belly of a whale, Ninoy spent three years in American exile. However, while Jonah was set down gently on shore to successfully convert the people of Nineveh, Ninoy came home to be murdered. It was this death, however, which freed the Filipino people.

The ways of the Lord are strange but the people must trust Him because He never forsakes those who do His will.

I know that all of you in this assembly seek guidance, inspiration and strength from the Scriptures. In the words of Paul: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness."

I too have sought counsel and inspiration from God's Word, specially during the most trying and painful moments of my life. Ninoy and I would read the Bible often in his prison cell, finding comfort and assurance in its verses.

On August 21, 1983, when Ninoy went off on his fatal journey, I prayed and searched for some passages from Scripture that might strengthen and guide him. I came upon the book of Jonah, but I saw no relevant message for Ninoy there. I went on to read Paul's letter to the Colossians, 4, verse 10: "My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark . . . You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him."

It was this passage that I shared with Ninoy when he called me long distance from Taipei. It was the last time we spoke to each other.

We thought that Mark meant Marcos and the passage augured well. As you know, there was no occasion for welcome on Ninoy's return. Murder met him at the door.

But now, in retrospect, I see that the Book of Jonah had something to say about the future.

"Jonah" means "dove", which became the symbol of the revolution and the representation of Ninoy's non-violent approach to the resolution of the Philippine crisis.

Ninoy, like Jonah, felt called upon to warn a wayward ruler and his people that it was time to change their ways if they would avoid total ruin.

Ninoy, like Jonah, did not embark on this mission immediately. Jonah spent three days in the belly of a whale. Ninoy spent three years, more pleasantly, in American exile.

But here the analogy ends. For the whale deposited Jonah safely on shore, while Ninoy walked from the belly of the China Airlines Flight straight into his grave. At this point the analogy resumes.

Jonah's words converted the king and people of Nineveh. But to a nation grown callous with lies and false promises, words were not enough. No less than Ninoy's willing self-sacrifice would convert his people to renewal and revolution. But in both cases, a redeeming change took place.

We had missed the message of the Scriptures. Indeed, as Paul put it: "Now we see through a glass darkly . . ."

We cannot easily or immediately perceive God's grand design or his individual plans for us. For we are assured that "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him."

We do not have to know. It is enough to trust.

The Philippines looks to a brighter future today than Ninoy thought was possible when he stepped out of the plane and into his role in the final liberation of our country. But he took that step nonetheless because he had faith.

And it is by faith that we proceed on the longer journey we have yet to take to bring progress, prosperity and justice to our land. But a journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step. And only faith, given the daunting distance to be travelled, can make us take it. As with your missionaries, so it is with us. In the end, it is by faith that we persevere.

As Paul, who was the first to heed his own advice, assured the Christians suffering persecution in Rome: "God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose."

May that verse strengthen us to persevere in our individual missions. But most of all, may we never falter or fail in our love for the Savior who delivered us from the dominion of darkness at the price of his life.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the National Research Council

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippine To the National Research Council

[Delivered at the Philippine International Convention Center, March 14, 1987]

HARNESSING SCIENCE FOR DEMOCRACY

President Aquino says science and technology should address two concerns: alleviation of mass poverty and securing the future. The Philippines is rich in natural resources, which the scientist must tap to provide food and jobs. The scientist must address the needs of health, agriculture and industry in his work to ensure national progress.

The government in return will support the scientist through an increased budget for education.

It is a pleasure to be among you today, you who represent the best of our country in science and learning. I am told that the NRCP is the oldest and largest collegial body of scientists in our country, counting among its members the best minds in mathematics and the natural sciences, in medicine, agriculture and engineering, and in the social sciences and the humanities. Newspaper write-ups have made much of my concentration in mathematics and French during my college days. While these qualifications may have to be stretched somewhat to qualify me for membership in the divisions of mathematics or humanities, they do add to the pleasure and warmth I feel in being with you today.

In my first address to the scientific community during science week last July, I addressed myself to two concerns:

The first was for science and technology to respond to the urgent call of the present. I asked you to become involved in our first priority of alleviating mass poverty.

The second concern was for the future. While we are gripped by the present's urgent demands, I said then, the government's chief responsibility is to the future.

The events since July confirm the importance of both concerns. The urgency of the present, so painfully underlined for us by the ceasefire negotiations and the breakdown of the truce, is succinctly expressed in the formula of our beloved friend, Pepe Diokno: food and freedom, jobs and justice.

At the same time, the importance of building a strong foundation for future growth is enshrined in our new Constitution, which enjoins us to give priority to science and technology and their adaptation to our country's needs and capabilities.

In our first year of government, we feel most satisfied with accomplishments in the areas of freedom and justice — values now enshrined in an overwhelmingly ratified Constitution and protected by the democratic institutions we have rebuilt. But we know that freedom without food remains fragile, and justice without jobs seems hollow.

You are men and women specially gifted in science and technology, the two powers that can transform the earth, make land and sea more productive, and give us the means to liberate our countrymen from their age-old bondage to poverty and fruitless toil. Many of you have left the security of ivory-tower research here or abroad to search for ways to bring the fruits of development to our people. But I must ask still more of you.

We have land and sea, abundant sun and rain, a hard-working population. Yet the formula that will transform these factors into progress remains locked in the science and technology to which you hold the key. You can unlock the future.

Our country's struggle to produce more food and create more jobs deserve the best efforts from the best minds. Our people have suffered and waited so long. They deserve no less than the best that you and I can give.

At the same time I realize that your capability to contribute to these efforts depends on stronger structural support for science and technology. Much of the capability for science and technology depends on the strength of academic institutions' of higher learning. Thus the government's efforts to increase the budget for education, and provide tax incentives for new science high schools. These are modest starts, but they are what we can afford for the moment. I ask for your generous effort to make them succeed.

The NSTA, too, with its different sectoral councils and the research institutes under its umbrella, needs more support. My Science Secretary tells me that our support for R&D in science and technology is far below the UNESCO recommended 2% of GNP. Again the government needs your help to assure the relevance of such R&D support to the urgent concerns of food and freedom, jobs and justice. You must descend from your ivory towers and talk to the people, talk to the media, talk to the hardnosed planners in natural resources, industry and agriculture, and help us to see the crucial role of research and development in the future progress of our nation.

This brings me to my second concern: building a strong foundation for the future. Public Works Secretary Ting Jayme gave a talk on the financing of innovation and entrepreneurship. In that talk he outlined the role of NSTA in supporting and funding research and development activities. He pointed out the inadequacies of the present NSTA framework. He discussed other more daring ventures such as the Korean Technology Development Corporation. Such exchanges are useful. It is good to meet in this yearly assembly and assess how the NRCP can contribute to better science and technology. It is important to discuss the strengthening of academic institutions and the NSTA. But the future needs a firmer foundation than these things afford, and more daring than they involve.

A stronger Philippine industry may need more vigorous research and development, and a different organizational and financing scheme than we have hitherto employed. Can you help the government respond to this need?

Our efforts to give better health care to our people are greatly hampered by the lack of locally produced and therefore affordable medicines. Can you help the Department of Health build an affordable health care system for our people?

Higher agricultural productivity has not lifted the farmer out of poverty because of the high cost of fertilizers, pesticides, machines. Can your expertise link with the efforts of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform to break the cycle of productivity without improvement in the lives of our people?

The possibility of building a stronger foundation for the future demands a breaking of present patterns and paradigms. Perhaps the NRCP of the future will be divided not into disciplines but into concerns: health, industry, agriculture. Scientists from various disciplines bringing to bear their various expertise on each of these pressing areas of concern. These are but first steps into a more radical restructuring of the future role of scientists in the development of our country. As with the first steps of democracy, there will be mistakes and a great deal of uncertainty and hesitation, but, we are at least assured that in the eminently rational pursuit of science there will be nothing rash like a coup. It is both the burden and mission of our generation to take these bold steps into the future. That future is already pressing hard upon the present, and will soon add its burden to that which we already bear. The future cannot wait and cannot be disappointed. With your support behind our commitment, and God's help, we shall succeed.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Logistics Command Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Logistics Command**

[Delivered at the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Parade Grounds, March 16, 1987]

LOGISTICS: SAVING LIVES

The Logistics Command was organized for the efficient delivery of personnel, supply and services to all branches of the Armed Forces in all parts of the country. The readiness of the Armed Forces is essential in the anti-insurgency operations, and this readiness depends largely on the military's capability to augment forces and equipment in the shortest time possible. Speed saves a soldier's life and, with its capable performance, the Logistics Command has saved many a soldier.

The formation of the Command some 25 years ago today was premised upon the need for a systems approach to supply management. Thus, it was charged with the development of systems and structures for the supply of personnel, material and services to all branches of the Armed Forces, as well as to other government agencies when needed.

Today, I would like to review the mission of the Command within the context of an ongoing counter-insurgency campaign.

To put the complexity of the task of this Command in proper perspective, it would be worthwhile to note that:

First, it is managing a supply system for stock that is intended for all levels of service in any area of the country.

Second, it is tasked with continuing research in requirement, procurement, distribution and maintenance management.

And, lastly, it is mandated to pursue a program of self-reliance to the fullest extent practicable.

The Command has, aside from the main depot we see here a network of 13 military supply points and a number of forward supply points across the 12 regions of the country. The systemwide inventory has been estimated at P20 billion, and the military and civilian personnel that make up the Command number in excess of 2,500.

These details are important, but I leave them confidently in the hands of those who directly hold the Command. My particular interest as Commander-in-Chief lies in the readiness of the Armed Forces in areas of operation and in the systematic capability to augment and complement their forces.

From the standpoint of field operations, the tactical necessities of equipment, transport and communication — in laymen's terms: bullets, wheels and orders — depend entirely on the performance of this Command.

The Command responds, as it should, by integrating requirement, distribution and repair. The idea is to speed up logistics by shortening the pipeline and therefore the cost of sending anything through it. A shorter pipeline not only reduces cost, it reduces the uncertainty of support by cutting down the time our men must wait for their much needed supplies.

The ability to endure privation, a great student of war* wrote over 150 years ago, is one of the soldier's finest qualities: without it any army cannot be filled with genuine military spirit But privation must be temporary: it must

be imposed by circumstances and not by an inefficient system or a niggardly calculation of the smallest ration a soldier needs to stay alive – both factors that sap the soldiers' physical and moral strength to fight.

True, hungry soldiers have, through history, performed astounding feats of arms. But how much greater would their victories have been if they had been well provisioned?

That is why I have argued, almost nagged, for greater air mobility. I know that combat helicopters are not the ultimate solution to the insurgency, nor even the last word in tactical advantage in a counter-insurgency. But I do know that speed saves lives and multiplies firepower. And I will not gamble with the safety of our soldiers.

The counter-insurgency campaign, as most of you are aware, involves a pincer movement of sorts: military operations to roll up one flank, development initiatives to roll up the other. And, in the center, an offer of amnesty to those who see the futility of their struggle and the sincerity of our efforts to bring justice and progress to all our people. While the Command's major purpose is to enable the Armed Forces to be ready for combat, its capabilities can be just as easily harnessed to support development initiatives.

I understand that combat clothing and individual equipment stocks are now consistently finding their way to the field. Transport capability is being upgraded by way of an innovative combination of direct exchange and rolling out repair facilities to the field. The Command's performance as logistic managers for the Bigay Puso project receives my highest commendation, and those of the civilians who worked with you.

Marcos who bragged about his anti-communist program stole, as you know, nearly all the means to fight the Communists. He left our treasury empty. The problems this has created are being met, however, by the creativity of the Command in favoring locally fabricated parts for repair, privatizing service, and in an over-all commitment to greater efficiency.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of JUSMAG, specifically General Teeter's staff, in the on-going appraisal and improvement of our logistics capabilities.

But, lest we forget, it is our budget, those are our troops in the field, and it is our fight!

This Command has given a force multiplier effect to the Republic's military campaigns over the past 25 years. I trust it will continue to do so, and with greater effect. Carry on.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Agri-Aqua Fair

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the Agri-Aqua Fair

[Delivered at the Philippine International Convention Center, March 21, 1987]

AGRICULTURE: THE NATION'S LIFEblood

Agriculture takes priority in the efforts towards national economic recovery. This priority follows the Aquino Administration's main objective of alleviating poverty. Among the administration's achievements in agriculture are the following: the liberalization of the market, the stabilization of the prices of grains, the rationalization of taxes and tariffs, and the provision of agricultural credit.

May I first congratulate the Fair's organizers.

I welcome the holding of this Fair for it emphasizes our determination that agriculture shall be the lead sector in national economic recovery.

The highest priority given to agriculture follows from our first objective in government: the alleviation of mass poverty in the countryside where the vast majority of Filipinos live. Our aim in a short phrase is: To make farming pay for the farmer.

We are counting on the Department of Agriculture to provide the services and prepare the necessary policies to achieve this goal.

Some of the Department's policy recommendations have already been adopted, such as; the liberalization of the market, the stabilization of the prices of grains, the rationalization of taxes and tariffs, and the adequate provision of agricultural credit.

We destroyed the agricultural monopolies that strangled the spirit of initiative and enterprise in the agricultural sector. We have returned the importation of wheat, wheat flour, and soybean meal to private business. We have curtailed corn imports until local corn becomes competitive in the world market. We have decontrolled the fertilizer trade. And, as a result, the competition has grown in that sector. With competition, prices have dropped. Bad for the fertilizer importer and dealer, but good for the farmer.

On grain prices, the Department has developed a stabilization scheme to support farmgate prices in surplus regions and stabilize them in the cities. Part of this scheme is the direct linkage of farmers and consumers. I congratulate both the Big Integrators and Farmers Organizations who are involved in this effort.

The Department's policy proposals to lower the prices of farm inputs and increase the prices of farm products are being reviewed. As recommended, we have abolished export taxes, lifted the copra export ban, reduced sales taxes on fertilizers and pesticides, and eliminated the ten peso surcharge on fertilizer which was being collected to save one fertilizer company. We also liberalized the importation of fertilizer grades.

As for agricultural credit, we are about to complete a rehabilitation package for a select number of rural banks. Other proposals of the Department are the consolidation of loan funds for specific commodities under the Comprehensive Agricultural Loan Fund or CALF, which I hope does not grow into a milking cow.

These are only some of the policy proposals of the Department that government has adopted. Let me say that the Department of Agriculture enjoys my greatest confidence in the integrity and competence of its leadership, in the wisdom of its policies.

I have a pragmatic turn of mind. I have little patience or respect for endless theories. I shall involve myself deeply in agriculture because here the payoff can be immediate. We can see our investment in the sector reflected quickly in improved living standards for our people.

Agriculture is our first priority and our last fallback. Whatever happens, a successful agriculture means that our people will never go hungry, will always be well-fed and therefore able to keep working for a better tomorrow. Agriculture is our nation's lifeblood, whose vigor it is your special duty and privilege to protect. Keep up the good work. You are Cory's special battalion in the fight for national recovery.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Philippine Military Academy's Class of '86

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Philippine Military Academy's Class of '86**

[Delivered at the Philippine Military Academy, Baguio City, March 22, 1987]

WAGING A DEMOCRATIC WAR

President Aquino called the Philippine Military Academy's Class of '86 as the proudest in history because, during the February Revolution, they were one with the nation in fighting for freedom. They passed the most difficult test of a soldier: the test of loyalty.

The Class of '87 also has something to remember. During preparations for their graduation, the PMA was bombed, showing to them, even before they go to the field, the extent to which the enemies of the state will go to topple the government.

As she came to power peacefully, President Aquino vows to keep it, although her peace offerings have repeatedly been rejected by the Left and the Right. Still, she vows to lead a democratic war, a war fought with honor and humanity rather than violence.

She appeals to the rebels to lay down their arms and join the government's work of reconstruction. To the soldiers, she asks for patience and courage.

One year ago, I stood here and called the graduating Class of '86 the proudest in PMA history. That class had gone through a graduating exercise of far greater importance than any held in this field. For the Class of '86 had passed the most difficult test of a soldier: the test of his loyalty, the discovery of his highest duty. In the final days of the Revolution, the Class of '86, torn between literal duty and patriotism, had defected to the people and become the first graduating class of the people's army.

In that class, a young man stood and heard my call to protect the government and the state from any threat, be it internal or external. He heard me explain the difficulty of waging war for a democracy, of fighting for its honor and integrity without violating its principles. Lt. Edgardo Dizon answered that difficult call with the unquestioning valor and directness of a soldier. He answered it with his life.

I went to the place where he was killed. I talked to his comrades-in-arms. I learned from them what a true officer he was. His troops had been pinned down by enemy fire. Against the warnings of his troops, he refused to take adequate cover so he could keep a commanding view of his soldiers. He was killed in a hail of enemy bullets. His act defined the first duty of an officer; the duty to care for the safety of his troops.

You, who will leave here to command troops of your own, take his stern example to heart. We, the Filipino people, for whose freedom and honor he gave his life, take his sacrifice equally to heart and mourn the loss of a brave Filipino.

I had hoped that peace would be the life of our new democracy, as it had been the moving spirit of its restoration.

As I came to power peacefully; so had I hoped to keep it. God knows, I have tried.

But my offers of peace and reconciliation have been met with the most bloody and insolent rejections by the left and the right. It is clear that the forces of the extremes will not leave us in peace — to achieve the recovery and progress we so badly need.

The latest rejection was made in this field last week. It came in the form of a terrorist bomb inflicting death and terrible suffering on innocent people in the midst of a most peaceful pursuit — while preparing for an occasion meant for joy and celebration. You, the graduating Class of '87, now have your own distinction. During the preparations for your graduation, the PMA was struck by the greatest tragedy in its history. March 18, 1987 will live in our memory as the most treacherous act committed against it by the enemies of democracy.

It was a dastardly act of cowardice.

We will find the perpetrators.

And some of you of the Class of '87 will have the privilege of bringing them to justice. And you are the men for it. I have heard how well you responded to the crisis, rushing quickly to aid the wounded. It is fitting also at this point to acknowledge and commend the care and concern that civilians showed in this tragic incident. Doctors and nurses, from Baguio General Hospital, St. Louis Hospital and from as far as Manila, responded with equal concern and timely assistance. Soldier and civilian worked together in the face of a common tragedy.

You have learned the most important lesson of your entire training. Here, even before your graduation, you had your first encounter with the enemy. Now you know his methods and the evil he can do. You have seen the fate he intends for us, for your President and your people, if he prevails.

Such evil passes understanding. I ask those who are responsible for this heinous deed:

Why is it necessary to go to such extremes? Why is it necessary to kill the innocent? Is nothing sacred anymore — not the lives of the innocent nor the sanctity of a school? The enemies of democracy, it is obvious, will not play by any rules. And yet we, who stand for the truth, can only fight with honor and humanity. That is the difficult challenge of fighting a democratic war. But I know that we are equal to it.

The irony of this tragic incident is that it took place here in the very shield of the Republic, meant to protect its government and people. I have gone to many parts of our country, and walked freely among our people, protected by little more than their affection. And yet it is here, in a military camp, that the greatest threat to my life has been made and the greatest casualties inflicted. Take this lesson also to heart. It is the lesson of EDSA. We are safe only in the affection and loyalty of our people.

This field, where tradition graduates the frontline defenders of Philippine democracy, was intended by its enemies to be the graveyard of democracy.

Let us pledge today to make it the graveyard of their dark ambitions instead. Let us pledge to defeat the ambitions of the left and the right to enslave this nation again and bring down our new found pride.

To the enemy, let me say, give up your futile struggle if you have a drop of humanity and patriotism left in your veins. Democracy is here to stay. It is our people you are killing. We shall spare no effort to protect them.

Do not think you can use the rights and liberties, the promises of the Constitution, to destroy the lives and freedom of our people. No provision in the Constitution, let me say this now, will be allowed to prejudice their safety. For the first law of the Constitution is the protection of the people.

To our enemies, let me say that nothing will intimidate this President. Death holds no fear for us, neither for the Commander-in-Chief nor for the soldier in the line. One nation, one Armed Forces, acting with the energy and

direction of a single hand will smite the foe, on the left and the right, and permanently end all threats to freedom before my term as President is over. This is my solemn oath.

Last year, I said, with the hope of peace in my heart, Welcome home, my soldiers.

Today I must say, with sadness in my heart: Patience and courage, noble soldiers of the Republic.

The harvest has not yet come. Our enemies have delayed the peace and progress for which we have worked so hard.

The battle has only begun. But the victory will certainly be ours. 90 years of AFP history is our guarantee of this. Congratulations to the AFP: Carry on.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Address of President Corazon Aquino at the Philippine Military Academy Testimonial

**Address
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Philippine Military Academy Testimonial**

[Delivered in Baguio City, March 22, 1987]

TAKING UP THE SWORD

President Aquino addresses the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) after it was bombed, after soldiers were ambushed by insurgents in Quezon, and after another policeman was shot dead. She vows immediate police and military actions against these acts of terrorism, measures which, however, must be exercised with care to ensure minimum damage to civilians. She is confident that the Armed Forces can do this even without help from outside.

Enough words have been said. It is time for results. So let me be brief. In the space of 3 days I read about the terrorist bomb attack on the PMA, with 4 dead so far and 40 plus wounded. Terrible wounds were inflicted, not the least on the physical integrity of a military camp, the Armed Forces premier school at that, and on the Armed Forces' reputation as an effective shield and protection for the Republic. As if to underscore this, I read in the papers that 19 of our men were killed in an ambush in Quezon. Always the same province.

And, just in case we have missed the point, another policeman is shot in the head. What is the death count now? 10?

These are terrorist acts. The insurgency of the Communists and the treachery of the Right, loyalists and others, may have deep rooted causes that may take a long time to remove. Economic development will probably cure both sicknesses. Government efficiency in the delivery of basic services, particularly speedy justice, should speed the cure. But the answer to the terrorism of the Left and the Right need not wait on total solutions. To a terrorist act the immediate answer is not social and economic reforms but police and military action. I told you when we were discussing the peace initiatives that when they fail, as we feared they would, and when it becomes necessary to take up the sword of war, that I want a string of honorable military victories to follow my proclamation of war. Victories of which we can all be proud. Clean victories, aimed straight at the core of the enemy, be it Left or Right, with a minimum of collateral damage to the civilians we are supposed to protect and avenge.

I want these victories. I want justice for the PMA, justice for GMA, an end to these ambushes, and victories in the field as proof positive to our people that you and I, Commander-in-Chief and Armed Forces, can protect them.

I have asked our military ally for the hardware to achieve these objectives. They have given us advice instead. So let us not hold our breaths. Help will come when it will come. In the meantime I know that we can more than hold our own. I am convinced, and you have told me that I am right in this conviction, that we can beat these threats to national security with what we have. And also with what we are: the army of the people, in whom they have, rightly, the greatest trust and confidence.

Gentlemen, let us enjoy the rest of this occasion. But tomorrow it is down to business. Carry on.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the University of the Philippines Law Alumni

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the University of the Philippines Law Alumni

[Delivered at the Manila Hotel, March 26, 1987]

THE LAW IS SUPREME

Despite the dictatorship's attempts to subvert democracy, the Filipinos' love for freedom and respect for law remain alive and undiminished. The Filipinos have restored the rule of law. President Aquino calls on the lawyers and the country as a whole to make it work.

This accomplished association is accustomed to hearing words of wisdom from Presidents who are also lawyers. And who occasionally happen to be alumni of the U.P. College of Law.

I would not be breaking that tradition today if events had not interrupted the study of law that I had embarked on after college. I was attracted to the law for its discipline rather than as a profession. But not far into the course at Far Eastern University, I stumbled. I fell in love with another law student, a sharp one but haphazard at his studies. Ninoy wanted to be a lawyer, but wanted also to make his mark in history as quickly as he could. He went to Korea to cover that war as the youngest Filipino correspondent. Not satisfied with that, he served as emissary for the Government in the settlement of the Huk rebellion. In the first semester of his last year at law, we married: I to him and he to me, but I knew even then, that he had also married his destiny to serve his nation.

In Fort Bonifacio, while this country's legal institutions were disintegrating and crashing down outside the prison's walls, Ninoy resumed his law studies. This time, he went at it with life-and-death urgency. For what was at stake was both his life and that of the democracy he loved. When the military commission poised to deliver its death sentence on him, Ninoy was well-prepared and well assisted by his counsel, most of whom were U.P. Law alumni.

As fate would have it, the law degree that had eluded both of us, fell into my lap happily last year. I thank the U.P. and its College of Law for the honorary degree conferred this former student of law who, without regret, chose love above its long discipline some 33 years ago. I like to think that the honor was implicitly bestowed on Ninoy, who, but for his restlessness and energy, might have belonged to your roster of alumni. And so I now face you as President and as honorary colleague.

I cannot claim to be steeped in the discipline of law which has taken you years to master. But I think our recent experience has taught us that mastery of law does not necessarily result in respect for its aim of justice. The last President knew the law well – or thought he did. For he came to the contradictory conclusion that the law, whose aim is a responsible freedom, did not give him the freedom he felt he needed to achieve his aims. And so, with Martial Law, he set himself above the law and made his private judgments the laws that would govern this nation. The law is the first defense of our freedom and security. He made it an instrument of oppression, on the one hand, and of selective favor on the other; violating the spirit of equality that animates it.

He called this state of affairs, on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the U.P. College of Law, “a revolution by law.” It was certainly that, for he had turned the law around on its head.

Martial Law, he said, “utilized the law to bring about what people demand, which is radical change.” The change was certainly radical: in the structure of government, in the ways of the economy, in the purposes of public service, and in the values of our society.

For a government of laws, he substituted that of one man and his friends. For a government of divided powers in which liberty would be secure, he provided the unified state in which thievery was facilitated. For a nation, proud by nature and heritage, he substituted one brought to shame by a government that was scorned by the world and impoverished by plunder.

I recall his words, not as an exercise in masochism, but to review how and why our country came to its present state. How indeed could a nation, welded supposedly by the blood of its republican heroes, by religion, by a common heritage, and by a system of laws upheld by one democratic regime after another, fall so easily into the hands of a few ruthless men?

Were the apologists of dictatorship right after all? The ease with which dictatorship was consolidated would seem to bear them out. Democracy would seem to have been imposed on our culture rather than spun painstakingly by a self-willed and self-determining people. Those arguments were heard even last year, after the Revolution. It was too soon for democracy, some people said; absolute power should be shared by the liberators and held until the people were ready.

I did not believe that. Even while I held all the powers of government in my hand, I began to parcel them out and provide for their independent exercise. I believed that I was called to the Presidency to reestablish democracy and secure our freedoms by the separation of the powers that had come into my hands.

To that end, I bent all my efforts, convinced that that was what our people wanted first and foremost: a true democracy. The results of the plebiscite proved me right, and proved wrong all the apologists of dictatorship. Our people are instinct with the love of freedom and will not have themselves governed any other way than by a democracy of laws. Laws that express the Popular Will and are reflective of the higher law of God.

Do such things as a Popular Will and the higher law of God exist? While some may have doubted, others, including myself, hold them as truths eternal. One swept aside an entrenched dictatorship and put its elected choice in power. One will reestablish and ratify those democratic principles – that respect for the rule of law – which the dictatorship had erased from our books, but which God had kept alive in our hearts.

Our people, with God's help, have restored the rule of law. It is now our solemn duty to make it work.

Justice, it is said, is the first virtue of political institution. It is clearly the first demand of our people:

Justice for the poor who were born and are imprisoned in desperate poverty.

Justice for the man of enterprise and hard work whom God has promised a just share of the fruits of his labors.

Justice for a country that deserves a measure of prosperity commensurate with the nobility and courage of its people.

But it must always be justice through law. The law, as made by the people themselves through their elected representatives. The law, always informed by the values of compassion and justice that mark our race and our faiths.

It is the privilege of the profession assembled here today that its first and highest duty is to uphold the supremacy of the law that marks our society today. In the sincere and dedicated pursuit of the law, lies the answer to many of our people's demands.

The sum of your duty and perhaps the mission of all government as well is found in the words of Isaiah:

“Seek
encourage the oppressed.

justice,

Defend the cause of the fatherless,
plead the case of the widow.”

Give the Filipino what is his due: freedom, justice, a helping hand to break the shackles of age-old poverty and under-development, a voice in his destiny and the rest will follow. The Filipino does not ask for much. The Filipino showed himself willing to offer everything, including his life, to give us, you and me, this chance to serve our nation. Each of us, in his own way and appointed role, will prove him right in his trust and confidence.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on education

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On education

[Delivered at the Philippine Normal College, March 31, 1987]

EDUCATION: SHAPING A NATION'S CHARACTER

Elementary education should go back to the basics: reading, writing and mathematics. A leaner but harder curriculum, which has fewer subjects that are taught well, should be provided. The inequality in education, inequality in access to books, classrooms and subsidies, should be corrected.

All these, however, would come to naught without the total commitment of the teachers, who, on the other hand, have to be better supported by the government.

When I ran for the Presidency, I pledged to give education the first priority it deserves in a free nation. For it is by learning that we become free: Free from the poverty and oppression imposed by ignorance, free to be all we can be as a gifted and daring people.

The dictatorship ignored education, except to pervert its content: to make our youth believe that tyranny is the Filipino way of politics and thievery the way to success. But, our youth were not duped. Although they had no experience or memory of freedom, they joined the fight for its return.

If the dictatorship's efforts to distort our values had no effect, not so the general neglect of our education. Scholars abroad reported that, unlike other educational systems, ours does not contribute to Philippine development. Our educators, I understand, could not deny it.

This is not the first time I address the education sector. But it is the first time that I shall try to tackle, in a more comprehensive way, some of its issues. Today, in particular, I want to address the problems of basic education. This is appropriate, I think, in the circumstances. For I address today the 1987 graduates of the Philippine Normal College, the unchallenged leader in teacher training for our elementary and secondary schools.

Your concentration on these levels is what makes your work so important. When a child is brought to you for education, it is at its most malleable stage. When the child leaves your care, it is permanently fixed in the ways you have taught it. All it can do thereafter is build on the skills it has learned. Your work is foundational and therefore critical to the future of the child – and that of our nation.

I want that foundation solidly built, well grounded in the basics of education: reading, writing and mathematics -in the two languages of our country, English and Pilipino. These are the basic skills that liberate the tremendous potential of the average Filipino child – to contribute as an adult to the liberation of the country from underdevelopment; and to his own liberation from poverty.

That is why I believe in a leaner but harder curriculum. This is the strength of the Japanese. They are taught few subjects but well. All the rest are learned through experience. Civic virtue and nationalism, for example, are not taught as subjects. They grow spontaneously out of the genuine achievements of the Japanese nation.

Back to basics will be the thrust of Philippine educational policy. But in the meantime there are problems that we must address immediately. These are essentially problems of inequality.

Some children have schoolbooks; many do not.

Only 66 out of every 100 who enter Grade One finish Grade Six. And of 55 who enter high school, only 42 finish. The statistics of our cultural and poorer communities are shamefully lower. Some classes have over a hundred pupils. In many schools, pupils still sit on the floor or bring their own stools. Students in some state colleges receive twenty thousand peso subsidies, others only a thousand. Students in private schools receive no government assistance whatsoever, and yet the public school system cannot begin to meet the educational requirements of our people.

These inequalities in our school system are clearly inconsistent with our obligation to make ours a society of equal opportunities and conducive to the full development of man.

Our system of elementary education is the only experience the State has designed which reaches every Filipino home. It is therefore the first and most important link of the Filipino child to that community which has primacy over all others – the nation.

The present effort to improve elementary education in the World Bank-supported “Program for Decentralized Educational Development” or PRODED must therefore be continued. Its objective to improve neglected schools, and therefore equalize conditions, must be supported. We have extended the life span of this Program by two years. And until its objective is met, we shall continue to support it beyond that period.

We must also extend its benefits to secondary education.

To cope with the modern world, we need more than six years of elementary education. A solid high school education is equally important. The Constitution recognizes this need and has made it mandatory on the new Congress to provide it — and for free. We have asked our countrymen, in the spirit of the Revolution, to give more of themselves. It stands to reason that we must enable them to improve their capacity to do so.

But all our objectives and programs will come to nothing without the total commitment of our teachers. They are the key element.

The present sorry state of education is the responsibility of the teachers. But the sad state of the teaching profession is the responsibility of the government. And yet we expect our teachers to be first in recognizing the tremendous liabilities that came with this government.

Nonetheless, we have made valiant efforts to improve their condition. Last year, we implemented a 20% wage increase, exclusive of P2,000 in health allowance and a one-month, year-end bonus. This year we have ordered a second 20% increase, which, compounded, makes a 44% increase in little over a year.

We have increased the budget for education from P8.7 billion last year to P12.3 billion this year, to reflect the priority I give to education as mandated by the Constitution. But, as you know, 97% of this budget goes to salaries. The other necessities for a relevant and effective school system, such as books, laboratories, school buildings and other instructional aids, remain unprovided for. Next year, these I needs must be addressed. How we shall do so simultaneously with meeting the need for better teacher compensation is the challenge that our team for the Senate has set itself.

The Senate team has prepared proposals to continue increasing teachers’ compensation together with non-cash benefits, that could equally well meet teachers’ needs, such as health care and free college education for their children.

In the meantime, we are studying the role of the GSIS in the improvement of education. There was a time when 55% of GSIS contributions came from teachers. Today, that percentage has dropped to 35%. Still, teachers compose the largest single block of employees paying GSIS premiums. I therefore expect to see the interests of the education

sector reflected in the management and investment programs of the GSIS, and of the government at large. For instance, I expect policies that affect education, such as those touching on the importation of paper, book publishing and sales, school supplies manufacturing, investments in schools, to reflect both the high priority we place on education and the problems we have committed ourselves to solve: a better life for the teachers, a better education for all.

What we have talked about here will probably not excite the public interest. But you and I know that what passed between us here today will decide the future of our nation and individual happiness and fulfillment of our people.

Congratulations to the graduates. I hope I have impressed upon you the great importance of your mission and the need for patience and sacrifice.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January 16 – March 31, 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

N

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the Rotary International Conference

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the Rotary International Conference**

[Delivered at the Philippine International Convention Center, April 23, 1987]

ALL SET FOR RECOVERY AND GROWTH

The President calls on the Rotary to participate in the economic recovery of the country, particularly the alleviation of poverty, the generation of productive employment, the promotion of equity and social justice, and the attainment of sustainable growth. With its vast reach and community service orientation, the Rotary is in an ideal position to keep the Government accountable to the people.

I am pleased to extend, on behalf of the Government, our sincerest appreciation to Rotary International for holding this three-day conference for development in the Philippines.

One of the pleasures that we in this Government enjoy is the enthusiastic – not to say overwhelming – response we have been getting to our call for deeper and wider involvement in the development process. Still, I find it specially gratifying that Rotary has likewise answered that call.

We have successfully hurdled many of the difficulties that beset us when we took power; yet our successes merely point up the great deal more that remains to be done.

When we set out last year, there was no question in our minds that our first task was the full restoration of democracy and an earnest start of our economic recovery. Today, just over a year later, we can collectively look back with pride at what we have accomplished. Because we are a democracy, the enemies of democracy can still criticize but there is no question they have been roundly beaten. All but one of the necessary institutions of democracy have been reestablished. In June, Congress will convene, thereby completing the circle of our country's great political accomplishments. The political stage has been set for the recovery that is already beginning.

We have managed not only to keep the economy afloat but have accomplished what few had realistically thought possible: an economic turnaround. The stage has been set for sustainable growth, if only the debt problem will not send it crashing to its foundations. We need little more than look around us to see the signs of an economy that is finally beginning to take off.

Still, as I have said, our accomplishments merely underscore the great task that remains undone: giving a decent life to all Filipinos.

When we drew up our economic agenda for the next six years, we all agreed that it would focus on the following: first, the alleviation of poverty; second, the generation of productive employment; third, the promotion of equity and social justice; and, finally, the attainment of sustainable growth.

The economic crisis of 1983 hit the poor the hardest. In 1985, real per capita income was set back a full decade to 1975 levels. Real per capita consumption naturally fell. The incidence of malnutrition rose significantly, as did mortality and morbidity. In 1985, 60 percent of all Filipino families were officially considered as struggling below the poverty line.

This is not the kind of statistic that any country would like to lay claim to. But even more appalling is the fact that poverty was greatest in the rural areas, traditionally the refuge from urban blight. In the countryside, where the vast majority of our people live, 64 percent of all families live below the poverty line. For that reason, we have embarked on a rural-based development strategy. In the last analysis, our administration will not be judged by our people in terms of GNP increases or some such indicator, but by how far we have improved their living conditions.

This is why I am particularly gratified to note that this conference has been given a decidedly community service orientation. Let me assure you that there will be no lack of opportunities for such service.

While it is not my intention to preempt your discussions these next three days, there are quite a few areas of cooperation that come readily to mind.

We have, for instance, a project to provide financing to small enterprises, which are basically family business concerns. The idea is to extend to these enterprises financing on liberal terms through volunteer organizations that will monitor the loans.

With your extensive network, you are in an ideal position to keep this Government accountable to the people. I ask you to monitor public works projects throughout the country. Some Rotary clubs are doing this already with our Community Employment Development Program. As a result of this private sector monitoring, we have had a very high rate of timely completion of our projects.

Aside from monitoring, I ask you to help us identify projects relevant to the needs of your communities. No one can know those needs, nor how to meet them, better than yourselves. You can also serve as two-way information channels, helping Government understand the problems, needs and views of your communities, and helping bring Government's programs to the people.

It is my hope that this gathering will forge a lasting and productive partnership between Rotary and the Government. As I said earlier, there is so much that remains to be done. Our partnership should get it done better and faster.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the Armed Forces of the Philippines’ National Reservists Association Conference

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the Armed Forces of the Philippines’ National Reservists Association Conference**

[Delivered at Camp Aguinaldo, April 24, 1987]

**FOR
OF CIVILIAN FORCES**

A

CONSTRUCTIVE

USE

Toward the Constitution’s goal of truly people-based defense, President Aquino defines the challenge before the Government: to get the people involved in defending their values and communities, but to make certain that there are adequate safeguards to prevent abuses.

Our Constitution provides that the “Armed Forces of the Philippines shall be composed of a citizen armed force which shall undergo military training and serve, as may be provided by law. It shall keep a regular force necessary for the security of the State.”

In recognition of the long process that will be required, the makers of the Constitution stated the ideal and provided for the Congress to implement it. For the matter will require deep study and much discussion. I am pleased, however, that the AFP National Reservists Association has called this conference to study the means by which we can come closer to the Constitution’s goal of truly people-based defense.

I have already referred for study to the appropriate Departments other Constitutional provisions regarding our nation’s defense forces. I refer in particular to the provision for a National Police Force, in lieu of all other police and paramilitary forces. I am awaiting the study being prepared by the Defense and Local Government Departments. I realize that our people must be assured of their security. The challenge is to mobilize people and involve them in the defense of their values and communities, but with all the safeguards that will prevent the abuse of this great power.

Another area of reform involves closer cooperation between the civilian population and our military forces. Both sectors are most effective when they are mutually supportive. I saw this when I visited the Lopez-Catanauan Road in Quezon. The area is heavily infested with Communist rebels. The lack of infrastructure, particularly a farm-to-market road, has kept the area extremely underdeveloped. The road construction project being undertaken there by our military engineers will probably do more to solve the insurgency in the area than any number of battalions we pour in. I felt the great trust that now existed between the farmers and the Government, and realized how little our people ask of the Government. I was also pleased at the great efficiency of the work being conducted. Although 12 percent of the road project has been completed, only 10 percent of the budgeted amount has been spent. This is how I would like to see the great potential of disciplined forces used: constructively rather than destructively, and with the natural efficiency and honesty of our common people.

I see the same great potential for constructive service to the people in the million or more AFP reservists that this association represents. I have studied your proposals for the effective utilization of this force and have referred them

to the Secretary of Defense for further study. The results of your conference, I can assure you, will be given equally serious consideration.

Even before this conference announced its theme, the essence of effective national defense as the mobilization of the power of the people was acknowledged by me. I have said again and again, I have never been safer than in the affections of our people. The gravest threat to my life and the stability of our democracy was made in a military camp. The greatest sense of security I ever enjoyed was in the midst of our people, even in the darkest days of the dictatorship.

People power is the force that is most feared by the enemies of freedom, of the Left and the Right. And well they should, for it is always in the people's name that they commit their abuses. Today marks the start of another effort on our part to give institutional and abiding expression to another facet of people power: its potential for national defense and reconstruction. I commend the initiative of the association in this respect and wish you all every success.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 34th Convention of the Rural Bankers Association

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the 34th Convention of the Rural Bankers Association**

[Delivered at the Manila Midtown Ramada Hotel, April 24, 1987]

THE ROLE OF RURAL BANKS

The government aims to create an environment where the private sector, including the rural banks, can effectively and efficiently supply on a sustained basis the credit requirements of the economy. The partnership between the Government and the rural banks, in particular, is a joint effort directed towards the singular goal of increasing the income of farmers.

I am very pleased to be your guest today for two principal reasons:

First, because it is rare that we have opportunities to interact with you in the face of our country's grave problems, and the need to find lasting solutions to them.

Second, I am happy that your convention is focusing on the partnership between Government and the rural banks, a partnership aimed towards national recovery. In fact, it is the nature of our partnership that I would like to address today. It is high time that we determine the terms of that partnership and base it on the lessons we have learned in agricultural credit and rural development over the past 15 years.

What are these lessons, which we have learned the hard, expensive way?

First: we have learned that subsidized credit is *not* the most critical factor in increasing the income of our farmers, which is our primary goal. Out of the total production costs of our farmers, the cost of credit is only 6 percent. The more important cost factors are those for labor, fertilizer, pesticides and seeds. Thus, Government assistance to farmers should be focused on lowering the costs of these inputs rather than on credit. As you know, we have done this already. We dismantled the monopoly on fertilizer supply and we removed the 10-peso surcharge on fertilizer which was being used to pay off the obligations of that monopoly. We intend to do more. We are also working on a policy to give incentives and protection to seed producers.

The second lesson we have learned is that the private sector has always been the principal supplier of credit to our agriculture. At the height of the Masagana 99 and all other supervised credit programs in 1979, Government's share of the total supply of bank credit was still only 24 percent. In 1985, that share dropped to 5 percent.

You may as well know it: Government cannot begin to meet the credit requirements of our agriculture. The agricultural sector's total estimated credit requirement for 1987 is estimated conservatively at P60 billion. The Government has less than P5 billion in agricultural credit funds at its command. Clearly, the proper role of Government in the credit system is not the provision of credit itself, but in the creation of an environment where the private sector, including the rural banks, can effectively and efficiently supply, on a sustained basis, the credit requirements of our economy.

The third lesson we have learned is that the relationship that has existed between Government and the rural banking system has resulted in the overdependence of that system on Government support and subsidies. This overdependence is painfully evident in the current state of the rural banking system. Most rural banks would not be in financial trouble these days if the system had not been so dependent on government-sourced deposits, rediscounts and subsidies. When this support dried up after the crisis of 1983, the system folded up quickly. From a high of 1,167 rural banks in 1981, we are now down to about 850.

These lessons were painfully and expensively learned. We will make the most of them. Thus, even as the Central Bank prepares to implement a rehabilitation program to set the rural banking system back on its feet, that program will be selective. Some rural banks do not need any help, and will get none. Others are beyond help, and will be treated accordingly. At the end of the road we shall have a leaner but stronger and more self-reliant system of rural banks.

Hand in hand with rural bank rehabilitation must go the reform of our agricultural credit system. Government can no longer afford to borrow high and lend low to the agricultural sector. The previous government did this for the past 20 years, with such programs as Masagana 99. Government lent money to the rural banks at one and three percent which it had borrowed abroad at 13 and a half percent. Government lending these days will be close to market rates and, at best, to a qualified few. You will have to mobilize deposits from the private sector. Market-oriented deposit rates will help you attract more deposits.

Given the lessons we have learned, and the imperatives of development we face, what should be the terms by which Government and you, the rural bankers, can be partners in economic development? To answer this question, we must first establish what our partnership is all about.

I believe that our partnership is a joint effort, made by Government with the private sector, to increase the income of all our farmers. Naturally, our main effort is focused on the low-income farmer. All our combined energies and attention should be directed at this singular goal: increase his income.

In thus focusing our efforts, let us not confuse help for the rural banks with help for our farmers. Our experience shows that helping rural banks does not necessarily translate into help for our farmers.

We must therefore ensure that whatever special subsidies and benefits will continue to be given to the rural banks are indeed passed on to the agricultural borrowers, particularly the small-holders.

Today, I should like to state the commitments of the Government in that partnership of which I have spoken.

First, I confirm Government's commitment to make farming more profitable, to increase the income of farmers. When farmers are able to buy at lower costs the critical inputs of fertilizers, pesticides and seeds, then their incomes will rise. Also, when farmers can sell their produce at higher prices, then their incomes will rise further. With higher incomes, farmers can pay back their loans.

Second, I commit Government to a more rational policy with regard to the rural banking system. Essentially that policy will call for a less paternalistic supervision of its activities, thereby giving rural banks more flexibility to respond to emerging profitable opportunities and adjust to changing market conditions.

Since this is a partnership, we expect corresponding commitments from the rural banks.

We expect the rural banks to act more like banks, that is, institutions which transform savings into loans. In the past, rural banks served more as one-way channels of funds from Government to the public. As a result, they fell under increasingly close and tighter government regulations.

We have found, of course, that government cannot run your banks for you. You know your communities, you know your borrowers. In short, only you can be the bankers. Government can set the overall framework, but you alone can make your part of it work.

This is a facet of the general economic policy I pledged to implement: to get Government off the backs of private business and its hands out of your pockets. Business, however, will find the same policy imposed on it. We intend to get business out of Government and its hands out of the national coffers and national affairs, until the State is confined to its proper role of providing for the protection of basic rights, the security of the people, and the basic well-being of its least advantaged members. There will be no favors for anyone. The power and prestige of the State will not be used for any but the most exalted purposes of democratic political community and national honor.

The rural banks play a very important role in the countryside. This is reflected in the great influence they wield in their areas. As a closing note, I ask you to use that influence for the greater good of our country, particularly in the coming elections. Join me in urging our countrymen to vote responsibly. Every sector has its own special interest to promote and protect, but come election day we should all be, first, Filipinos.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Inauguration of BFD Offices and Laboratories

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Inauguration of BFD Offices and Laboratories**

[Released on April 30, 1987]

**DEFINING
OF A NATIONAL DRUG POLICY**

THE

ELEMENTS

The Government will cooperate with all sectors to ensure the availability of necessary drugs and medicine. In doing this, the public interest will be its first concern. Public interest dictates the reduction of drug prices. Hand in hand with this is the assurance that drugs are safe, effective, and are made available to the great majority of the people.

We inaugurate today the offices and laboratories of the Bureau of Food and Drugs, an agency whose mission and functions are enshrined in our Constitution. Section 12 of the article on social justice and human rights enjoins the State to establish and maintain an effective food and drug regulatory system. What we inaugurate here today is a concrete step towards realizing the Constitutional mandate to see to the health and welfare of our people through food and drug regulation.

First, let me address the health professionals involved in food and drug regulation, particularly the men and women of the Bureau. Your task is no ordinary task. Your work is our people's assurance that what they take for sustenance or cure will not harm them instead. Knowing how poor the vast majority of our people are, your work maximizes the value of their hard-earned wages in terms of health protection.

But even as your work is intended to maximize benefits, its failure can maximize hurt even to succeeding generations. The world has not forgotten the example of thalidomide as a tragedy of regulatory failure. Your work touches all of us, you and me, and our families personally.

Second, may I address our foreign friends. In behalf of the Government and people of the Philippines, I would like to thank the government and people of Japan whose generosity made this building and its facilities possible. In particular, I would like to thank the World Health Organization for extending sustained technical support for many of our past and present food and drug regulation initiatives. Secretary Bengzon tells me that WHO has been invaluable in helping us formulate a national drug policy. I would also like to thank the many other governments and individuals who continue to extend various forms of assistance in this area. The gratitude of our people cannot be measured.

Having addressed myself to special publics, I would like now to address myself to the public at large, whose health and medical needs, particularly drugs, have been largely unmet. In all my consultations in the various regions, a recurring issue is that of the quality, availability and affordability of drugs and medicines. From Department of Health reports, it appears that health is one of those things that the poor must also do without.

The lack of affordable, safe, effective and good quality drugs and medicines is a central concern of this Government because these things are a vital component of health services, and because they are the major, if not dominant factor in the overall cost of health care.

As a nation, we are not properly utilizing our already deficient resources for drugs and medicine. There is clearly a need for better coordination of Government efforts in this area. To that end, Secretary Bengzon has been hard at work formulating a national drug policy. I understand many meetings, consultations and discussions have gone into this effort. I would now like to outline the major elements of our national drug policy.

The national drug policy will, first of all, be built on the bedrock of competent, fair, honest, effective and thorough regulation. We are committing this Government to strengthen the Bureau of Food and Drugs – legally, organizationally, technically and financially. The reorganization of the Department of Health will include a substantial expansion of the Bureau’s capabilities. The food, drugs and cosmetics law, as well as the pharmacy law, will be amended to strengthen the legal basis of food and drug regulation. We are undertaking a manpower training and development effort in order to provide adequate support to our inspection and registration activities. In short, a Bureau worthy of its offices and facilities, and of the commitments hereby made by Government.

I expect the Bureau to spearhead the removal from the market of fake, banned, harmful and ineffective drugs. I expect that its stamp of approval will be widely accepted as an indubitable mark of safety and quality. This can only happen if its policies are sound, its technology solid, its personnel adequate, and its procedures appropriate.

As a second element of the national drug policy, the Government will be a more aggressive participant in the procurement, production and distribution of drugs and pharmaceuticals. As the biggest buyer and user of pharmaceutical products, Government will systematize its procurement in order to maximize its limited budgets for health. Such measures as bulk purchasing and contract manufacturing will be utilized to bring our people the best drugs at the lowest prices. We shall start up and operate our four herbal processing plants and expand our vaccine and biologicals production. We shall pursue the Botica sa Barangay project and link this with our national network of drug distribution for rural health units and hospitals. We shall take advantage of our dominant role in drugs and medicine to benefit our people. As we do this, I expect the Bureau to apply the same stringent standards and regulations on government as well as on private entities.

A third element of national drug policy shall consist of a package of initiatives designed to provide the right information to physicians and patients. Adequate and accurate information is a key requirement for the rational use of drugs. Some measures to control the proliferation and reduce the number of brands in the market are needed to focus scarce resources on the most essential drugs. Another initiative involves the adoption of generic labelling as a tool for educating doctors and patients on the characteristics and use of various therapeutic preparations. Our policy shall seek to encourage full information and discourage misleading or inaccurate claims.

The final element of our national drug policy is the coordination of investment and trade policies in order to achieve self-sufficiency in pharmaceuticals, while assuring good quality and affordable prices. I myself have sounded the call for a revival of free enterprise, but that call has not deafened us to our people’s pleas for better health care, nor has it blinded us to the current realities. Our local pharmaceutical industry is underdeveloped and cannot respond to the specific conditions of the local market. Many companies are captives of their mother corporations; uncritical reliance on the free market system neglects the majority of our people whose low purchasing power has made them an uninteresting market for industry. Industry can afford this neglect. Government cannot countenance this situation. The poorest are also the most ill; they are the most in need of medicines, and the least able to buy them. A democracy cannot survive when its industry cannot respond to one of the most basic needs of man.

The Government will cooperate with all sectors to assure the availability of necessary drugs and medicine. We recognize and respect the interests of various sectors but the Government has to put itself squarely behind the public interest. In drug policy, public interest clearly lies in reducing drug prices, and in assuring the safety, quality, effectivity and availability of drugs, and their intelligent use. These are our goals to which I believe we can all be committed, being Filipinos first before anything else.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Philippine Air Force Day

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the Philippine Air Force Day**

[Delivered at the Villamor Airbase, May 4, 1987]

**MEETING
NEEDS OF THE COUNTRY**

THE

SECURITY

President Aquino underscores the need for more military hardware which will give the Armed Forces of the Philippines greater ground mobility in dealing with threats from the Left and the Right. The Philippines' security needs cannot wait on the generosity of the country's principal ally. The AFP must depend on its valor and native ingenuity to meet the national security needs of the country.

I made a solemn vow at the Philippine Military Academy to end all threats to our democracy, coming from the Left or the Right, in five years. I aim to keep it. And when I say that, I speak for the officers and men of the AFP under my command. I called for a string of military victories to follow upon my announcement of war. For there is no better cure for the insolence of our enemies than swift retribution. In this regard, I commend Army Chief General Canieso for his swift and decisive resolution of the Black Saturday mutiny.

In the fulfillment of that oath, the Philippine Air Force plays a critical role. On such important matters as national security, I put first trust on the evidence of my senses. In Lupao, aside from the need for greater self-restraint on the part of our soldiers, I saw the critical part that mobility plays in bringing our power to bear on the enemy in a timely and conclusive fashion. I saw how the lack of it can bring tragedy.

The reports I received at the last command conference on the distressingly high ratio of patrols to contact revealed the inadequacy of our tactical intelligence and our inability to act quickly and decisively on the reports we receive in the field.

In the Kalinga-Apayao effort, an attempt to encircle the enemy in a highly inaccessible area demonstrated that, with all the will in the world to achieve a smashing victory, we can only do as much as the means available permit us. I will not dwell on what happened there, except to say that our principal military supplier should not expect our brave soldiers and determined commanders to fight the insurgents with our teeth and our hands.

I have, time and again, asked our military ally for more gunships, at least 10 per region, and for other means that will give our troops greater ground mobility. At the last command conference I gave the sense of their objections: inability of our Government to support such a capability and the inexperience of our military to use it. At the conference, too, I got the sense of what the Armed Forces of the Philippines thought of their objections. I am assured, however, by Chief of Staff General Ramos that JUSMAG, at least, has a better opinion of our ability to sustain and effectively use such a force. We shall continue to press for our requirements.

In the meanwhile, we shall, as I had warned, have to depend on our valor and our native ingenuity to meet the national security needs of our country. Much as we need relevant, adequate and timely assistance from our ally, our security needs cannot wait on their generosity. With the strength of our arms and the courage of our hearts, with such means as we have patched together, and above all with the support of our people, we have enough to fulfill our pledge to bring a wide and permanent peace and a just order to our land.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Business Community

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Business Community**

[Delivered at the Philippine International Convention Center, May 5, 1987]

A REVIEW OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

President Aquino emphasizes the promotion rather than the regulation of trade and industry. For its part, the Government has restored initiative to the private sector with such measures as dismantling of monopolies and special privileges that dampened free enterprise and implementation of tax reforms aimed at more efficiency and equity. Every structure of unfair competition has been removed. Now in place are programs such as privatization, the provision of necessary infrastructure, and an efficient market information system.

The President also campaigns for Congressional and Senatorial candidates who will back up her programs. She notes that it is better for Congress and the President to have a shared vision of the country's future and direction.

It was only five months ago when I addressed a sizeable gathering of our business community. This was at your Philippine Business Conference. Since then, there have been so many favorable economic developments; making this, perhaps, one of the most remarkable five-month periods in our economic history. The activities of our business sector have been accelerating at such a rate that I thought it would be timely to meet with you in order to review these developments and look ahead.

The bedrock of our economic policy, we had pledged, would be one of restoring to the private sector the initiative and the principal role in the development of the economy. Insofar as Government must have a role, it would be supportive, and always informed by the widest consultations possible among the sectors affected. You would be the engine of economic growth. Government might stoke the engine when it stalls, but never to the point of overheating.

To restore initiative to the private sector, we dismantled the monopolies and special privileges that had strangled trade and dampened the spirit of enterprise. In an effort to improve the much eroded purchasing power of our people, we implemented a package of tax reforms aimed at more efficiency and equity.

After judicious assessment and wide consultation, Government has spelled out its economic priorities. We would welcome substantial investments in employment-generating, export-oriented, agriculture-based and import-substituting industries. We have removed every structure of unfair competition and put in their place such programs as privatization, the provision of the necessary infrastructure, and an efficient market information system.

This is apart from Government's own investment program in such basic services as transport, power, water supply, social infrastructure and agriculture. The aim is to stimulate demand-led growth. The Community Employment and Development Program was our response to your call for some pump-priming measures and its effects are already being felt in the economy. In fact, some economic sectors are beginning to strain with the surge in economic

activity. My economic ministers have sadly advised me that this is not a sure sign of sustained growth. Well, it sure beats depression.

Our priorities call for investments that will create new jobs, and not just buy out well-established and flourishing enterprises. We need investments in those areas that can generate much needed foreign exchange, and that will put our native resources to the most efficient use.

Government is currently targetting a 33.4 percent growth in construction investment for 1987. This is up from 15 percent last year. Government expects to spend P35.5 billion in investments in the current year, and a total of P330.7 billion for the next five years. Among the programs planned is the construction of 91,800 housing units in 1987. This will benefit not only the construction and real estate industries, but also other industries related to construction.

On the other hand, the private sector is expected to increase its share of total investment in construction from 17.4 percent this year to 24 percent in 1988, or an annual average of 20 percent over the next six years.

The Department of Trade and Industry is reviewing the *New Omnibus Investments Code of 1987*, which will feature a tax holiday incentive. The new code will make our incentives more competitive with those of neighboring countries. It will be much simpler to administer and understand than the former tax credit scheme, and will emphasize the promotion rather than the regulation of trade and industry.

As a further help to prospective investors, the Department of Trade and Industry and its 120 industry associations are finalizing the organization of a One-Stop Industry Center. Its aim is increased coordination in Government efforts to help trade and industry and the elimination of red tape.

It appears that everything is now in place and in motion. So much so that many sectors now speak, not of recovery, but of economic growth and accelerated development.

But the private sector should not confine its role to just investments in the economy. Much to our satisfaction, a harmonious partnership is taking shape between Government and private business, a partnership whose first expression is the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan, in the formulation of which the private sector was extensively consulted.

But the private sector's role need not end at the policy formulation level. Its participation is even more important in the implementation of policies and programs. A number of our community service programs have been much improved by their implementation by private individuals contributing their expertise, experience and grassroots reach. We are seriously studying the use of private organizations as conduits for government-lending programs, to cut down on graft.

The efforts of non-governmental organizations, particularly the NAMFREL, the Rotary Clubs, the Jaycees, to monitor the CEDP program is an example of continuing democracy in action. We had people power to restore democracy. This is people power to keep it honest.

We remain as determined as ever to untangle the web of corruption spun by Marcos and his cronies. He is reported to have told one recent visitor in Honolulu: "Tell everyone, *malakas pa si Marcos*, at *mayaman pa rin*." Not everyone is happy with the way we are unravelling his empire. And sometimes zeal gets the better of those particularly charged with the task of doing it. But we reiterate our commitment to restore to the people what was stolen from the people.

When I said I want Government off the backs of business, I meant honest business. I don't want those business thieves back in this country. I don't want them buying back, with the money they stole from us, the revitalized enterprises they plundered. That is adding insult to injury.

A week from now we shall have Senatorial and Congressional elections. In July, Congress will convene. The circle of our democratic achievements will be complete. Yet even before this event, for which our people have waited 15 years and for which so many of our loved ones and friends suffered and died, the Congress which doesn't yet exist is being criticized. I am being rushed to legislate on a variety of subjects before Congress gets its hands on them. This is unfair. Many of those who will make it to the Senate and Congress have shown their worthiness in the long fight for Philippine freedom, when the odds were against them and commitment to the good involved the highest risk. Surely they will not fall short of the high standards they themselves have set.

While on the subject of Congressional and Senatorial elections, it has been said that I should stand above the fray and not devote time and energy to elections involving a separate branch of Government. This observation ignores the realities of power and the legitimate workings of democratic governments through the world.

The Constitution mandates a separation of the powers of Government to protect liberty, not to promote paralysis. The Constitution recognizes the desirability of an independent executive and an independent legislature working together towards a *shared* vision of what this country should be. In giving the veto power to the President, the Constitution even strengthens her hand against any attempt by Congress to change her policies and programs. It is better, of course, that Congress and President should be of one mind and heart with regards to the direction of the country.

It is therefore my duty as President and chief of the political movement that brought me to power and restored democracy in our land to campaign for those who will back up my programs. Let's not kid ourselves. The opposition will be an obstructive force. Their track record shows them to be interested only in seizing power by promoting instability. They won't hesitate to ruin the country just to get it back. Let us not forget that in 1972 they destroyed democracy in order to save it.

It has been asked: Why do I use government planes and other facilities in my campaign? I answer: because, much as our enemies would wish it, I cannot be physically divided. The President who campaigns to get the friends of her programs into Congress is the same President who is obliged to accept maximum security measures for the safety of the Republic. I have done no more, and in fact much less, than other democratic leaders before me, whether of this or of any other democracy.

This is our first election in over 15 years. I want it to be the best we have had in our history. I want it to be the model of future elections – honest, orderly and fair. I have gone around the country to campaign not only for the candidates that have pledged to support my programs but also for the cause of good elections. To that end, I have refused our candidates the use of Government resources to match those accumulated by the opposition while it was in power. I have given the opposition equal access to media, even media that is presently government-controlled, although the opposition has more money than our candidates to exploit that access. I may be sorry for this. But this is not just a campaign to get our candidates into Congress, but also an effort on my part to establish the true style of genuine elections and hopefully set the future tone of Philippine democracy.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the 13th Anniversary of the Department of Natural Resources

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the 13th Anniversary of the Department of Natural Resources**

[Delivered at the DNR Ninoy Aquino Park, May 15, 1987]

BENEFICIARIES OF OUR RESOURCES

Filipino citizens should be the true and primary beneficiaries of the country's natural resources. These resources should be shared equitably by Filipinos through the prevention of monopolies, cooperatives and small-scale utilization by subsistence farmers and fishermen. Agrarian reform will determine the use and allocation of resources while national policies and programs will protect the rights of cultural minorities to their ancestral lands. Tougher laws against the illegal exploitation of resources will be a priority of Congress. Hand in hand with this development, the Department of Natural Resources must strive to project an image of integrity and credibility.

I remember that 11 months ago, I and some members of the Cabinet planted trees in this park to commemorate the launching of a national forestation program. Those trees, I presume, are alive and well and growing under the auspices of the DNR and the caretakers of this park. It is not true that if the tree dies, the Cabinet member will be fired. I presume also that the various projects initiated by the former Ministry, now the Department of Natural Resources have managed to take root and survive, despite a number of changes in your leadership and organization. You enter your 13th year as stewards of our nation's natural wealth. That number should not prophesy ill-fortune, but rather, a new year marked by increased growth, productivity, efficiency, creativity, better morale and stricter adherence to your goals and principles.

These factors will sharpen your perspectives and direct your energies this coming year. For one, it will be your first year under the new Constitution. That Constitution poses, under Article 12, comprehensive guidelines for the exploration development, utilization and protection of natural resources in lands classified as public domain. In its various sections, Article 12 also provides:

That Filipino citizens will be the true and primary beneficiaries of the nation's resources;

That these resources will be shared more equitably through the prevention of monopolies and the encouragement of cooperatives and small-scale utilization by subsistence farmers and fishermen;

That a sound agrarian reform program will also determine the use and allocation of resources;

And that national policies and programs should protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to their ancestral lands.

A second factor, which will be to the benefit of the DNR and its role as guardian of the nation's patrimony, is the imminent convening of Congress. It has been said that the illegal exploitation of resources, specially our national forests, is due largely to the lack of tougher laws against such exploitation, as well as tougher measures for the implementation of such laws. When Congress convenes, a priority issue will be to determine as soon as possible, by law, the specific boundaries of lands of the public domain and how they may be acquired, developed, held or leased. Another issue is the need to prohibit logging in endangered forests and watershed areas. I am certain that such issues, threshed out in the open by the majority of pro-Filipino members of Congress, shall insure the fairest and most stringent legislation. People power too, expressed through local government officials and their representatives in Congress, will encourage vigilance and adherence to the law on the grassroots level in the countryside.

Meanwhile, the Department of Natural Resources must strive to project an image of utmost integrity and credibility. The new political climate is now conducive to the maintenance of your independence and vigilance. The recently concluded national elections, involving a staggering 90 percent of our voting population, have strengthened the fabric of democracy on the lowest socioeconomic levels and put the insurgency on the defensive. Citizens are now more aware of their rights and privileges, specially in the protection and conservation of their lands and resources. The limited number of forest guards of the DNR can now count on the help and support of an enlightened citizenry. Added to this, a free and inquisitive press can monitor the granting of licenses and concessions, insuring the protection of the rights of small settlers and the dispersal of resources from the privileged few to the many.

With such natural checks and balances, the DNR need not fall under the influence of foreign interests, big business, or terrorism from the Left and Right. You continue to face, I know, difficulties and daunting problems. Forest destruction continues at an estimated average of 100,000 hectares yearly. You must continue to strike the difficult balance between the full use of our resources for the purpose of economic recovery, while insuring that future generations can continue to avail of the abundance of the land. With other departments of Government, along with private business, you must help spearhead the thrust towards the processing of our own raw material rather than the simple exportation of such prime products as wood and ore. You also face the challenge that confronts all other countries of the world, and that is to maintain an ecological balance in an environment where populations continue to grow and industrialization is unavoidable.

Remember that while you are charged with the protection, conservation and development of our lands and waters and the abundance they hold, your ultimate duty is to the country's greatest resource, and that is, its people. In this, all other branches of Government are on your side. May that encourage you, and guide your activities, projects and efforts in your 13th year.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Philippine Medical Association

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Philippine Medical Association

[Delivered at the Philippine Plaza Hotel, May 21, 1987]

PATIENTS DESERVE THE BEST CARE
— AT THE LEAST COST

President Aquino calls on physicians to take initiative in making the national drug policy a success. She notes that the doctor is the key to the dispensation of quality, safe, effective and reasonably priced drugs. Doctors will truly serve their patients by doing their best to give them the best care at the least cost. To do this, they must first liberate themselves from pharmaceutical propaganda and rely on their informed judgment as true medical scientists.

Fellow physicians,

I use that greeting deliberately because the principal tasks of my government appear to be that of healing: of binding a nation's wounds, of effecting its recovery, of restoring the strength and integrity of its body and spirit, so it can achieve the many things that we believe it to be capable of.

In likening the Government to a physician, I try to honor and give due recognition to our native capacity to be all we want to be. I am really saying that what we need is already in us and that we need not wait on the uncertain generosity of outsiders. To honor the work we do by likening it to the restorative work of a physician is also an affirmation of our faith in the Filipino.

Before continuing, let me first congratulate your new officers. The year ahead is going to be a year of hard work for all elected officials. I should also like to thank your outgoing officers for having served during the critical period that has just passed. Your officers have a major role to play in leading the medical profession towards the excellence and devotion we all expect of it.

Today I will talk about two issues. One is a review of your profession's response to our call for deeper and more fruitful involvement. The other is about your further participation in national reconstruction.

Health and medical care is one of the key social services. The attention given to this area measures the sense of responsibility we have as a Government and a people. I am greatly heartened that your response has been wide, enthusiastic and sustained. Secretary Bengzon told me yesterday that the first three volunteer surgeons left for Palawan and Mindanao. He has told me also of the great efforts exerted by the Philippine Pediatric Society in controlling and treating the incidence of diarrhea among the children of the poor. Many PMA chapters, specialty groups and individual physicians have extended their time and talents to work with Government in delivering vital services to our people. For these, I thank you deeply.

I would like now to address the issues of the future. There are two of special importance. I am referring to the cost of medicine and the availability of doctors' services, particularly in the rural areas. I shall address the first issue here, and reserve my comments on the second for some other occasion.

More than two weeks ago, I announced my national drug policy. That policy calls, among others things, for more information on the quality, safety, efficacy and cost of drugs. I would like to focus on this particular aspect and your role in making the initiative it calls for to succeed.

The doctor's mind is the real battleground between the propaganda of the drug companies on the one hand, and the principles of drug and medical science on the other. Sad to say, science is losing to commerce every day. The pediatricians among you know that the Philippines is one of the biggest consumers of anti-diarrheals in the world yet many studies show the doubtful clinical usefulness of these prescriptions.

The ordinary patient trusts his doctor implicitly. So when he gets a prescription that costs, say, ten times his daily income, he complains about drug prices but never doubts his doctor's wisdom and care in prescribing the drug. But me ask you now to examine yourselves. Do you carefully weigh the financial consequences of your prescriptions? Do you carefully consider the true merits of the drugs that are advertised and pushed on you by salesmen? By and large, none of them are harmful; but how many are really needed, and aren't there cheaper substitutes? Have you truly served your patients by doing your best to give them the best care at the least cost?

Our national drug policy aims to make information available to the doctor and the patient to assure the more rational use of drugs. Government is doing its part to disseminate this information. I ask you to help out; and to help out first by liberating yourselves from pharmaceutical propaganda. I ask you to become true medical scientists by relying on your informed judgment rather than on the commercial hype of your suppliers. I ask you to consider both the merits of your prescriptions and the situation of your patients. There is much you can do to make a real impact on the prices and effectiveness of drugs and medicine. The PMA is particularly well-situated, in terms of organizational reach and resources, to be effective in this effort.

In the many countries where reforms in pharmaceuticals were undertaken, the doctors were a crucial factor in deciding the outcome. I am confident that it will be the same here.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the Baptist Vesper Worship Service

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the Baptist Vesper Worship Service

[Delivered at the Malacañang Palace, May 22, 1987]

THE FAITH GROWS STRONGER

President Aquino shares with the Baptists an intense devotion to certain ideals. Like the Baptists, she believes that the wife should be totally supportive of her husband, that children should be given fair amounts of love and discipline, and that a nation is defined by its people, and a people is judged by the kind of society it builds. Transformations of nations and societies take place first in the hearts of people and this is what happened during the Yellow Revolution.

It is not often that I address a Baptist Vesper Worship Service. I am not a Baptist but I have friends who are, and I know that we share not only the same faith but also the same intense devotion to certain ideals.

The Baptists are considered among the most conservative of the Christian sects. By the standards of the world today I, too, might be called a conservative. I adhere to certain time-worn truths, in the area, for instance, of family living. The Baptist wife, I understand, must strive to be the Biblical wife – totally supportive of her husband, mindful of his needs, respectful of his role as leader of the home in the way that Christ is head of His Church. I must say that as Ninoy's spouse, I was, in much of my behavior and attitudes, scriptural. My life revolved around him and our children. And that served to keep the balance of our marriage throughout the turbulent years of his meteoric rise in politics and the dark despairing years of his imprisonment and exile.

In the rearing of children too, I am rather old-fashioned in dispensing fair amounts of love and discipline. That is a fact that my youngest daughter Kris will attest to, with some chagrin, I am sure. She once complained to Diane Sawyer, the host of the TV show, *60 Minutes*, that nothing had really changed. When I became President, Kris had projected that my responsibilities would keep me from checking up on her with the same frequency and closeness. She was wrong. It remains as Ninoy wanted it, but most of all, as Christ expects it. Our children are not only ours, but God's own. "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these," Christ said.

The Baptist faith is also known as one of the more fundamentalist of faiths. Your philosophy of life, and the life hereafter, is distilled to its essence in God's Word. Your view of society is focused on its nucleus, the family; and the epicenter of the family which is Christ.

I would agree with your view that a nation is defined by its people, and a people rightly judged by the kind of society it has built. Even so is a society judged by the families that compose it, and families by the individuals that make it up. Transformations of nations and societies take place first in the hearts of their people. That is how it happened here, with our Yellow Revolution. That improbable event might be easier to understand when you consider the years when the hearts of our people slowly turned from despair to heroism, like a piece of steel turning in the fire. So it was with Ninoy also. At the lowest point of his seven-year imprisonment, Ninoy wrote his friend Soc Rodrigo of that experience, and I quote:

"In the loneliness of my solitary confinement in Laur, in the depths of my solitude and desolation, during those long hours of meditation, I found my inner peace. Christ stood me face to face with myself and forced me to look at my emptiness and nothingness, and then helped me to discover Him who has never really left my side." Ninoy then quoted Paul: "For the sake of Christ, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and calamities, for when I am weak, then I am strong."

Many Filipinos experienced the same light in those years of darkness. Now that that light has been kindled, it continues to spread and grow, even in the noonday brightness of our freedom. And as more and more Filipinos bask in that light, my faith in the future grows stronger. As it is written in Proverbs: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.” That is an old, conservative and fundamentalist notion, but it is as true and revolutionary today as it was two thousand years ago. And we Filipinos can attest to it.

I thank our Baptist friends for having been, and continuing to be, part of our inner revolution. Thank you for your prayers for the success of our recent elections. Please continue praying, this time, for the transformations in Government that will soon take place with the convening of Congress. May Christ once again hold the floor and steer its members to straight paths as they work to serve our people.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 70th Anniversary of the Department of Agriculture

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the 70th Anniversary of the Department of Agriculture**

[Delivered at the DAF Compound, May 29, 1987]

A BETTER LIFE FOR FARMERS

The bottomline of Government efforts in agriculture is to increase the income of the Filipino farmer. After setting the basic conditions for profitable farming, the Government is determined to make Philippine agriculture robust, long-lived and strong.

Binabati ko ang Department of Agriculture, kayong mga kawani at opisyaes nito, ng isang maligaya at makahulugang pagdaraos ng inyong ika-pitumpung anibersaryo. Hindi nakapagtataakang ang kagawarang ito ang isa sa mga unang naitatag, bilang isang kawanihan muna noong 1901, ng bagong Republika ng Pilipinas. Ito'y nagpapatunay lamang ng kahalagahan ng pagsasaka sa ating kabuhayan bilang isang bansa. At pagpapatunay din sa makasaysayan at mahalagang katungkulang nakaatang sa balikat ng Department of Agriculture at sa mga magsasaka ng Pilipinas.

Isang taon na ang nakalipas buhat nang ako po'y huling tumayo sa harap ng ganitong pagtitipon.

One year has passed since we gave honor to our nation's farmers. For, no sooner had we struck off the shackles of political slavery than we proclaimed the revival of Philippine agriculture to be the first priority of our new democracy. We would do this, we declared, by making farming a truly paying proposition for the farmers. Our first goal would be increasing immediately the income of our farmers. That would be the bottomline of any and all initiatives we would take in agriculture.

Today, one year later, we can say that we have set in place the basic conditions to make farming profitable. We have put life back into Philippine agriculture. What remains is to make it robust, long-lived and strong.

This is still a tall order. A lot remains to be done.

Public investments must support the productive work of our farmers and agribusiness entrepreneurs. But, since our resources are limited, Government investments should be focused on those activities and projects that will have the most immediate impact on farmers' incomes.

We should therefore invest in irrigation systems, in farm-to-market roads, and in communication and information systems that will enable the farmer to learn new methods and find immediate markets for his produce.

Along with these, and other measures such as improving extension services, we must provide adequate credit.

In these measures, I assure you the Administration will extend the fullest cooperation and support to the Department.

I said I would govern by consultation. I am pleased to note that this has been followed by your Department through the national agriculture and fisheries councils. Let me assure you that the feedback you have given us from these councils, in which the private sector is represented, will inform our decisions regarding agriculture.

Lastly, let me dwell on agrarian reform. First let me state the first principle of any policy in this area: Agrarian reform must produce a better life for our farmers. It must increase incomes. It must be sustainable and effect a real and durable improvement in the lives of Filipino farmers. Distribution for the sake of distribution is not enough. The principle we defend and for which we shall work and devote all our energies and the prestige of our office is a better life for the Filipino farmer.

In the past few weeks, a lot has been said about how we should go about land reform. Several issues have been raised; issues of legality, of technical feasibility and financial capability. Although most of the issues regarding land reform have been resolved, several issues regarding legality, technical feasibility and financial capability remain unresolved. Saving the resolution of those issues for a later occasion, let me state certain things that will not change:

One. I truly believe that agrarian reform is necessary for our people and for our future, and thus I have pledged to see that agrarian reform is carried out, and carried out soon;

Two. I believe that in order to successfully implement agrarian reform, we should develop a program that is within the present capabilities of our Government to manage and finance;

Three. I believe that agrarian reform is a process to which our Government and the public are jointly committed and engaged. This requires intensive consultation, consensus and cooperation between all Filipinos. To generate such a commitment and cooperative involvement, our agrarian reform program must have a strong training, education and community organization component. I have seen what these factors can produce in San Simon, Pampanga. There I saw self-reliance produce dignity and generate energies that many said our farmers were not capable of.

Finally, let me go back to my first principle. I am for agrarian reform, not for the sake of the thing, but for the improvement it promises in the lives of Filipinos. I am for agrarian reform because it promises to give the farmer a better life. It is not enough for us to subdivide our present miseries on the land. Division must produce improvement. We shall go for an agrarian reform program that will succeed. It may not be everything everyone wants. But it will succeed in doing what it sets out as its goal. That goal is a better life for the farmer.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Elementary School Principals

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Elementary School Principals**

[Delivered at the Malacañang Palace, May 29, 1987]

THE ROLE OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

President Aquino expresses her thanks to schoolteachers for the fairest and most honest elections in the country's history. She notes that the schoolteachers played a key role in making democracy happen. At the same time, she reminds school principals that, as the teachers' superior, theirs is a double responsibility: they must uphold the morale and standards of schoolteachers who are charged with the task of uplifting the integrity and education of the youth.

Since the elections, I have looked forward to this occasion in order to deliver a brief, but deeply felt message. And in this I believe I speak for all our people.

Our nation thanks the schoolteachers for the fairest and most honest elections in the history of our country. I say this again, in spite of the charges of electoral fraud that have been hurled. Because all sides know that the elections were fair and that the results accurately reflect the popular choices.

The elections were a stirring example of democracy in action. And the schoolteachers played a key role in making it happen.

In your invitation to me, you said that the teacher in the classroom works in a very sensitive area because he or she shapes the attitudes and values of our youth. In a very palpable sense, teachers are making the future. They hold our children in their hands. In discharging this heavy responsibility, the first important step has been taken. The stirring example of their dedication in the last polls will do more than any number of classroom hours to imbue our children with a profound patriotism.

Even as we reiterate the tremendous responsibility of the schoolteacher in moulding our youth, and underscore the honor and nobility of their role, we point up the double burden and responsibility of their superiors – the school principals. You must hold up the morale and the standards of those charged with uplifting the integrity and education of our youth.

Even as we ask our teachers to be an inspiration and support for our youth, so must the school principals be an inspiration and support for their teachers.

It is said that our children spend most of their waking hours in school, and that is why school is so important in the formation of the right values and skills. We can also say that the schoolteachers spend most of their waking hours in school. It is true for them also, that the school plays an important part in shaping their values – the very values they teach our children. This is the responsibility of the school principals. Treat your teachers fairly and with the respect you expect them to accord you. Encourage them to turn to you with their problems, and help them where you can. This willingness to be a helpmate and support will repeat itself in how they treat their students. The school is what all of you make it – principal, teachers and students. Make it a place of right living. A place where the right values are taught and practiced. A place where our youth can learn the right standards by which to judge our world and acquire the inspiration to change it.

In closing, may I congratulate the new officers of the Philippine Elementary School Principals Association. I wish you a successful term. I take this opportunity to invite you to join with us, the Government, in studying the many problems that beset Philippine education. We look to your wealth of experience to guide our future decisions in this field.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Inauguration of Our Lady of Peace

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the inauguration of Our Lady of Peace on EDSA

[Delivered at Our Lady of Peace Shrine, EDSA, May 31, 1987]

THANK GOD FOR THE WONDERS OF EDSA

At the inauguration of Our Lady of Peace Shrine on EDSA, the site of the February Revolution, President Aquino expresses her deepest thanks to God and the Virgin Mary for the wonders that transpired on this avenue. On behalf of the Filipino people, the President is thankful for the rebirth of democracy in the country and the overwhelming ratification of the new Constitution.

Shrines and monuments that commemorate political victories are usually built in battlefields, over the mass graves of heroes, or where the executioner has spelled the martyr's blood.

We are happy and proud, but most of all deeply thankful to God, whose spirit moved so mightily along EDSA for the privilege that allows us now to build our marker, not where men fought and fell, but where they reconciled with their estranged brothers and rose as one from humiliation to the greatest pride in that miraculous liberation.

We thank God for the wonders that transpired on this avenue. We thank him for our new and vibrant democracy, anchored now in a Constitution that implores His aid and guidance in defining a Government that is humane and just. We thank Him for the miracle of a concerned and discerning electorate that turned out massively and voted overwhelmingly to ratify that Constitution. This against the prediction of experts that the people were only good for one people power exercise, that no one really bothers to vote in plebiscites over difficult questions. We thank God for the recently concluded Senatorial and Congressional elections – by His protection and grace, and by most objective accounts, the most peaceful, honest and widely attended election in our nation's history. We thank God for the victory of those who have always stood by democracy, and who will strengthen and defend it in the months and years to come. We thank God again for a people who defied the experts again by rising early, patiently awaiting their turn at the polls, and filling out their ballots completely. We thank God for a people whose powers and achievements have been prodigies and miracles. We thank Him for our answered prayers, and for miracles yet to come from Him through his noble and chosen people. For it is written in Corinthians: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him."

We thank God for the peace we now celebrate and seek to sustain, not only here in this intersection that was the crossroads of our destiny, but everywhere in this country that seeks His wisdom, mercy and strength. Christ said, "My peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

It was that peace that must have filled the heart of Mary even as she watched her Son dying on the cross. For she knew by faith that beyond the suffering, beyond the iniquities visited by men upon men, her Son would bring peace and the final victory.

As the angels sang after she gave birth to her Child: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." And so it was in EDSA.

In a shining moment in the world's history, God's favor came to rest on Filipinos. It was just as Mary sang in her own moment of joy and thankfulness: "My spirit rejoices in God my Savior . . . He has performed mighty deeds

with His arm; He has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.”

Let us join Mary, a true Lady of Peace, in her praise and gratitude for a God that loves and a God that cares. May the grace her Son Jesus Christ gave us at EDSA work in our hearts wherever we are, whatever we do, in more years of peace to come.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the GSIS Golden Anniversary

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the GSIS Golden Anniversary

[Delivered at Government Service Insurance System, Arroceros, June 1, 1987]

A NEW BEGINNING FOR GSIS

The GSIS should be restored to its former strength and original mission as the country's premier social insurance institution. A GSIS member herself, the President sees the importance of promptness on the part of GSIS in giving each member the benefits and privileges due him. The President is pleased to note the beginning of the transformation of GSIS from extravagance to economy, from losses to gains. The President, however, sees a lack of cohesion in the institution's social security set-up. She would like to see a consolidation of all insurance packages into one integrated scheme without diminishing the benefits already enjoyed by GSIS members.

On the occasion of your Golden Anniversary, your President and General Manager, Sonny Belmonte, wanted to bring all of you to Malacañang for a courtesy call. *Ang sabi ko*, it's your anniversary, it's your celebration – I'll come to you.

You have given me a wonderful reception. I hope the way you received me today is reflective of the way you receive and service the 1.4 million members of the System. I am, after all, just one of them.

I have just received my policy contract as a public servant and member of the System. I shall treasure it, and, you can be sure, I shall collect on it should need arise. I shall treasure it for what it represents, for what it offers and provides, and for what it can do for the civil servant and his family, in their time of need. But this policy is only as good for the civil servant as you make it.

Sa akin pong palagay, ang pinakaimportante sa aming mga miyembro ay ang pagtanggap ng aming benepisyo sa oras mismo ng aming pangangailangan. To my mind, retirement benefits which are granted months after a government employee has retired have substantially lost their usefulness, a funeral benefit paid out after a member has been buried has lost its meaning and betrayed its intention, a monthly pension delayed may actually come too little and too late for the increased need of the pensioner.

The bottomline is that everytime you issue a policy contract to a member, you are committing to pay his benefits and privileges not at the time of your choice but at the time of his need; not at the time when you are able to provide but at the time the member needs to be provided for.

I took these things into consideration when I was looking for a President and General Manager for this institution. I felt that the person for the post should not only share my thoughts on what GSIS is and should be, but should also have the capability to restore GSIS to its former strength and original mission as the State's premier social insurance institution.

Looking over your president's report, I note with satisfaction the direction in which he has set you, the transformation that has begun. A transformation from extravagance to economy, from losses to gains, from deficits to surpluses, from ignominy to high esteem in the eyes of our people.

I particularly appreciate your P31 million savings on administrative expenses. It is a good and auspicious beginning.

I note with equal satisfaction the other financial gains your management has reported. They are encouraging signs of growth and improvement, and indeed serve as assurances of a better future for your members.

Regarding our policy on privatization, I appreciate your desire to extract the best price for the assets you hold. You should indeed maximize returns on the disposal of your properties, as you have apparently been doing. As for that P2.5 billion building which you inherited from the past regime, how you dispose of this is a crucial test of your ingenuity, managerial ability and business acumen. I am sure you will exercise the same prudence and fidelity to the principle of privatization that has marked your dealings thus far.

With regard to housing, may I say that while Executive Order No. 90 transfers the operation of a home mortgage market to the National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation, your housing program can continue as a complement to the Corporation's functions, giving special attention to the housing needs of Government employees.

I note your initial accomplishments in your general insurance business. But there is a great deal more that needs to be done, particularly in the matter of extending coverage to all Government property.

But what is really of paramount concern to me is your social insurance responsibility. This is, after all, the reason for your being. Through you, Government extends protection to its workers. Unfortunately, I see a lack of cohesion in your social security set-up.

For while you provide life insurance, you also have independent coverages for retirement, Medicare, employee compensation, disability and survivorship. The simultaneous existence of different and independent insurance coverages results in duplication of benefits and the charging of multiple insurance rates, not to mention a larger overhead. I am instructing your President and General Manager to consider the consolidation of all existing insurance packages into one integrated scheme; without, of course, diminishing the benefits already enjoyed by your members. The aim should be to remove disparities among the retirement schemes of the various sectors of the Government.

And finally, I am equally pleased to note the decentralization moves you have initiated to bring the GSIS closer to the grassroots with more complete frontline services. That's the test of good government: Does it finally deliver? No amount of corporate success can compensate for any failure you incur in your first responsibility to provide prompt, efficient and honest service to your members.

In closing, I would like to say that your Golden Jubilee Celebration is very timely and appropriate to what is unfolding in our country today. A jubilee means an emancipation and a restoration. And that is what is happening both here in the GSIS and throughout our country. We have begun to free ourselves from the waste and fraud and neglect of the past, and we are on the way to restoring the public service to its true character and mission: honesty and efficiency in the service of the country. This is a new beginning for the country and for the GSIS, in particular; a beginning marked by the enormous and deeply heartening trust and confidence that our people have in all who serve in the name of the Republic.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Kalayaan Village Groundbreaking Ceremony

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Kalayaan Village Groundbreaking Ceremony

[Delivered at MIA Avenue, Parañaque, June 2, 1987]

FULFILLING A PROMISE

At the groundbreaking ceremony of the Kalayaan Village housing project of the National Housing Authority, President Aquino fulfills her promise to do something about the housing problems of public school teachers and members of the police forces. The first of several housing projects, the village will be home to 806 police families and educators by the end of 1987. The occasion also marks the launching of 17 new slum improvement projects of the NHA in Metro Manila.

I have said, the time for talk is over; the time for action is now. One of the things about the National Housing Authority that has pleased me is precisely this action-orientation. It was not too long ago that I acknowledged the housing problems besetting our public school teachers and the members of our police forces – these indispensable and much neglected sectors of the public service. I promised to do something about it. Not long after, NHA General Manager Lito Atienza was in Malacañang with the blueprints and models for several housing projects. Today, we stand here in this groundbreaking ceremony to give concrete fulfillment to my promise.

The Kalayaan Village project is only the first of several housing projects which we shall undertake to meet your housing needs. This village will be home to 806 police families and educators by the end of 1987, which is not too far away. It is our way of expressing belated recognition of your great services to our people.

Today's occasion also marks the launching of 17 new slum improvement projects of the NHA in eight cities and municipalities of Metro Manila.

I congratulate the NHA for its deep commitment to meeting the housing needs of the poor, and for its readiness to answer the Constitution's call to make decent housing available to our poor and underprivileged countrymen.

Some have commented that it is provisions like this that spoil our new Constitution. What relevance does housing have in a document that should be about political liberty and democratic institutions? The answer is plain. It is projects like these that give our people a real stake in democracy. When democracy goes hand in hand with a life of dignity, our people will readily defend it with their lives.

Once more I congratulate the Agency on its performance. To the first beneficiaries of this housing project, some of our school teachers and police, I wish you all the best.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Address of President Corazon Aquino at the Command and General Staff College Graduation Rites

Address of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the Command and General Staff College Graduation Rites

[Delivered in Fort Bonifacio, June 5, 1987]

A CITIZEN ARMY IN THE MAKING

Addressing the graduates of the Command and General Staff College in Fort Bonifacio, President Aquino announces the abolition of the Civilian Home Defense Forces and other paramilitary units as called for by the Constitution. These forces have made more enemies than friends, more Communists than loyal citizens. The Constitution suggests, however, the integration of the CHDF into the regular force or the creation of a citizen armed force to take up the slack after the CHDF is abolished.

May I first congratulate the Class of '87 on its graduation. You are the first graduating class of the College in this year of full democracy. The past year has given you a sense of the new dimensions that the restoration of freedom and civil rights has opened up in the theory and practice of military leadership. The middle of this year will see the opening of Congress and the final division of the powers of Government among its three counter-balancing branches. Although the Armed Forces remains the special constituency of the President and Commander-in-Chief, the separation of powers adds new responsibilities and duties to all of us in the military. In the meanwhile, the problems that are specifically our concern remain with us, largely unresolved.

The repeated affirmations of our people of their iron commitment to democracy proves that the emotional and intellectual attractions of Communism have greatly weakened among our people. We must not, however, become complacent. Many structural reforms are needed to make our country proof against Communism. Moreover, Communism's terrorist grip remains something to reckon with.

It is a truism in counter-insurgency strategy that we must continuously deny the countryside to the insurgent. A continuous Government presence must be felt in rural communities. Armies come and go in their periodic sweeps, but the communist terrorist, often operating alone, remains. The Armed Forces has neither the numbers, nor the duty, to provide a constant presence to offset the pervasive climate of insurgent terrorism.

In the past, that requirement was met by the Civilian Home Defense Forces. But these forces made us more enemies than friends, more Communists than loyal citizens of democracy. Predictably, when the Constitutional Commission convened, it called for the abolition of these and other paramilitary units. Congress and I are sworn to defend the Constitution and achieve its promises. I intend to perform. So will Congress, I am sure. The CHDF will be abolished and its place will not be taken by other paramilitary units under a different name. But I also pledged that I will *not* compromise the security of our people; I will not relent in my determination to destroy all threats to democracy from the Left and the Right in five years, and I will take all measures necessary to achieve this aim so help me God. I said before the Mindanao representatives last year that the security presently afforded by the paramilitary units will continue to be provided, even if we have to enlarge the military establishment. Communism will not win in the Philippines by default. It will not win, period.

The Constitution supports me in this. For the very article that abolishes the CHDF, suggests its integration into the regular force or any measure that will preserve and enhance our capability to discover and destroy the enemies of freedom.

The Constitution that mandates the abolition of the CHDF has wisely provided a way to take up its responsibility to secure our communities.

Section 4, Article XVI of the Constitution provides that ‘The Armed Forces of the Philippines shall be composed of a citizen armed forces which shall undergo military training and service as may be provided by law. It shall keep a regular force necessary for the security of the State.’”

This is a recognition that people power is the backbone of effective national defense and that, in a democracy, the sword must be wielded not primarily by a military caste but by the nation in arms.

The Secretary of Defense, the Chief of Staff and other Department Secretaries have been involved in earnest consultations on how to effect both the abolition of the CHDF and the creation of a citizen armed force to take up the slack that will be created. The expansion of the regular military establishment will entail an additional half to three-quarters of a billion pesos more in military expenditures. We need to husband our limited resources for the economic measures that will dry up the roots of insurgency over the long run, even if we recognize the need for a sufficient military capability in the short run to buy time for our socioeconomic initiatives to bear fruit.

We shall therefore proceed to implement the existing law on the creation of a citizen army, specifically the National Defense Act. Following the organization of these forces, they shall be called into active duty by me, as Commander-in-Chief, in areas of heavy insurgent activities to assist the regular armed forces. These units shall be recruited from the communities that need to be protected, from among the best of its able-bodied citizens. Present CHDF members shall be processed to test their qualification to join these new units and a social program will be devised to facilitate the reentry of others into regular civilian life. These citizen armed forces shall be organized in the pattern of regular AFP formations, and shall be subject to military justice and discipline. To the regular virtues and qualities of the soldier, we shall add to our fighting capabilities the home loyalties of our local citizen armed forces and their special knowledge of the terrain and the communities they are defending.

We shall prove that the introduction of the democratic element, even in the rigid occupation of the soldier, will result in an addition to the power, rather than in a reduction in the effectiveness, of our national defense effort.

Even as you graduate, a new factor has been added to the national defense equation: People Power. Study it well. We live in fluid times; times of challenge and, yes, times of risk — but also times of great opportunities for even greater achievements than those for which our nation is already renowned.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the National Artist Award Conferment

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the National Artist Award Conferment

[Delivered at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, June 11, 1987]

WHERE THE ARTIST IS FREE TO CREATE

Conferring the National Artist Award on Atang de la Rama, President Aquino says that the best in culture and the arts is achieved in a climate of political freedom. A democratic republic is one which guarantees the freedom to create, with no special instruction attached.

I regret I am not seen often enough attending cultural events. I know my presence in expositions and celebrations of the arts is not as marked as that of first ladies of past administrations, most specially the last. It is not that the new Government does not concern itself with art and culture. It does, and not only by natural inclination, but, more dependably, by the injunction of a Constitution which, in five sections, defines the State's responsibility to preserve, enrich and encourage the dynamic evolution of Filipino culture. However, this Administration does have one limitation. It does not have a First Lady. Or rather, I am both the President and First Lady, and that imposes the most unusual and stringent demands on my energy and time.

Culture and the arts certainly have a place in our new climate of social and political freedom. I would even say that many barriers limiting their growth and evolution have been removed. For one, the stigma of political patronage and control has been lifted. Culture, especially when subsidized by the State, is no longer regarded as a propaganda tool. The rich tapestry of our ethnic heritage is no longer used to cover the multitude of sins committed by a gross and tribal tyranny. Also, the atmosphere of favoritism, elitism and exclusiveness has been largely dispelled.

I admit that I and other members of the Government have our individual tastes in the arts. But the last thing we would do is impose our tastes on an entire country.

Patronage should not impose its taste, however liberal it may be. What should be supported is not a particular kind or style of art, or any special theme, but the talents that make art happen in all its rich diversity.

As a consequence, I will be brief. What art serves, I leave to the artists to decide. A democratic republic guarantees, but cannot impose any special instruction on the freedom to create. All I can say is that, if we go by the historical record, the best is achieved in a climate of political freedom. But I'm no expert in the history of art, and if after all I am wrong, and slavery has produced art, it can't have been worth it – at least from the viewpoint of the slaves, which is the only viewpoint that counts, because it is the human viewpoint. And if art has a moral purpose, then it should never be achieved at the cost of freedom.

It is my privilege today, and proof of Government concern and support for the arts and for those who have devoted their lives to it, to witness the conferment of the National Artist Award on Atang de la Rama. Honorata de la Rama-Hernandez, also known as Queen of the Zarzuela, "Reyna ng Kundiman" and "Mutya ng Dulang Tagalog," deserves more than our awards. She deserves to be known and remembered by all Filipinos. She did not only give the best years of her life to Philippine drama and song, she was also a fierce and tireless patriot.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 1987 Independence Day Celebration [Filipino]

**Talumpati
ng
Kagalang-galang Corazon C. Aquino
Pangulo ng Pilipinas
Sa pagdiriwang ng 1987 Araw ng Kalayaan**

[Ipinahayag sa Quirino Grandstand, ika 12 ng Hunyo, 1987]

“MULING KAILANGAN ANG KAGITINGAN”

The country’s fight for freedom and democracy is far from over. Enemies of the state are out to prove to Filipinos that Government is not in control. The congressional elections, however, proved that the enemies of democracy do not have the support of the people. The President reassures the people that Government, with the cooperation of a concerned citizenry, has the capability to stop terrorists from destroying this democracy.

Sa katapusan ng buwang darating, ang Kongreso ng Republika ng Pilipinas ay magpupulong. Lahat ng mga institusyon ng demokrasyang Pilipino ay nasa kani-kanilang lugar na.

Mayroon na tayong Pangulong nahalal sa demokratikong paraan, mayroon na tayong tunay na malayang Korte Suprema, at isang Kongresong tunay na kumakatawan sa mamamayan.

Ngunit ang laban ng Pilipino ay hindi pa tapos. Ang mga kaaway niya na naglalayong manira, mang-alipin at sirain ang ating mga karapatan at kalayaan, at muli hilahin tayo sa hindi na maka-Diyos na pamamaraan at pagmamalupit ay narito pa at nagnanais gawin ang kanilang masamang layunin sa kahit na ano pa mang paraan.

Ang mga kaaway natin ay hindi tayo hahayaang maranasan ang kaligayahan, katahimikan, at mga biyaya na dulot ng demokrasya.

Ang nakaraang eleksiyon ay isa na namang pagpapatunay na silang mga kaaway ng ating demokrasya ay walang suporta ng mga mamamayan. Ang mga kaaway na ito ng ating kalayaan ay walang paggalang sa mga mamamayan, gayundin sila ay walang paggalang sa hatol ng mga mamamayan. Ngayon, sila ay nananakot at pumapatay upang maipalabas lamang ang kanilang kagustuhan at masamang intensiyon sa mga mamamayang Pilipino.

Sa loob lamang ng limang araw, ang karahasan sa lungsod ay nagdulot ng kasawian sa tatlong pulis at dalawang sundalo. Dalawa pang pulis ay malubhang nasugatan. Noong isang araw, ang kandidato ng Partido ng Bayan, na si Bernabe Buscayno, ay nasugatan sa ambush ng mga hindi kilalang lalaki na kunwari ay mga sundalo.

Alam ko na marami sa inyo na mahal kong mga kababayan ay lubhang nag-aalala.

Ang inyong tanong – ano ang dapat gawin? Ang mga terorista ay dinala na ang digmaan sa lunsod. Ang aking sagot: Dalhin natin ang digmaan sa kanila.

Kanilang ginambala ang katahimikan ng ating mga tahanan at katiwasayan ng ating pamumuhay na siya nating pinaglaban at sinakripisyo; kailangan natin silang pagbayarin sa mga kaguluhang ito.

Ang mga kaaway ng ating kalayaan, na lubhang nahihiya at nagtatago sa kaduwagan, ay patagong sumasalakay, upang ang ating mga militar at pulis ay hindi sila malabanan ng parehas. Lubhang matitindi ang kanilang ginagawang pagsalakay upang paniwalain kayo na ang inyong Gobyerno ay hindi kayo kayang protektahan.

Ako ngayon ay narito sa inyong harapan upang ipaalam sa inyo na ang inyong Gobyerno ay kayang sugpuin ang mga pananakot at paghamon na kanilang ginagawa.

Subalit tulad din ng mga hamon at pagbabanta na ating tinalo noong nakaraan, muli kailangan natin ang kagitingan, pangangalaga at matiyagang pagbabantay ninyo, mga mahal kong kababayan.

Kayo ngayon ay aking tinatawagan, mga mahal kong kababayan, na sana'y kayo ay makipagtulungan sa ating militar at pulis upang hulihin ang mga duwag nating kaaway. Kayo ay tinatawagan ko upang ipaalam agad sa pulis at militar ang mga taong inyong pinaghihinalaan na maaaring kasangkot sa mga kaguluhang ito. Kayo rin ay aking binabalaan na huwag ninyong labanan ang mga teroristang ito na kayo lamang. Sila ay may armas at madaling pumatay sa inosente at walang armas. Ang inyong tungkulin ay isumbong sila upang pangalagaan ang inyong mga tahanan at pamilya. Hayaan ninyo ang ating mga pulis at militar upang gawin ang nararapat sa kanila. Sa pangangalaga at matiyagang pagbabantay ng ating mga mamamayan, naniniwala ako na kaya nating talunin ang mga kaaway na ito sa madaling panahon.

Tinatawagan ko ang ating mga OICs sa Metro Manila at sa lahat ng panig ng bansa na bigyan nila ng kaukulang suporta at tulong ang ating mga militar at pulis sa pakikipaglaban sa ating mga kaaway. Ang inyong panunungkulan at pagkakahalal kung sakali ay nakasalalay sa akin at sa ating mga mamamayan.

Tayong lahat ay bahagi ng isang kamay: ang inyong Pangulo, ang Armed Forces, mga local officials at kayong mga mamamayan ay magkakuyom ang mga palad sa iisang layunin upang wasakin at durugin ang pananakot na ito sa ating buhay, sa ating kalayaan at sa ating pananampalataya.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Vin D'Honneur Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Independence Day '87
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Independence Day '87

[Delivered on June 12, 1987]

SALUTE TO THE FILIPINO PEOPLE

Taking pride in the country's independence and democracy, the President salutes the Filipinos, a people so poor yet so proud and jealous of their freedom.

Today we celebrate the 89th anniversary of Philippine Independence with double pride: pride in our independence; pride in our democracy. We were Asia's oldest republic, and its first democracy, in the old style. We are today the world's first democracy, in the new style – of People Power.

We were the first Asian nation to win its freedom by means of war, and the first to restore its freedom by the ways of peace. No other nation has shown a richer repertoire of political action.

One year ago, we gathered here to celebrate the 88th anniversary of Philippine Independence, and the first quarter of its democratic restoration. Since then the Filipino people have outdone themselves repeatedly. Against every prediction that they would fail to uphold the democracy they so wondrously restored, the Filipino people came through for democracy again, and again, and again.

Against rightwing coups and leftwing terrorists, in the plebiscite, and in the recent elections, they gave one astonishing demonstration after another of their deep sense of responsibility and commitment to democracy – as if to underscore what the rest of the world had refused to believe, that a people so poor could be so proud and jealous of their freedom.

We celebrate independence today just a few weeks from the convening of Congress, the act that will complete the shining circle of our political achievements. We have here the elected Senators and Representatives of that distinguished body.

We have here the proud achievement of our people: the judicial wisdom, the legislative will and the executive power of a democratic State – wisely divided by the Constitution, but here united by a common resolve to prove ourselves worthy of the sacrifices of our people.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast: To the Filipino People and the outstanding democratic example they have set before the world. May we, their leaders, always prove worthy of their trust.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Ateneo Law Alumni Homecoming

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Ateneo Law Alumni Homecoming**

[Delivered at the Mandarin Hotel, June 19, 1987]

WE'RE HOME, BACK IN A DEMOCRACY

President Aquino reacts to complaints of a sense of drift under her Administration. Her reply to those who make such complaints: "Get yourselves an engine and set yourself goals. The rest of the nation has done so." Now that Filipinos are back home in a democracy, it is not a time to whine but a time to keep going.

I understand that this is the first time an Ateneo Alumni Homecoming has the President of the Republic as guest of honor and speaker. That is because this is the first time you have a President who is virtually an Atenean. Aside from honorary doctorates from three Jesuit universities – Ateneo, Xavier and Fordham – I also get a lot of advice from Jesuits, some of it is even good.

I want to use this opportunity to react to one particular advice or complaint that I have received.

Some complain of a sense of drift under my Administration, and urge me to do something about it. Not too long ago, they complained of a sense of being pushed around and dragged into disaster. Father Bernas here knows that when we planned our march to freedom, we all believed that liberty would spontaneously give us back a sense of purpose.

At that time, it was the lack of freedom that gave us a sense of drift, because the rudder had been taken from our lives. We did not know where dictatorship was taking us, and so we gave up having any long-term aim in life. We drifted from day to day, waiting on rumors, living on speculations.

And then one man died and showed that a brave decision could end the sense of drift. That man's death gave us all a sense of purpose. Suddenly there was no question, among the best of us anyway, about what we wanted and what we needed to do. We were going for freedom – and we were prepared to do what was needed to get there.

You chose the man's wife to lead you. Not just anywhere she wanted, but to freedom, as we had all stipulated – to the freedom where every Filipino would have the right again to make of his life what he wanted.

We got there. We got to where we are now: the land of the free and, as it turned out, the land of the brave as well. For our journey was marked by astonishing acts of heroism and is now the most stirring chapter in the story of democracy.

Why, therefore, do some people complain of a sense of drift? Let's face it, 14 years of slavery has given them the habit of obedience, of wanting to be led by the nose.

Well, I'm not going to do it. Furthermore, the best of us don't want to be led by the nose. The best of us are enjoying our newly won freedom and are determined to make something useful out of it. By the best I mean the vast majority of our people.

As a result, the economy is taking off. All the studies show that, and, more reliably, you can feel it in the air. The energy and optimism are there again.

Democracy is firmly in place – its structure is complete. A Constitution and a Congress complete and balance the democratic institutions with which we started last year: a people's Presidency and an honest Supreme Court.

These things could not have been achieved by a people in drift.

And in fact, they were not. The people weren't drifting. They knew what they had: a democracy, and they backed me in defeating every challenge to it. They were with me all the way when I faced down threats to democracy from the Left and the Right. They were with me when I called for an all-out vote for a new Constitution that would enshrine our liberties and proclaim our hopes. And they were with me again when I called for a new Congress to support me.

Now I am asked to repudiate what the people have given us: a Congress that is both of their choice and of my sympathies, just to show that I'm in charge and we're not drifting. I am asked to steal a march on this grand assembly of men and women who, alone with me, enjoy the mandate of the people.

And who are those who ask me to derogate from the dignity and powers of this co-equal branch? People who will never get elected in a free election.

The elections left me a residual power to legislate until Congress convenes.

I shall use it.

Not sparingly, nor excessively; but *wisely*, as needed.

And yes, I shall use it to enact the initiatives I have made in regional autonomy and agrarian reform. But those initiatives must be informed by wider consultations.

The watchword is wisely. For in everything I do, I aim for success. It is not enough to be right; I also have to win. That is why my enemies, whom so many feared would overwhelm me, are all scattered.

I would rather achieve a modest success than be initially praised for taking ambitious courses that will, most likely, lead to total failure. It is not my way to grandstand. I must proceed like a President, with the due care and deliberation that the fate of a nation deserves.

To those who still complain of a sense of drift, all I can say is: Get yourselves an engine and set yourselves goals. The rest of the nation has done so. This nation, firmly secure in its freedom, is well on the road to recovery.

I am sure there are no drifters in this audience. My message this evening can be summed up briefly: we're home. This is where we longed to be through 14 years of shame and fear and slavery: back in a free country, with a chance to start over.

That's where we are, back in a democracy. And we have made, by all accounts, an impressive start. The nation's strength has been restored. The wounds have healed. The confidence is back. The pride in itself is such as the country has never shown before. All that remains is to keep going, stop whining, and keep building on the many things that we have already accomplished. That much still needs to be done should not daunt us, because this nation has done so much already.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Navy Day Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Navy Day**

[Delivered at the Philippine Navy Headquarters, Roxas Boulevard, June 23, 1987]

PEOPLE'S WAR AGAINST TERRORISM

Enemies from the Left and the Right continue in their vain attempts to bring down the regained democracy. Because the people reject them, they have intensified their efforts. Again, Filipinos are called upon to give all-out support to the military in its effort against the left- and rightwing terrorists. It is the people's peace and freedom that the terrorists seek to destroy. Clearly, it is now a people's war against terrorism.

The other day, Balweg and his party were attacked. He escaped. His party was not so lucky. We are on our 32nd murdered policeman. A grenade was thrown at the Comelec offices over the weekend. A grenade attack took more lives in Cebu.

Our enemies, on the Left and the Right, have not relented. Despite the stinging rebuke they received from the people in the last elections, the Left and the Right continue their vain attempts to bring down our democracy. Perhaps it is because of that rebuke that they have intensified their efforts. As the toll increases, it becomes increasingly clear that the price of liberty is not just eternal vigilance, but a mounting sacrifice of lives.

There is no help for it. Our policemen are the front line of the public defense. The first in the face of danger, the first in the list of casualties. They are the natural targets of terrorists who want to show that they can reach with their bullets what they could not seize with their promises, the hearts and minds of the Filipinos.

Last Independence Day, I called on all our people to give all-out support to our military effort against the left- and rightwing terrorists. I repeat that call today. I call on our people to report all suspicious activities and persons to the police and military authorities in the area. It is the people's peace and freedom that the terrorists seek to destroy. It is clearly now a people's war, a people's war against terrorism.

I expect the Defense Department, the Chief of Staff and the Police Chiefs to work out immediately an integrated approach that will use the power of the people to stop the terrorism against them.

In the meanwhile, I call on our naval forces to redouble your vigilance and your efforts to keep our borders secure, especially from arms landings. This is a tremendous task, given our coastline, and our small naval capabilities. But what is at stake here is freedom and what we have so painstakingly built up since the Revolution. We must do what we can with what we have. The terror must be contained and then destroyed. The last thing we need is a massive infusion of arms to our enemies.

I commend the naval forces for the great work it has done so far; not only in the military sphere but also in bringing relief to distressed areas of the country.

I commend the navy's land forces, the Philippine Marines for its particularly distinguished performance in the last elections in the South. Colonel Cabanlig has received our highest commendation for conduct that has made us truly proud to be his Commander.

We have achieved much since the Revolution: not only the consolidation of democracy but also a respectable measure of economic progress and military security. The elections have exposed the real strength of our enemies.

These attacks are signs of desperation, attempts to recoup in terms of fear what our enemies have lost in terms of credibility as popular political forces. We shall not let them.

To mark its 89th anniversary, the Philippine Navy renews and redoubles its commitment to defend the peace and freedom of our country.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Philippine Air Force

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Philippine Air Force

[Delivered at the Fernando Air Base, Batangas, June 27, 1987]

THE IDEAL AIR FORCE

With its speed and mobility, the Air Force should be able to strike back immediately when the insurgents strike in any part of the archipelago. This is the ideal, but unfortunately not the case. The Air Force lacks gunships and weaponry to fulfill its mission. And the country's ally has been advised on this deficiency. But the renewal of the country's fighting forces need not wait on the arrival of foreign equipment. Training must start now to meet the needs of the future.

It is a happy coincidence that I met yesterday with Air Force officers. This occasion gives me the opportunity to answer some of their concerns.

The first of those concerns is the inability of the Air Force, given its present organization and resources, to fulfill its mission as the fastest of the Armed Forces in providing security to the people.

Speed is ideally the essence of the air force. The mobility of the Air Force is Government's answer to the stealth and mobility of the insurgents. Its firepower, brought immediately to bear wherever the insurgents strike, is the best assurance we can give our people that, even in the farthest reaches of our widely spread archipelago, Government can protect them. That is the ideal. The reality is something else.

The Air Force officers I met with underscored the serious lack of gunships and weaponry that will enable the Air Force to fulfill its mission. The Government has repeatedly brought up this deficiency before the highest officials of our military ally. A few weeks ago, the first 10 helicopters were delivered. But this only begins to meet our requirements. I am assured, however, that every effort will be made to answer our needs.

Yet, even as we recognize the critical role of gunships and weaponry in the fight to protect our country from its internal enemies, we must never lose sight of the fundamental fact that it is people that make up armies; it is the individual that makes up a soldier.

The Armed Forces – airborne, earthbound or seagoing – are only as strong and effective as the individual fighting man that is its basic unit. It is in the individual soldier that we find the will to fight which is the moving spirit of victorious armies.

The renewal of the Philippine fighting forces need not wait on the arrival of foreign equipment. The most important work of military renewal should be taking place already.

It begins now, in this time of relative peace: *Si vis pacem, para bellum*, as the saying goes; if you want peace, prepare for war. The training of efficient fighting forces and capable commanders takes time. We must start to meet the needs of the distant future today.

It begins here, in schools like this, where the soldier gets his first taste of a life of rigor and total dedication, and learns that the object of his efforts cannot be wealth but honor.

Honor is the motivation and inspiration of the soldier. The soldier risks all for strips of colored cloth and pieces of bronze, because these are the age-old badges of honor and the signs of rank. It is therefore imperative that the procedure for the awarding of ranks and honors be transparent and objective, so that no sacrifice or outstanding performance is overlooked.

Very soon, the Defense Secretary, the Chief of Staff and I will meet on how we can improve the procedures for recognizing merit and awarding promotions.

In the last analysis, however, the best assurance of a promotion is your consistent performance. One of the officers I met with said that, unlike other professions where there is a one-time test for admission, the officer is tested every day of his life. The test becomes even more rigorous and persistent from the moment of his graduation from formal training.

Today, therefore, marks not an end of one period of your lives, but the serious start of the constant testing of your abilities and your character that will henceforth mark your lives. That test of a lifetime will decide whether you will cap your career with the highest honors and ranks that the Republic can give the men and women of its Armed Forces.

Unlike other graduations, this is not a welcome but a send-off. I wish you luck in the challenge you have bravely taken up to prove the mettle of the Filipino soldier.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the National Convention of the Philippine Judges Association

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the National Convention of the Philippine Judges Association

[Delivered at the Malacañang Palace, July 3, 1987]

DISPENSE JUSTICE SPEEDILY

Speaking before the Philippine Judges Association, President Aquino notes that the country is suffering from a crisis of confidence in its justice system longer than one can remember. Plain justice that should be dispensed by the courts is not working, partly because of the small budget allocated to the justice system. But this cannot be helped. Nearly half of the country's revenues are committed to foreign debt. Despite this, the men and women on the bench who dispense justice can do their share by resolving cases speedily.

Justice is the first virtue of institutions; it is the first duty of the State. Only after justice is served, do other concerns merit attention. The Lord is first just before he is compassionate; even as the Old Testament precedes the New.

The first in the order of priorities of any state, regardless of political philosophy, is order, order upheld by the rule of law. Not the order of a dictator which is merely the anarchy of his will. But the order of just laws that surrounds and binds us together in a free and orderly society. All our liberties and the rights that protect them rest upon this order of justice. And this order of justice rests on you, the judges.

Our country has many grave problems. Some will require many, many years for their solution: the debt problem, mass poverty. They also call for enormous resources. But some of the gravest problems require only the will to solve them. One such problem is justice.

This country has been suffering a crisis of confidence in its justice system for longer than any of us care to remember. Even under the Old Republic, justice was a joke. And I am not talking about grand ideas of social justice that are hard to pin down as practical programs. I am speaking of the simple justice required in cases that range from the theft of a carabao, the denial of an inheritance, to the swindle of a piece of land, the brazen refusal to pay an incontestable debt, and a plain assault on one's person.

These small matters make up the life of our society. People have to be secure in their persons and properties, however humble they are, however small their possessions may be.

As it is, it is only the rich, who can afford competent counsel, who dare to go to court. And even they hesitate.

It is because the poor have so little that so much depends on their keeping what they have. Nowhere does the denial of a right wreak so much havoc as among the poor, who can afford to lose so little. And yet, justice in the Philippines – and I mean the plain justice that should be dispensed by the courts – isn't working. It isn't even working for the rich. Ask any businessman what he thinks about resorting to the courts to settle any dispute.

Part of the reason is the small budget allocated to the justice system. Our courthouses are shanties and our court personnel, despite some effort on my part to increase salaries, remain grossly underpaid along with the rest of government. But there is no help for it – nearly half our revenues are committed to the foreign debt.

And yet, with all these deficiencies, there is much we can still do, and nowhere more than in the field of justice. In the end, it is not the courthouse, nor the salaries, but the judge – the man or the woman on the bench – who

dispenses justice. And he or she can do it just as well in humble, as in proud surroundings, with a full sense of honor more than with a fat wallet.

Justice today is given grudgingly and is slow; so speed it up. It does not take much experience to spot a delaying tactic by one or the other party to a case. Do not allow the parties to use the law to pervert the law. You can easily spot a malicious prosecution to punish or break the will of a litigant. Do not allow the law to be insulted. Throw out the case and throw the book at the lawyer who allows it.

“Do not pervert justice,” says Leviticus, “show neither partiality to the poor nor favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.”

Above all, finish the cases before you as quickly as you can. Delay is not the distinguishing mark of due process, despite what the lawyers say. Finish your cases quickly, there is always an appeal to make up for any oversight. But the worst injustice is the interminable delay that gives victory to the one who can afford it. This is the worst injustice, that nothing can repair.

Remember also, in this connection, that the danger today is not to the independence of the judiciary but to the integrity of judges.

Deuteronomy warns: “Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous. Follow justice and justice alone.”

You must deliver justice; but I, and soon the Congress, must deliver the laws. Justice must have teeth.

In light of recent events and increasing reports of common crimes, especially those involving firearms, I called yesterday for a meeting with the Justice Department and the Chief of Staff to work out the details of the following policies:

Bail for all common crimes shall be increased 10 times, especially crimes against persons and property and illegal possession of firearms.

All mission orders issued by any agency or instrumentality of government, other than the Philippine Constabulary and the National Bureau of Investigation are hereby revoked. Mission orders other than those duly issued by these agencies shall not be a defense in a prosecution for illegal possession of firearms.

I have instructed the Justice Department to call upon the Court Administrator of the Supreme Court and present a proposal by the Executive Branch that the trial of common crimes, especially those involving firearms, shall be given the highest priority and shall be speedily disposed of. As I said, delay is not the mark of due process. The swift accounting for crimes, the certain punishment of offenders, on the other hand, is the first and most essential attribute of justice. And we shall have it.

The fruit of righteousness, we are told, is peace; the effect of righteousness will be tranquility and confidence forever. These are also the conditions necessary for recovery and progress; and, quite plainly, what our people deserve after all they have been through.

Justice for all is one goal that is within our reach and present resources. All that is needed is integrity and the will.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the IBM Golden Anniversary

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the IBM Golden Anniversary

[Delivered at the Philippine Plaza Hotel, July 13, 1987]

PEOPLE AS THE GREATEST ASSET

People are the foundation of IBM's great success. The company has regarded people as its greatest asset and the human mind as its most important resource. Thus, in IBM Philippines, the greatest value added is the Filipino himself. IBM has also focused on support to education and on giving recognition and reward to intellectual achievements. For all these the President congratulates IBM on its 50th year.

First, let's get a few things straight. Pinky was working in IBM before I became President, and Manolo met her there. And they are not the reason Rey Reyes is in my Government. Although I must admit that his standing in IBM was the best testimonial of his talents and the invaluable contributions he could make to my Government.

I have to clear up these things because anything I say tonight will be judged in their light. Especially since I shall speak of merit, of the talents and dedication of people that are the foundation of IBM's great success.

If size and wealth were all that IBM is about, I would not say more than "Congratulations" this evening. But few companies have so pointedly regarded people as their greatest asset and the human mind as their most important resource. In IBM, by the nature of its work, the greatest value added is the human being; in IBM Philippines, the Filipino himself.

It is not surprising that IBM has made the development of the human being, inside and outside the company, the principal focus of its efforts. For IBM is as dedicated a profit-taker as any business in the world, and better at it than most. Its business just happens to be people.

IBM makes its money by using the best in people, by improving their intellectual command of their environment, and using their talents to the fullest extent in the operation and development of machines and programmes to which IBM has addicted the world. I must add that this has been to the world's great improvement and benefit. (I am still a mother and Pinky is working here.)

It is again not surprising that, in discharging its corporate social responsibility, IBM has focused on support to education and on giving recognition and reward to intellectual achievements. To celebrate its anniversary, a million has been earmarked for scholarships in higher learning. That's the essence of IBM's social thrust: to make people smart, smart enough to use IBM. This also means helping the country develop so it will need and use IBM.

There is nothing wrong with that. On the contrary, there's everything right with it. Nothing is more useful and lasting than an activity that draws on the most number of instincts to support it; on compassion as much as on calculation, on enlightened self-interest as on the most generous impulse of philanthropy. IBM has had the luck to be both good and smart, for itself and the country.

Before I conclude my remarks, may I extend my congratulations to Dr. Rafael Guerrero for receiving the IBM Science and Technology Award. His achievements in improved food production have earned him the recognition of his science peers throughout the world and the gratitude of many nations, not the least ours.

His methods, however, deserve equal recognition and greater notice. For Dr. Guerrero achieved success by making the most of the little he had to work with. Particularly notable is his use of easily available, cheap native resources. That is why his work is so useful to us. For Filipinos have little to work with.

While it is true this country has made a fresh start, it has had to do so with old burdens: the burdens of mistakes that others made and we must pay for.

This injustice is a given. So is our determination to succeed despite it. And people like Dr. Guerrero are showing us how. We are grateful to IBM for calling our attention to his work.

To IBM, my congratulations on your 50th anniversary. I wish you another 50 years in the Philippines.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the creation of the Cordillera Administrative Region

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the creation of the Cordillera Administrative Region**

[Released on July 15, 1987]

AUTONOMY FOR THE CORDILLERA

Granting autonomy to the Cordillera does not, in any sense, subdivide the territory of the Philippines. The aim of autonomy is the strengthening of the whole by means of strengthening of its parts. By the special attention the Cordillera will give to itself, the State becomes empowered to pursue its objective of freedom and prosperity.

I have signed this day the Executive Order creating the Cordillera Administrative Region. This is meant to pave the way for the autonomy of this region that Congress, pursuant to the Constitution, shall enact.

The intense discussions and even the tragic events that attended the formulation of this order both underscore the importance of granting autonomy and the equal importance of reaffirming the overriding duty and recognition we all owe to the one democratic State that rules all our lands.

Autonomy within the State, as the State understands it, can mean no derogation of its territorial integrity or its essential authority over all who were and shall be born under the protection of its arms, the security of its laws, and in the dignity conferred by its great charter of freedom.

This first measure of autonomy, and all other measures that shall follow upon it, cannot in any sovereign sense subdivide the territory of our State. On the contrary, the aim of autonomy is the further empowerment of the whole, by the strengthening of its parts. By the special attention that an autonomous unit of the State will give itself, we expect the State to be, overall, further empowered to pursue its timeless objectives; prosperity; and honor abroad to the one Philippines.

Mabuhay ang Republika.

Mabuhay ang Kalayaan.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino during her visit to Bicol Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During her visit to Bicol**

[Released on July 16, 1987]

RECOVERY AND PROGRESS FOR BICOL

President Aquino expresses her deep concern for the problems of the Bicol Region. She stresses that the success of the region, and the economy as a whole, depends on private initiative and the corresponding infrastructure to make enterprise productive and profitable. Thus, in addition to credit which has been released, the prices of energy in the region will have to be studied. The President also vows to end all threats to peace and freedom before her term ends.

Let me start by thanking the men and women who worked tirelessly to make these consultations a success. Two of them are religious. Archbishop Legaspi, the Chairman of the Regional Coordinating Body, and Secretary Ting Jayme, known in the Cabinet as The Monsignor. May I also thank co-chairman Judge Bonto, and the man that my surprised staff in Malacañang calls the less controversial Arroyo, Commissioner Jack Arroyo.

Levity aside, may I say that every concern that has been expressed here has been duly noted. They will be referred to the appropriate Departments for consideration and, if merited, for immediate action.

In the meantime, we have noted the deplorable condition of the Maharlika Highway, for which I hope we can come up with a better name. Attention has also been called to the need for more school buildings and the repair of farm-to-market roads as well as the provision of bridges.

The success of our economic recovery program turns on private initiative. It is therefore imperative to provide the basic infrastructure to make enterprise productive and profitable.

Initially, I would like to announce that we have released almost P300 million of the P568 million that has been programmed for this region in 1987. I would like to announce the following releases for infrastructure projects in Region V:

For national roads
For barangay roads
For flood control
And for water supply

I am hereby directing the Secretary of Public Works to include in the budget of his Department for 1988 the amount of P75 million for the Quirino Highway. For the Maharlika Highway, in addition to the P20 million allocated for the restoration of portions of the highway, he is directed to provide P2 million for detailed engineering work so that the P290 million project can be submitted to the OECF for additional funding.

We have released all funds for school buildings, totalling P38 million.

Again, our thrust is recovery and progress through private enterprise. We are aware that credit is the lifeblood of enterprise and that it is very hard to get it for small and medium scale industries. I should like to announce that P808,000 has already been released to the Department of Trade and Industry to help this sector. The Development

Bank of the Philippines has meanwhile resumed regular lending operations for agriculture and small/medium scale industries.

In addition to credit, a further, and perhaps the most critical factor in development, is energy.

We shall consider the issue you have raised about the prices of energy in the region despite the proximity of energy sources. This is an issue that requires deeper study. In the meanwhile, may I reiterate our policy of encouraging private sector participation in small power generation. The NEA has also programmed the construction of several small hydro plants in the region: two in 1988, five in 1989 and four in 1990.

We recognize the continuing threat to the security of persons and property in the region, posed by the New People's Army. Let me only reiterate my vow: to end all threats to peace and freedom before my term is over. And to that end we are bending every armed resource we have.

I ask you to be patient, and to be brave. For I have called for a People's War against the Communist insurgency and against continuing fascist attempts to destroy our freedom. The hurt they have inflicted has been terrible indeed. But they have lost the war, even if they continue fighting. Democracy has been their irreversible defeat. And democracy is here to stay. We shall, as I have vowed, mop up these elements and give this country the wide and permanent peace that it richly deserves.

Again, may I thank the organizers of this consultation. To the people of Bicol, may I say that you are always in my thoughts, and high in my esteem. You stood solidly for freedom and democracy even through the dictatorship, and gave me and my Government some of the widest and strongest support in the country. My thanks to you. In the days and months to come, you will see how well I have remembered this day.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the signing of the Omnibus Investments Code

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the signing of the Omnibus Investments Code**

[Released on July 17, 1987]

A BASIC FRAMEWORK TO ENCOURAGE INVESTMENTS

The basic framework that will guide and encourage investments in the economy has been laid with the signing of the Omnibus Investments Code. Freedom and stability have been put in place while the necessary economic policies have been issued and are being implemented. The country is now back in the mainstream of the world's growth economies. However, much more can be done to promote industrial peace.

Two and a half months ago, I spoke before many of you who had gathered at the PICC for the meeting of the business community with the President.

At that time, reviewing how far we had come and looking ahead in the direction we were heading, I said we were no longer talking of just economic recovery but of growth.

The economic indicators that have since become available appear to bear this out. Our real GNP grew by 5.5 percent in the first quarter, something we haven't experienced since the late '70s.

In particular, we are proud of this feat because it is investments that led GNP growth with an increase of 23 percent; and it is industry which led the way with a 9.9 percent growth.

I am also specially pleased with the results of the last election. If you recall, I asked you at that meeting to vote for my candidates "if you still believe in Cory Aquino." I made that appeal throughout the country, to all sectors. Getting 21 out of 22 senators thus far proclaimed, is not a bad way of learning the level of confidence our country still has in my Government, not to mention the strength of our people's reborn faith in democratic institutions.

I think, ladies and gentlemen, we must all finally agree that this country is off to a good start.

But it is still just a start. Poverty and unemployment continue to hold the majority of our countrymen in their grip. Our economy is still tossed about on the surface of international economic forces over which we have no control whatsoever.

We are certainly proud of our accomplishments so far. And I am deeply pleased with and proud of my team. We have gone farther than any would have thought possible, and we did not violate a single democratic principle nor did we act in the kind of haste that we would live to regret. We showed that democracy, for all the apparent confusion, need not be sacrificed for speed and efficiency. Yet our accomplishments have hardly made a dent on the legacy of problems that the dictatorship left us.

We shall not rest on our achievements. On the contrary, our successes will spur us to greater efforts. For every advance we have made has merely opened a wider view of the many problems that still lie ahead.

Today, with the signing of the Omnibus Investments Code, we have taken another giant step forward. We are putting in place the basic framework that will guide and encourage investments in our economy.

With political stability, and now this Code, most of the elements of a supportive climate for investments are in place. We need only to enhance industrial peace.

It is gratifying to note that with the efforts of the Department of Labor and Employment, the number of strikes for the first six months of the year has dropped 22 percent in the last year. More significantly, the number of workers involved in strikes has gone down by 60 percent and the man-days lost by 56 percent.

Still there is more that can be done if we are to accelerate the setting up of factories that will employ our workers and compete effectively in the world market.

Our Constitution itself enjoins the principle of shared responsibility between workers and employers in the development of the economy, and mandates the State to promote industrial peace through the voluntary resolution of disputes.

In this light, even as we acknowledge our responsibility to protect the rights of workers and to promote their welfare, we also acknowledge our responsibility to foster the right climate for investments and growth.

Without losing sight of the substantive gains made by the Secretary of Labor, I want to see how all of us, working together, can further the cause of industrial peace as an essential factor in our take-off. I would therefore like the Department of Labor, the Department of Trade and Industry, and the representatives of labor and management to meet and submit to me as soon as possible a realistic program of action that will bring industrial peace to our economy.

The stage is set for the great cooperative effort. All the institutions necessary to our freedom and stability have been put in place. The necessary economic policies have been issued and are being implemented. We are back in the mainstream of the world's growth economies.

In ten days, Congress will convene and to them will pass much of the power I have exercised to bind our nation's wounds, restore its strength and give it the confidence to be all it can.

I am counting on all of you to carry your share of the work that must be done.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Agrarian Proclamation

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Agrarian Proclamation**

[Released on July 22, 1987]

DEFINING AGRARIAN REFORM

Agrarian reform is one of the means by which poverty can be eliminated. Its objective is higher productivity and higher incomes for as many Filipinos as quickly as possible. The key to agrarian reform is the creation of a productive agricultural sector upon which the foundation for the industrialization of the country may be established.

We have discussed and debated the issues for longer than any of us care to recall at this point. The time is up. A decision has been made. Before announcing it formally at this meeting, let me reiterate the principles of my idea of agrarian reform.

Agrarian reform is a means, one of many, to the highest aim I have set my Administration: the elimination of poverty by putting the Filipino to productive work that will pay him a decent livelihood.

The objective is higher productivity and higher incomes for as many Filipinos as quickly as possible. The prosperity and well-being, not necessarily the equality of all, is our aim. That is why I have said that agrarian reform cannot merely subdivide the present miseries on the land. It must effect a substantial improvement. The key therefore is the creation of wealth in agriculture, which is the main feature of our economy. By that creation we hope to establish a firm foundation for the industrialization of our country that can alone assure its final and genuine independence, and a sustained improvement in the lives of our people.

The discussions during the preparation of this program have convinced me that the Constitution was wise to provide for the common counsel of Executive and Legislature in the full implementation of agrarian reform in our country. The proclamation and executive order go as far as the Constitution and a sense of realism allow me.

In this Proclamation and Order, the Executive has said the final word. What remains now is for you, my extensions and instrumentalities, to carry out the law as therein set forth. The discussion here, in this Branch, is over. The real work begins.

I want to thank all those who were principally involved in this project for their dedication and hard work, for that combination of passionate commitment and intellectual acuity that have left their marks, I believe for the better, in these laws that I shall sign today.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the necrological services for Local Government Secretary Jaime Ferrer

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the necrological services for the Local Government Secretary Jaime Ferrer**

[Delivered at the St. Andrews Church, Parañaque, August 7, 1987]

DEMOCRACY CAN SURVIVE

During the necrological services for the assassinated Local Government Secretary Jaime Ferrer, President Aquino reminds the people never to give up the rule of law which they long fought for. Democracy can survive the death of noble men.

I campaigned for him in '84. He campaigned for me in '86, where he proved invaluable. I offered him a post in the Cabinet after the victory, but he declined it. He wanted to enjoy in private life the liberty and rights for which he had fought. In the midst of the crisis last year, I prevailed on him finally to take on the thankless and, it turns out, the fatal job of Local Government.

I had not expected him to win in '84, against a worthy opponent, albeit in an unfair contest. But he won, and in the process proved himself not only the better man but a smarter politician. Virtue and traditional politics, like oil and water, don't ordinarily mix. But they did in this man. He was not only right, but he could win. A combination I always prefer. There are no points for mere effort or good intentions.

His devotion to country and his commitment to democracy were complete and uncompromising in war and in peace. And they expressed themselves less in words than in actions of unfailing and unmistakable patriotism.

He brought to public service the regimen and directness of the soldiering life that was his first love and the constant standard by which he tested his effort and those of others.

He was curt in manner and sharp in his speech. And always passionate on the issues he carefully selected. He was one of the few men in Government who believed that their time is not their own to waste.

This was the quality that endeared him most to me. During both campaigns, he was the only politician who let me speak punctually on schedule. The moment I arrived, he cut short whoever was speaking and gave me the microphone.

In my Cabinet, he went straight to the point and declared himself clearly on one side or the other of crucial issues: honesty, responsiveness and accountability in local government, firmness in dealing with revolutionary terrorism or plain political gangsterism.

To his long and distinguished record of achievements, one sadly adds the dark distinction of being the first Cabinet Secretary to be assassinated in the history of the Republic.

Jimmy made a lot of enemies; but we did not think that his straightforwardness would create his killers. He received death threats, but he rejected bodyguards. In his old age, he may have thought there was a cleaner way to die than nature offered. And he was the man to take it.

And he did, in the end, as the best of our race have taken it in the past few years.

His murder is the unwritten paragraph of my State of the Nation. It states the most serious challenge that faces us today: Can we have order without tyranny, and peace without oppression? Must democracy fight with the weapons of its enemies; with treachery and cowardice?

There were no assassinations of public officials under the dictatorship. Perhaps it is not abuse that provokes violence, but decency that is mistaken for weakness.

Jimmy's death states the problem; his life gives us the first part of the solution: fearlessness. As we look for ways by which democracy can defend itself without dishonoring itself, let us never lose heart, never be afraid, never give up that for which our people fought and sacrificed these many years: the rule of law; a Government that, even in emergencies, conducts itself with decency towards its people.

Democracy can survive the death of Jimmy Ferrer, as it can survive the deaths that may follow, although I pray that his will be the last. But democracy cannot survive the adoption of the ways of its enemies.

We shall continue to fight anarchy with law and murder with justice. There are more than enough laws for the purpose. What is needed is the will and the intelligence to enforce them. For as long as the imminent danger is only to public officials, there will be no Constitutional shortcuts to public safety. Let every flagstone on the road be the grave of a servant of the people, but the light of liberty and the protection of rights will be with us all the way to permanent peace.

This is how Jimmy Ferrer would have wanted it, this man whose whole life and tragic death have been one uninterrupted and uncompromised service to duty, to country, and democracy.

Let us hope that he is not the last of his kind.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the Manila Stock Exchange

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the Manila Stock Exchange**

[Delivered at the Manila Hotel on August 7, 1987]

MODERATION DURING PROSPERITY

There is renewed activity at the Manila Stock Exchange, after a long dry spell. President Aquino reminds the members to practice moderation in a season of prosperity.

I do not know if the recent activity of the Exchange reflects the revival of our economy or simply the revived spirits of the brokers. Whatever, I know how busy you have all been making money hand over fist. Those of you here, who stuck it out in the Exchange, after the long dry spell, must be taking all this as the just reward of your unflagging faith in our country. Or in the credulity of your clients. And I guess you deserve it. But as you take your well-deserved drink at the well, please do not empty it. The stock exchange runs on faith and credibility. You saw what happened when your colleagues, who I hope are no longer with you, played with that faith and credibility, making large but short-term fortunes at the expense of the economy and the long-term credibility of the Exchange. As I said, it's been a long dry spell, and you deserve a drink of prosperity; but, as the commercial goes, drink moderately. If you don't, if each of you reaches for more than a moderate share, it will happen all over again. And I don't know how we can revive again public confidence in stock exchanges. The law, as experience shows, is not enough to prevent abuses. In the end, you regulate yourselves. You have to watch each other, that no one of you eats the whole goose that's been laying the golden eggs.

I wish you continued success and another 60 years of service to our country.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the occasion of the Philippine Constabulary-Integrated National Police Anniversary

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the occasion of the Philippine Constabulary-Integrated National Police Anniversary**

[Delivered on August 8, 1987]

PROTECTING THE PEOPLE'S RIGHTS

On the occasion of Philippine Constabulary-Integrated National Police Day, the President assures the people that the government will protect their cherished rights and liberties through democratic methods. She also announces sweeping measures to eliminate the alarming proliferation of firearms.

Yesterday we buried a champion of democracy, and a friend of order and liberty. He was a soldier-veteran of one war of national liberation, and of another struggle for democratic restoration. He was a friend of the Armed Forces and one with us in our commitments in the military. He was raised to be a soldier, and died a member of the President and Commander-in-Chief's official family. Yesterday, we buried one of us.

His killers are still at large. That is a fact. It is a fact that has been shoved, since last Sunday, in our faces: in your faces and mine by our critics. You would think from their griping that my only duty as President is to ride shotgun for my Cabinet Secretaries. And that our soldiers and police all but exhaust their usefulness when a brutal crime happens. And then they are useful only as the butt of insults.

But you and I know that nothing can stop an assassin's bullet, that there is no sure protection against treachery and deadly cowardice. If there were such protection, our enemies would choose other means to strike at us, and at the liberty and political order we represent and are trying to uphold.

We are blamed for every murder that happens and forgotten for the many more crimes that have not been committed; for the definitive reverse that the insurgency has suffered since we reconstituted the Armed Forces and the police as forces of integrity for democratic order.

But let us not complain at the treatment we have received. For we are not in office, and you are not in uniform; for compliments and flattery.

We are here for a job whose demands will increase with every success we meet, for our enemies will grow desperate and more cruel with every defeat, every failure of their persistent efforts to sow division among us.

We are confronted by a challenge that grows in difficulty with each day of liberty that our people now enjoy.

That challenge is to protect democracy by the methods of democracy, to fight a war for enduring liberty and permanent peace with methods that will enrich the life and dignity of the democratic society that you and I and our people have created.

Thus far, the casualties have largely been our own. Scores of soldiers and public officials have been killed.

We will take our losses manfully.

I have said that there will be no Constitutional shortcuts to public safety for as long as the victims are largely from our ranks. We shall protect our people's cherished rights and liberties by methods that will honor and not diminish

them, even if they help the guilty escape as often as they protect the innocent. For the overriding aim is to protect and enhance democracy, not to preserve it as an inviolate memento in a garrison state.

Still, we must show that democracy is not defenseless. That, with all due respect to the guarantees of the Constitution, we can strike at our enemies with the vigor and effect that will overcome their traditional treachery.

In the next few days, the Armed Forces and the police will adopt sweeping measures; measures aimed at eliminating the alarming proliferation of firearms and impunity of crimes in our society.

Checkpoints and searches will be increased and intensified.

The Supreme Court has rationalized the procedure for obtaining warrants.

Let me make myself clear to you, the forces of order: no one is to be spared, specially public officials.

A public office is a private risk. If an official cannot stand the heat, he should get out. No one shall be allowed to plead his office as a ground for exemption from the rigor of the security measures you will undertake. We have directed the Customs to crack down on all persons bringing in firearms from abroad. The more you catch, and the more important the person, the more you will rise in my esteem, and the greater will be my gratitude and that of our people.

Our people, I assure you, will back you up all the way. Because they know, and your conduct will prove it, that you are here for their safety.

These directives are addressed to the military, police and civilian authorities, whose close coordination and unstinting cooperation are indispensable to the success of this campaign. Work together. The success of one is the success of all. We are one Government; one force for order.

Today we celebrate the 86th anniversary of the Philippine Constabulary and the 12th anniversary of the PC-INP. Let us celebrate them as the people expect us to: with action.

Again, so there is no ambiguity, let me give you the standard by which we shall judge success. As I have said, there are no points for mere effort or good intentions. The standard will be mathematical: the more you catch, the more you confiscate, the better. Go now, and do your duty. You have our people's fullest support.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the National Laity Week

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On the National Laity Week

[Delivered at the Manila Hotel, August 17, 1987]

A 2,000 YEAR-OLD REVOLUTION

Two thousand years ago, a Man chose suffering, humiliation, and death to save humanity. It was a revolution far more sweeping than EDSA, the President declares. As for our own revolution, it began from within and must continue within.

The peaceful, almost joyful, February Revolution that made us free had its seeds in a darker, sadder time; in lives of solitary suffering.

Ninoy's part in the Revolution was fated not to be at EDSA, but to make EDSA possible. It began in the solitude of his cell, where, as he put it, Christ "stood me face to face with myself and forced me to look at my emptiness and nothingness, and then helped me to discover Him who has really never left my side." At that moment, Ninoy found his peace and his strength, and began the journey that ended in our freedom.

In the rest of the country, things were not as wretched, but, in varying degrees the vast majority of Filipinos lived lives of shame and desperation. It was a time like no other in our history, apart from the War, when moral choices were made so clear and yet so difficult: between a life of submission and spiritual integrity; between bondage and life, on the one hand, and danger and the promise of freedom, on the other. Between despair and hope, and the price of working to realize that hope.

It was, in the last analysis, a choice made by an even earlier and more sweeping revolution, begun and completed 2,000 years ago – by One who chose humiliation, suffering and death for himself to overcome humiliation, suffering and death for us all. That one solitary victory continues to change our lives today more than, as a poet wrote, all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned.

One of the great proponents of democracy said that governments should be of the people, by the people, and for the people. But all nations having "a new birth of freedom" must be first "under God."

We are now free and are enjoying the fruits of freedom to the full. We are also paying its price in grave responsibilities and in mistakes committed, and in the abuses that freedom encourages. But the chief price is continuing labor and eternal vigilance to keep freedom alive and make it meaningful for all; the chief price is heeding the call of our first Liberator.

Ninoy, quoting Thomas A' Kempis, sought to understand the demands of that call. In *Laur*, Ninoy wrote: "And when He sent His disciples into the world, He sent them not to have temporal joys but to meet great battles; not to have honors but injuries; not to be idle but to labor; not to rest but to bring forth much good fruit in patience and good works."

We in Government, all of us the laity, are fully aware of how much we have yet to overcome. The past will always dog our footsteps, as the debt burden, as corrupt values, as continuing hunger for power and undying thirst to return this country to slavery, deceit and death.

The freedoms we enjoy can be used as levers for their own destruction. In the law and justice we respect, we create the space for conspiracies to destroy the law and deny justice. Though we seek to do right, and work with all our might, there will still be those who by indolence, indifference, malice and violence, seek to undo our best efforts.

As we labor to improve the quality of our lives, let us remember that our Revolution that began from within must continue within, where the search for God's light can alone succeed. As a wise man wrote in Proverbs: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and he will make your paths straight."

On the occasion of National Laity Week, may more of us walk with Christ along straight paths.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Ninoy Aquino's Death Anniversary Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Ninoy Aquino's Death Anniversary**

[Delivered at the Sto. Domingo Church, August 21, 1987]

THE EXAMPLE OF A MAN NAMED NINOY

President Aquino compares liberty to a tree, in whose shade Filipinos today enjoy peace and dignity. This tree grows from the grave of Ninoy Aquino, and continues to draw its greatest nourishment from his sacrifice.

This is the fourth year we observe the death anniversary of Ninoy, the second in the freedom he purchased with his life.

The tree of liberty, in whose shade we enjoy today the pursuits of peace and a life of dignity, grows from his grave and continues to draw its greatest nourishment from his sacrifice.

The Revolution that restored democracy in our country drew its ideals and courage from his example: the example of a man who could have avoided, but instead resolutely accepted, seven and a half years of imprisonment, three years of exile, and then a bullet in the head.

No other Filipino was like that. Because no other Filipino loved his people so purely, so much. Those are not my words, but those of one of the anonymous millions who stood outside this Church and made up the Great Funeral that became our country's Great March to freedom.

Without him, I wouldn't be here, the President of this great and proud country. Without him, some of you here would not enjoy the dignity of serving in a Government believed in by the people and respected by the world. Without him, no one could write freely, nor even think without fear. Without him we would all still be sitting in that darkness from which only courage and faith could rescue us. And he gave us that courage and taught us that faith.

Some of us would be fugitives, but most would have struck a separate and shameful peace with the powers in this country.

What he did, what he suffered, and what he achieved by his death, makes it impossible to call anyone else in living memory a hero. I can say this without immodesty or fear of contradiction. Because with our own eyes, we have all seen him rise from his seat on China Airlines Flight 811 and resolutely walk to his death because he knew that this, finally, would be the dictatorship's fatal mistake.

I hope that people don't forget that. But if they do, the loss is theirs. For with the loss of that sense of obligation to Ninoy's memory, they lose their identity with the Philippines as it stands now in the eyes of the world: a nation of courage, of impossible achievements made possible by the unbelievable sacrifice of one man who recreated a nation in shame into a race of heroes.

If they forget Ninoy, it doesn't matter. For his memory will live on in the best of us, in those of us who model our lives after his ideals and his sacrifice, in those of us who are Filipinos as the world understands that name today.

His death has one more consequence. It puts a special value on our freedom and privileges. Each abuse we take of our liberties, each piece of official corruption, is a mockery of what he died for, a waste of the life he gave. For we wouldn't be free, nor would those of us who are public officials be in office, had he not given his life. Remember

that when you libel your neighbor, or when you, as a public official, put your hand in the public till or shake down a businessman in the course of an investigation.

Beyond the intrinsic value that our rights and liberties have, and beyond the inherent quality of trust of public offices, Ninoy's death has given them all a special value. He bought them for us with his life.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the occasion of the Philippine Coconut Authority Week

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the occasion of the Philippine Coconut Authority Week**

[Released on August 24, 1987]

PROTECTING THE COCONUT INDUSTRY

Millions of Filipinos depend on the coconut industry for their livelihood, and this country accounts for 70 percent of the world's coconut exports. In view of this, the Philippines must immediately counter the anti-coconut campaign of US soybean interests and check the abuses of some irresponsible coconut and copra exporters.

The following few facts about coconut should underscore the importance of this occasion.

Coconut represents 19 percent of the total value of agricultural production, or P12.5 billion out of the total of P63 billion. It contributes about 3-5 percent of the national income.

More importantly, for this people-powered and people-centered administration, by one count, over eight and a half million Filipinos directly depend on the coconut industry for their livelihood. If we include the others who are involved in the processing and trading of coconut products, this number could easily reach 10 million or 17 percent of the population of this country. This is one estimate. Another estimate has roughly 30 percent of our population engaged in this industry, one way or another. There are 2.8 million hectares of coconut planted land. At one family per hectare that would be 2.8 million families or, with an average of six persons per family, 16,800,000 people.

Either way, you are talking about a sizable portion of our population, a great chunk of our economy. These facts alone call us to give high priority and very serious concern to the industry. In the light of information we have received of direct threats to the coconut industry by adverse developments abroad and certain abuses at home, the problems of the industry should have the highest priority.

There is a concerted effort abroad to bring coconut products into disrepute and thereby deny coconut its traditional markets abroad. As you know, the Philippines accounts for 70 percent of the world exports of coconut products. Soybean interests in the United States are alleging that coconut products, like cooking oil, are hazardous to one's health, contrary to the conclusions of the most reputable foreign researchers that coconut is good for the health, that it is indeed the tree of life as we say here. In the Western markets, the allegation that something is hazardous to health can be fatal to that product.

Meanwhile, at home, we are not above shooting ourselves in the feet. Irresponsible copra exporters are bypassing the regulatory measures of the Philippine Coconut Authority and inviting suspicion abroad, especially in Europe, that our coconut-related exports are not up to Western quality standards. As you know, there is already a wave of protectionism in the developed countries that are sweeping Third World products out of their markets. Let's not help this effort directed against us by narrow self-interest.

The first development can be deadly. Unless the Western markets are disabused of the lies being spread by our competitors abroad, 16 million people stand to lose their livelihoods. In that event, land reform will truly be subdividing only misery, at least on coconut lands.

I am pleased to note that the Philippine Coconut Authority, the various associations of coconut producers, and the Coconut Planters Bank have taken the initiative to fight this anti-tropical oils lobby in the United States. I wish the

delegation that is leaving for the United States all the luck. They will need it. Our only protection against the economic devastation threatened by that lobby is the truth about coconut. This is a threat against which our Mutual Defense Pact is helpless. What we need here is a Non-Aggression Pact with the Western economies, a pact that will be to our mutual interest. For if this industry goes under, so will the interests that we are pledged in common to defend here in the Pacific. Let me put this more clearly, we will not let the Western Alliance starve our people while they hold up the shield of the Alliance in the Pacific.

The second development is something we can address immediately. I have directed the Philippine Coconut Authority to exercise the most stringent regulation of our coconut and copra exports to assure their quality.

The fatal curse of our numerous export campaigns has been the failure of Filipino exporters to maintain high quality. We have been our own worst enemy. We can't recover and grow with the usual "Take the money and run" attitude. That's for bank robbers, not Filipinos. I would think that, having retrieved our country from the edge of disaster and from the hands of crooks, we would cherish it now for all the dangers we have braved to save it.

I have been apprised of the other problems of the industry, especially the decline in productivity despite the increase in hectareage devoted to coconut and the unauthorized operation for private interest of government-owned oil mills. This should be stopped immediately. I look forward to a comprehensive report from the Authority on these problems and their proposed solutions. The Authority's inputs on land reform for the coconut areas will be very helpful to the Congress in arriving at a rational and pragmatic program for these areas, a program that will build on the present strength of the industry, rather than undermine it.

The Philippine Coconut Authority has been quietly doing its work. Now that it has honest and competent men on the Board, few hear of its important activities. I appreciate this silent industry and dedication on the part of the Authority. Your efforts have not escaped my grateful notice. Presidential Counsel Teodoro Locsin does not waste any opportunity to tell me of the current developments, and especially the problems, of the industry and the work you are doing. I have appointed to the Philippine Coconut Authority men of probity and dedication. It has now a very strong Board and Chairman. Each of them was carefully selected for his intelligence and dedication to the industry. That was important for so much depends on the performance of this body.

I have myself signed an Executive Order, No. 259, that mandates the progressive use of coconut products by foreign and locally owned manufacturers. As protectionism abroad restricts the market for this essential product, we must widen the market at home.

The Executive and, I am sure, the Congress stand ready to help the industry in every way. May I congratulate the Philippine Coconut Authority on the work it has done to protect the industry and advance its interests. You have my fullest support.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on petroleum prices

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On petroleum prices

[Released on August 25, 1987]

THE OIL PRICE ISSUE

Because of positive developments abroad, the President orders the reduction of customs duties on crude oil importations from 20 percent to 15 percent, as well as the prices of gasoline, kerosene, diesel oil, and LPG. She urges the people to “roll with the punches delivered abroad.”

Raising petroleum prices was bad politics but a necessary measure at the time it was made. Government is not a popularity contest.

Last March, we asked our people to brace themselves for a mid-year increase in petroleum prices because the world crude oil price had risen from \$13.15 to \$ 17.03 per barrel.

The Oil Price Stabilization Fund enables us to adjust petroleum prices gradually whenever there is a world oil price increase.

We should have increased petroleum prices as early as March 1987. But we wanted to delay as long as we could a decision that would undoubtedly burden our people. By June, however, we had emptied the Stabilization Fund. Meanwhile, the international crude oil price continued to rise.

Towards the middle of this year, our decision to increase prices was reinforced by certain adverse developments in the Middle East. These developments specially affected our principal oil suppliers in the Middle East.

The world continues to follow these developments with great apprehension as tankers negotiate the mine-filled Gulf.

Anticipating a turn for the worse, the industrialized countries began stockpiling oil supplies both for the coming winter and a worsening situation in the Gulf. As a result, oil supply tightened, and the price rose further.

Again, we were affected by these developments.

Masakit man sa aking kalooban na payagan ang pagtaas ng halaga ng iba't ibang produkto na nagbubuhay sa langis napilitan kaming gawin ito.

Nalalaman ko na itong hakbang na ito ay magdudulot ng kahirapan sa ating lahat. Ngunit ang katotohanan at alam nating lahat ito: Hindi natin hawak ang halaga ng langis.

Just the same, Government made sure that the price of fuel oil directly used for generating electricity or for powering factories was increased only 31 centavos per liter. This means that despite the increase, cost of production increased only by a very small amount for manufacturers. As a result, we did not expect prices of goods in the market to increase a great deal. We relied on the conscience of the business community not to treat a smaller increase in fuel oil price as a source of profit, but as a means to moderate the prices of their products in the market.

As I said, it was a painful decision but necessary at the time. Yet even as I held to that decision, I requested the Energy Regulatory Board to continue studying ways and means to reduce the prices of petroleum products despite the world price increase that had taken place and the further increases we were anticipating.

Today I am happy to announce that a way has been found because of recent developments abroad.

We have noted a reversal in the upward movement of crude oil price. We think, and hope and pray, that crude oil prices will remain stable for the rest of the year. Some experts assure us that it will be lower than the earlier worldwide projection of higher prices by the end of 1987. At any rate, the stockpiling of oil supplies by the industrialized countries is nearly completed, and there is an increased supply of crude in the market. As a result, we expect prices to either drop or remain stable.

At the same time, our strong dollar reserves promise to maintain the current peso-dollar exchange rate.

While we expect these healthy signs to be reflected in lower crude oil prices, an actual lowering hasn't happened. Still, we have reason to hope.

I am pleased now to translate these hopeful developments into a change in price policy.

By virtue of the powers vested in me by Section 401 of the Tariff and Customs Code, I have ordered the reduction of customs duties on crude oil importations from 20 percent to 15 percent. This will mean a loss of revenues of about P1.7 billion that would otherwise fund projects necessary to economic recovery. We will just have to find some other way to make up for this loss.

To partially make up for the shortfall, I have turned to the Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) to subsidize the price reduction that I will now announce. The PAGCOR, pursuant to its mandate to devote its revenues to sociocivic projects, has been directed to release the amount of P300 million to enable the Price Stabilization Fund, which is now depleted, to be replenished. This will enable the Fund to continue subsidizing lower petroleum prices.

I therefore recommend to the Energy Regulatory Board the following price reductions as early as possible:

Premium	gasoline	from	P8.20	to	P7.50.
Regular	gasoline	from	P7.85	to	P7.15.
Kerosene		from	P5.69	to	P5.30.
Diesel	oil	from	P5.64	to	P5.25.
LPG from P4.46 to P4.15.					

While we shall seize every chance to reduce prices or keep them low, we will not shirk our duty to do what must be done for the stability of our economy and society. If the situation takes a turn for the worse again, we shall consider another increase in petroleum prices. We are not an oil-producing country, nor are we a debt-free country. We must roll with the punches delivered by developments abroad, even as we carry the burden of debt we inherited. This is our country, these are its weaknesses, which we cannot escape. We just have to face the facts and do the best we can.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on her Tribute to the members of the Presidential Security Group

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On her Tribute to the members of the Presidential Security Group**

[Delivered at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, Fort Bonifacio, August 30, 1987]

TRIBUTE TO OUR FALLEN HEROES

The President honors the members of the Presidential Security Group who died defending Malacañang and the presidential family from a treacherous attack by rebel soldiers. She also pays tribute to the other officers and men who quelled the bloody coup attempt.

Imitation is the greatest tribute. The fallen heroes of yesterday are honored today by those we shall bury beside them:

Cpl.	Rolando	S.	Salamero,	699090,	Marines.
PFC	Ireneo	A.	Gaddingan,	724808,	Army.
Sgt.	Oscar	Arevalo,	617009,	Constabulary.	
Sgt.	Samuel	Santos,	644146,	Marines.	

Airman First Class Janayto S. Sunio, 707539, Air Force.

Civilian Agent Joseph Galleta threw himself between my son and the bullets intended to kill him. He was seriously wounded.

All these men are from the Presidential Security Group that repulsed a treacherous and cowardly attack on the lives of the President and her children by rebel military forces. The aim of the rebels was clearly to kill the President and her family. The size and ruthlessness of the attack, the treachery that marked it, the brutality of the rebels who fired on civilians, and the timing – when a significant portion of the Presidential Security had been deployed in three provinces for my Region 3 Consultation – prove beyond a doubt their murderous intentions. But the PSG was prepared. Col. Voltaire Gazmin had earlier received intelligence of the coup and readied his forces. I had made the right choice of officer to lead the Palace guards. The PSG fought with courage and the ferocity of tigers. They threw themselves into a counter-attack that stunned and turned back the rebels, who fled to the short-lived safety of Camp Aguinaldo.

On the first anniversary of this special force I said: The Armed Forces as a whole are the shield and sword of the Republic, but the Presidential Security Group is the armor protecting the Heart of the Republic. The PSG has well deserved that tribute, my gratitude and that of our people.

To that roll of honored dead we add the names of Marine Pfc. Pablito Baladad, whose blood was the first drawn in the assault on Aguinaldo, and Police Corporal Eduardo Esguerra. Scores more were wounded in the Armed Forces and Police that held fast to their loyalty to the Republic and to their honor as Filipinos. I hope I will be forgiven for not mentioning all their names for I have yet to receive the total list. In that roll, we must include the many unarmed

and innocent civilians who were mercilessly slaughtered by the rebel forces for expressing their support for democracy and President Aquino.

But the living who fought did equal honor as the dead to the qualities of our race: to the valor and idealism of the Filipino:

I refer to the composite police and Special Action Forces led by Police General Alfredo Lim and other police officers like General Cruz, General San Diego, Major Dula Torre, Major Maganto, Major Barbers, Major Dimaaliw and Major Sonny Razon. Poorly armed and outnumbered policemen and police trainees relieved the siege of Channel 4 laid by crack rebel troops, and went on swiftly to attack the other rebel-held television stations. This action draws belated recognition to the bravery and skill of our police forces.

Take care of your Marines and they will take care of you. The Marines certainly have. Commandant Biazon's Marines came early to reinforce the ranks of the PSG in the event of a second attack. Under the command of Col. Emmanuel Teodocio and Lt. Col Braulio Balbas, the Marines threw themselves with their famous energy and courage into the fight to liberate Camp Aguinaldo.

True to his word that he would stamp out the rebels, Lt. Col. Rene Dado of the Philippine Army threw his men into the fight, and together with the Constabulary under Col. Cesar Nazareno, relieved the siege of the AFP General Headquarters, which had been defended by a small force led by Generals Ermita and Montaña. General Sotelo and a small group denied the Air Force to the rebels, although they had been betrayed by the second in command. Sotelo's group held out until General Protacio relieved them.

Again I beg the indulgence of the many officers I have not mentioned and of the great majority of the AFP who joined in defeating those who seek to bring shame and contempt to the Armed Forces.

Throughout the land, officers and men stood by their oath to the Commander-in-Chief and held their forces and regions fast to the colors and the Constitution of the Republic.

Chief of Staff General Fidel Ramos led and directed, with his Deputy, General Rene de Villa, this great effort to preserve democracy.

For the past 18 months, I and General Ramos have crushed every threat to this Government and our democracy. Last Friday taught them their most bitter lesson. And we shall teach them again, if they want it.

These traitors and murderers of unarmed civilians have been called idealistic. Let not idealism be used to cover the darkest crimes and ambitions of men whose actions only show their hatred of democracy and their contempt for the lives of their people. For one of the most important elements of idealism is truth. One cannot be idealistic and a liar.

The rebels call themselves nationalistic. They dishonor that name. They dishonor the word. But if nationalism means to put our country over all others, patriotism means putting our country over ourselves.

Last Friday showed that in our country today, there are still more patriots than cowards.

Last Friday's valiant action also brings us closer to our dream of military unity. I had thought that the spirit of reconciliation would close the fissures in the Armed Forces. But now I see, that only a common cause, a common danger, and a common fight for the right can forge an iron bond of unity in the Armed Forces.

First in peace, first in war, the Armed Forces and their Commander-in-Chief stand here and say to the heroes buried in this sacred field: We have kept the faith.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 30th anniversary of the Social Security System

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the 30th anniversary of the Social Security System

[Delivered on September 1, 1987]

SSS ON THE GO

During the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Social Security System, the President cites the accomplishments of the SSS. She approves the SSS's recommendation to increase the minimum monthly pension from P200 to P400, and to increase by 20 percent the monthly pension of all pensioners.

The recognition of outstanding performance is the best incentive to improved public service. I readily accepted Administrator Cuisia's invitation to your celebration of the Social Security System's 30th Anniversary because I know about the good work the management and employees of the SSS have been doing.

The SSS was established 30 years ago to respond to the workingman's crying need for social security, for protection against economic distress brought on by death, disability, sickness or retirement. The philosophy was that men work better when they know there is some provision for the accidents of life and the inevitability of old age and weakness, when there is some sure provision for his family, however modest.

The SSS was created to fill this need for a sense of security.

Today, the SSS covers approximately 11 million members and their families. I note with great satisfaction your increasing annual benefit disbursements to the members and their dependents and beneficiaries. I am equally pleased with the various social programs you have implemented.

I am happy also that the SSS has continued to provide short-term loans to the members at very low interest rates, so they don't have to turn to moneylenders. And while you have stopped your direct housing loan operations, you have given substantial support to the National Shelter Program which is our way of rationalizing our housing measures. I have been informed that you have responded to my appeal for countryside assistance by financing small and medium-scale enterprises in cooperation with the DBP and giving financial assistance for the establishment and upgrading of the hospitals and schools.

These and other projects too many to mention now have been made possible by the continually growing financial strength of the SSS, that rare combination of prudence and creativity that mark its new management. Records show that the total assets managed by the SSS have reached P33.8 billion.

You have achieved much. I congratulate you and I commend you all for a great job. But more remains to be done. You will learn in my Government that the more you perform the more will be demanded of you.

You must extend your coverage to include those not traditionally included in the System – farmers, fishermen, and other workers, and increase your benefits to match the reality of the present. I know of course, that you don't have all the money in the world to do all you want for our people.

At any rate, I am happy to announce that I have approved the Social Security Commission's recommendation to increase the minimum monthly pension from P200.00 to P400.00 effective September 1, 1987.

I have also directed another 20 percent upward adjustment of the monthly pension of all pensioners. This is the second across-the-board increase I have approved this year, bringing the aggregate to 40 percent. This attempts to adjust pensions to inflation.

Although we have increased benefits, they remain modest. We are still a poor country. But let us not compound the modesty of our benefits with inefficiency in delivering them. I commend the positive steps you have taken to improve the delivery of benefits to the members. I am told by Administrator Cuisia that you have completed your reorganization and now have an operational computer system that is the state of the art. With these improvements, SSS members will be anticipating even better service from the SSS.

I know that the improvements in the SSS would not have happened without the dedication of its employee force. Hence, I have approved the immediate adjustment of your salaries and fringe benefits to make them comparable with those of other Government financial institutions. Chairman Roa and Administrator Cuisia have just approved two additional employee benefit programs: the Hospitalization Benefits Program and the SSS Employee Housing Program.

Let me congratulate you on your anniversary and let me wish you even more successes. I remind you that the SSS is one of the few activities of the Government that serve as an accurate measure of the Government's genuine concern for the people and willingness to help them. You make a difference in the lives of our people. Make it clearer by your better performance that we truly care.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Camp Aguinaldo Housing Project

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Camp Aguinaldo Housing Project**

[Released on September 4, 1987]

THE HOUSE OF DEMOCRACY

In the Camp which only recently was the scene of fierce fighting following the abortive coup, the President praises those military men who ably defended “the house of democracy.” She also announces a series of low-cost housing projects for soldiers and their families.

In this camp, the Filipino soldier redeemed his pledge to the colors and the Constitution of the Republic, in a victory that has brought us as much sorrow as relief that democracy has been saved again.

That victory did not come cheap.

In this Camp whose buildings are pockmarked by bullets, whose General Headquarters is a burnt ruin, and whose General Headquarters is a burnt ruin, and whose gates and walls had to be rammed down, we must rededicate ourselves to democracy and to the ideals of military professionalism that were here violated.

Here soldiers defended the house of democracy with valor and sad resolve against their comrades-in-arms. The choice was painful but their duty was clear: to flag, country, Commander and Constitution. To the Rule of Law and ordered liberty.

The Government is not perfect, but Democracy and the Constitution cannot be compromised. Any illegal and unconstitutional shortcut to solutions will be met and stopped, as they were here, by the Armed Forces and our people.

Democracy must be matched by progress, by a better material life for our people. Those who stand in the way of this progress are as much our enemies as those who sought to kill democracy.

There can be no greater enemy of the State than the enemy within: he who causes the machinery of Government to slow down; the bribetaker and influence peddler who puts self above country; the public official who follows any agenda but duty to country.

We cannot isolate ourselves from each other. We cannot tolerate even the appearance of disunity. Our people expect us to work together as one solid team. After all, we have one constituency: the Filipino people. One objective: their progress and rescue from poverty. Our people are impatient for results. We cannot tarry or fumble. We must move with speed and telling effect.

The 280 housing units we are inaugurating today are just the first batch of the on-base housing project jointly funded by AFP financial institutions. It is a modest attempt to match the house of democracy so ably defended here with homes and livelihoods worthy of the soldier's daily sacrifice.

The project covers not only Camp Aguinaldo but also Villamor Air Base, Fort Bonifacio, Camp Bagong Diwa and eventually all major AFP camps, ports and stations countrywide. The San Mateo housing project, covering 120 hectares for some 6,000 houses for enlisted personnel and officers, is inspired by the same objective: a home worth defending for the soldier offering his life.

The Development Bank of the Philippines and PAG-IBIG have committed themselves to this same objective. The National Housing Authority is providing assistance in developing major areas designated for AFP housing.

Jointly with the Military Housing board, the NHA has announced that 5,000 lots in Taguig will be fully developed by the NHA. Under the NHA sites and Services Project in Carmona, Cavite, 3,000 lots are ready and developed for enlisted men's housing. The total lots made available by the NHA is 8,000.

Retired General Mison, now in the PNB Board, submitted last month another housing project to be financed by the Philippine National Bank.

The GSIS came up with a solution to the ownership problem of 596 enlisted personnel under the old Presidential Security Command.

The basic issue is affordability. I would like to encourage you in your projects to cut the cost of housing units without compromising the comfort, convenience and safety that our soldiers and their families deserve.

I know the concerns of military widows, specially regarding the education of their children. Existing programs are not adequate to their needs. I have therefore asked a number of private schools to provide special scholarships for the children of soldiers killed in action. Southridge School and the Aquino Foundation have already responded enthusiastically to my plea.

There are other needs that must be met. We were working on this long before last Friday's tragedy. But I am sure that the work which now bears fruit in concrete projects will be deliberately misinterpreted as yielding. But I will not let false pride stand in the way of basic needs.

I am endorsing to the Congress a special public works bill in the amount of P200 million.

The AFP has proposed the release of P16 million from the Calamity Fund for the Officers' Club House, which shall serve as temporary quarters for GHQ. I approved this request today.

I devoted a third of my State of the Nation Message to the requirements of greater military effectiveness, for military initiatives are needed to buy time for our economic programs to bear fruit. The Budget that followed that Message therefore reflected this first priority. The budget for the AFP as endorsed by the Defense Department was therefore readily approved. But after the Budget was submitted to Congress, I was told that original Defense estimates nonetheless fell short of AFP requirements. The estimates were re-calculated and the addition is now the subject of a supplemental budget bill.

The soldiers are not the only public servants whose needs are urgent. But we have only so much to spend for the needs of our people.

The progress of our economy, which last Friday's coup has undoubtedly set back severely, will answer for these other needs. If there is progress. And if our enemies will let us.

We must all work harder now to regain what we lost, and to take off again from where we were on the road to recovery.

It has seemed like one step forward, two steps back since democracy was restored in the Philippines. But we cannot give up. Our people have made so many sacrifices already. Let us take up the burden again and move forward, retracing the steps we lost, and with a stronger resolve to overcome.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the canonization of San Lorenzo Ruiz

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the canonization of San Lorenzo Ruiz**

[Released on October 7, 1987]

AT LAST, A FILIPINO SAINT

Lorenzo Ruiz of Manila was “a most ordinary” Filipino who was tortured to death in Japan in 1637, thus achieving greatness for his martyrdom to the Faith. In his canonization, President Aquino declares, we meet the challenge to rise, with God’s help, to the demands of the present.

On October 18, Blessed Lorenzo Ruiz of Manila will be raised to the altars for the veneration of the entire Catholic world, by Pope John Paul II, at the piazza of St. Peter’s basilica. After four hundred years of Christianity in the Philippines, we will have our own first Filipino saint.

What strikes those who read of this man’s life is its ordinariness and obscurity. Born in Binondo of a Chinese father and a Filipina-Tagalog mother, married, with three children, he made his living as an *escribano* for the Dominican Fathers. His name would never have made the pages of any history book, were it not for a series of improbable events which led him, reluctantly at first, and then with heroic fidelity, to arrest and trial, torture and martyrdom for his faith, in Nagasaki in Japan in 1637.

In the canonization of “a most ordinary” Filipino, a layman, we meet the challenge to rise, with God’s help, to the demands which the present makes of all of us and each of us. Lorenzo Ruiz would perhaps never have arrived at the full measure of his greatness had not the unsought-for demand of martyrdom been made of him. But when it was made, he found the courage, in the power of God’s grace, “to hold his own self in his own hands” and to “stand fast” in his faith to the end. In that steadfastness he now stands forever before us. He tells us that we too can try to respond as he did to the demands we face now in our own lives, in our own moment of history. He inspires us to do all that lies in us, relying finally on God’s strength and power in the struggle to have justice and love prevail in our society today.

In Lorenzo Ruiz we realize with a certain freshness the truth of Ninoy’s words, “The Filipino is worth dying for.” As the bells ring in jubilation throughout our land, and Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila is declared a saint, let us thank God for this singular gift. He gives us and our race, and generations of Filipinos after us. Let us renew in our hearts our faith in God as a people, our resolve to seek and be faithful to His will and His law, for without this we know our nation cannot hold as one. And let us ask our new saint to intercede for us, that the “many thousands of lives” he was willing to give for God, we may find the courage to give, under God, for the healing and making whole of our sadly divided land. Let us pray that something of Lorenzo Ruiz’s dedication, self-giving and courage may enter into our own lives, and that we may become, each in our small measure, the saints and heroes the challenge of our time calls us to be.

San Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila, pray for us.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Senator Manglapus' acceptance of the Cabinet post

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Senator Manglapus' acceptance of the Cabinet post**

[Released on October 9, 1987]

FROM THE SENATE TO THE CABINET

The President announces Senator Raul S. Manglapus' acceptance of the position of Secretary of Foreign Affairs. She describes this move to resign from the Senate to join the Aquino Cabinet as an "extraordinary, although not unprecedented, step."

I am pleased to announce that Senator Raul S. Manglapus has accepted the position of Secretary of Foreign Affairs. I have submitted his nomination to the Commission on Appointments.

I asked Senator Manglapus to take the extraordinary, although not unprecedented, step of resigning from the Senate and joining my Cabinet because, in this our critical period of transition, the nation needs a man of exceptional ability, dedication, intelligence and experience to guide our foreign relations and he is the Filipino who today most eminently possesses those qualities.

Senator Manglapus has long been an outstanding articulator of our national issues, including that of foreign affairs. He was, of course, already Undersecretary and then Secretary of Foreign Affairs under Presidents Magsaysay and Garcia. He was Professor of Constitutional Law at the Ateneo Law School, author of the original agrarian reform law in his first term in the Senate, and leader of the Progressives in the Constitutional Convention of 1971-72.

In his exile, he wrote books on international relations at Harvard University, Cornell University and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and taught at the School of International Service at American University.

He was President of the Movement for a Free Philippines which fought peacefully for the return of democracy. His efforts for world democracy received international recognition when he was elected President of the International Center for Development Policy in Washington, D.C., and two other positions which he still holds, that of Vice President of the Christian Democratic International, based in Rome and Brussels, and President of the Democracy International, based in Washington, D.C.

Senator Manglapus, in the first two months of our new Senate, again displayed remarkable legislative leadership as Chairman of the Committee on National Defense and Security and of the Committee on Science and Technology.

I know that our people who voted him to the Senate will not begrudge him this shift in the character of his public service, for like others before him, such as Ramon Magsaysay who once resigned from the House of Representatives when the country needed him more as Secretary of National Defense, Senator Manglapus has agreed to resign from the Senate because we have persuaded him that the nation, at this moment of our history, needs him even more as Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

Senator Manglapus will bring to the Cabinet his talent, patriotism, and Christian-Muslim Democratic vision and I am sure the whole nation is grateful that he has accepted this extraordinary call to public service.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the International Assembly on Human Rights

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the International Assembly on Human Rights

[Released on October 9, 1987]

AN UNCHANGED COMMITMENT TO UPHOLD HUMAN RIGHTS

After a respite, the country is again being challenged by extremist forces. Yet her Administration, President Aquino says, remains steadfast in the quest for unity and peace. Its record of adherence to human rights remain true to the ideals of the February Revolution.

When someone said long ago: "Love your neighbor as yourself; and love does no harm to its neighbor," thus might have been born the human rights movement as we know it today.

Even at the time, it was not a Commandment men easily adhered to. The Author Himself suffered from the rage and violence that have continued to perplex, plague and divide communities of men from age to age.

We in the Philippines had our respite of peace and a momentary reaffirmation of our brotherhood. Yet 18 months hence, we are challenged again, and again violently, by forces of the Left and Right. Yet we hope and persist, and will, God-willing, prevail in our quest for unity and peace because that was how we began our journey towards new nationhood. And in our country, we have a saying: "Those who lose sight of where they came from will also lose their focus on where they intend to go."

Our third Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay, viewing the great majority of Filipinos stricken by poverty, immediately prescribed the least that was due them. "They who have less in life," he said, "should have more in law." Today our resources remain scanty and thinly spread out among us, but we have restored our judicial system and ratified a Constitution that defines and defends the right of every Filipino. Nineteen sections of that document uphold the tenets of social justice and human rights. Our center forces have been victim to travesties by extremists, but our government's record of adherence to those human rights remains true to the ideals of our popular revolution.

I have no absolute answers on how the flood tides of exploitation, destruction and oppression that periodically wash over so many societies worldwide can be stemmed. I know only that men also have a tendency towards peace and brotherhood, for I observed it in my husband during the last years of his life, in a brief but shining moment in our nation's history, and in the convening of this international assembly of men dedicated to the upliftment and protection of the rights of men.

"Who is my neighbor?" someone had asked the Author of that second Commandment. And the answer, following the telling of a parable, was – the man who had mercy and compassion. The world we dream of inhabiting will be created yet by such men. Many of you, I trust, will be among them.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Philippine Business Organizations Speech
of**

**Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Philippine Business Organizations**

[Delivered at the Manila Hotel, October 20, 1987]

SPELLING OUT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Addressing businessmen, the President informs them that Government has an economic blueprint, and the military's professionalism saved the day during the August 28 coup. She also (1) rules out peace talks with the National Democratic Front; (2) orders the dismantling of illegal barricades of strikers; (3) announces that growth must take priority over foreign debt; (4) creates an Action Committee with a single member – "me"; (5) orders the Manila mayor to clean up the city in a week's time; (6) directs the Department of Public Works to cover all potholes; (7) orders PLDT to improve its service; (8) announces that all Government nonperforming assets will be sold to the highest bidder, and that all Government hotels are up for sale; and (9) orders the investigation of graft and corruption cases against senior government officials.

You invited me here because you say you are concerned about the Presidency, about the way things are going – or not going – in the economy, in the labor front, in politics, in the war against the Communists. Above all, I am told, you are concerned about me, and my leadership.

But first: the formalities. Let me say that it is a pleasure to meet with businessmen, "the engines of economic growth," as you are referred to in all our economic plans. In the next 20 months, I hope to see many more of you, together with those who work with you, on the shop floor and in the fields of your businesses. Because it is there, where Filipinos put their shoulders to the wheel of our national economy, that our future is made.

I have to say that at the beginning because there has been more talk than work in our country today. That is a pity. Because recovery and progress won't come through talking. At this time, when all the talk is about coups and I strikes, it is worth remembering that it is work, by all of us, that is going to lift us to better times.

When politics gets in the way of work, we have a problem. And there's been too much politics.

Let me get down to the issues that made you invite me here.

Issue number one: Government lacks a program of economy and politics.

First, the economy. It is said that Government lacks a coherent plan of economy. Wrong. We have a detailed Medium Term Plan. We are following that plan to the letter, making adjustments here and there as need arises. A lot of spirited and intelligent debate went into the making of that plan. Some people said that the over-spirited debates proved a flaw in the Government. On the contrary, I thought the debates assured a better plan. The Plan sets the direction this Government would like the country to take. It is not set in concrete, because we do not pretend that the Plan foresees every contingency. But there is a direction. If you don't like the direction, let us know. We can reopen the debate. This is a democracy.

The state of the economy was clearly and accurately described by me in my State of the Nation Message. I recounted the disappointments we had met in our effort I to revive the economy with external assistance, but I also pointed out the healthy signs in the economy. Recession bottomed out in late 1986. We posted a modest 1.5 percent GNP growth, whereas the two previous years had been negative. The reforms we had implemented improved the situation further. First quarter GNP, 1987, posted a growth of 5.5 percent. Unemployment dropped from 12 percent

to 11.2. The exchange rate remained stable, but I made no promise that it was locked there with any degree of permanence. We had \$2.4 billion in reserves. For the first time in three years, investments started to grow.

These were the effects of the structural reforms we had implemented. All monopolies, from sugar to sardines are gone; more than 2,000 items are freed from licensing, with a further 260 items to go. Price controls, whose inefficiencies and distortions always meant they hit the poor hardest, are gone. From power costs to rural credit, we have moved to reform and clean up, so that we can put the country back to work. We shall do more to de-regulate all economic activities, so that the businessman is not hostage to the bureaucrat and the politician. With due regard to public health and safety, we shall move to eliminate licenses and permits to the extent possible.

I pointed out certain weaknesses in our economy – those weaknesses have been aggravated by the public reaction to the August 28 coup attempt. The reaction, let me emphasize, not the coup attempt. The coup was defeated by a timely decision to use maximum force. But our victory was quickly undone by reactions to the coup. That reaction took the form of rumors of another coup; of talk about fatal weakness of the Government, which had roundly defeated the coup; of divisions between military and civilians although the coup was defeated by the solidarity of the two sectors. What happened?

I am not surprised that instead of backslapping congratulations, there was hand wringing instead. For we Filipinos did it again. Coups, successful or unsuccessful, are usually bloodless affairs. But the last attempt was one of the bloodiest anywhere in the world. Another Filipino first. But it doesn't erase the fact that the coup was roundly defeated, the perpetrators are swaying in LSTs awaiting trial, and their leaders are in hiding.

But better than defeating coups, is deterring them, and removing, or at least reducing, the reasons they get some support. The soldiers have legitimate needs that have not been met, BUT they have never been ignored by my Government. We continue to scrape the barrel of our resources to give them better conditions and better equipment for the all-important task of keeping the peace and destroying our enemies. I will go back to this later.

It is said that Government has had no blueprint of political development. I had a blueprint that you helped me formulate when I challenged Marcos for the possession of state power. The blueprint called for a restoration of democracy, respect for its processes, adoption of a democratic Constitution, the establishment of its necessary institutions such as an independent and honorable judiciary, an accountable Executive, and a representative Legislature. I came to power with a democratic blueprint that did not sit well with those who had other ideas about how power should be shared and exercised in this country, such as by a junta. I rejected those ideas and stuck to my blueprint, and I carried it out to the letter and in record time, despite numerous attempts to sidetrack me by coups and threats, all of which I defeated.

We now have a Supreme Court and a revamped judiciary that no one can take exception to, that everyone lauds for its new honesty, competence and independence.

We gave the nation a Constitution that stripped me of the vast, supreme powers I held in my single hand, and got it ratified by a sweeping majority such as this nation had never experienced in its entire history. It is truly a people's Constitution and the manner of its ratification did honor once more to the great people we are so fortunate to be part of.

Pursuant to that Constitution, I called for legislative elections. There were efforts to derail those elections. The people came through again, voting in record numbers, to give us a genuinely elected and truly representative Congress.

Early next year, we shall have local elections.

Part of the blueprint called for a reorganization of the Government, to make it more efficient and responsive. And I gave you, by and large, men and women of the highest integrity and competence to administer that new Government.

So did I have a blueprint? You know I did. And you helped me implement it, in record time to the astonishment of a skeptical world. More than a blueprint, it is now an accomplished and, if I can help it, a permanent fact.

Issue number two: relations with the military. In a sound democracy, civilian government and its military arm have each their respective roles. One makes policy, including military policy, the other enforces it. But, obviously, we have been undergoing a period of adjustment, as all our institutions, the military included, come to terms with the new democracy. Still, the facts speak for themselves. With the military, we have crushed every challenge to the supremacy of civilian authority. There was turmoil. Naturally, because neither side would give up without a fight. They fought me, I fought back. Surrender would have been neater, but it is not in me to ever yield. I want peace as much as the next person, but not at any price. Reality is never neat or nice.

The August 28 coup attempt reveals a fissure in the military. That is true. But more importantly, the determined and forceful putting down of the attempt by the military shows the triumph of professionalism. As I said, there are groups still resisting their personal and permanent loss of power and prestige, but the military as a whole demonstrated that it is firmly with, not against, the new democracy. I retain full confidence in the professional leadership of the Armed Forces.

The period since the coup offers an even more interesting lesson. For all the threats of a further coup attempt, we have actually seen a retreat from military to political action. I suspect the coup bubble is burst.* Threatened coups are used to leverage the political pressure. Somebody forgot to tell them that the place for politics is not the parade ground anymore but the halls of Congress. I have every confidence that their fellow officers will finally get this message through to the dwindling band of coup makers.

Yet I know there will always be ambition. And you should know that I will always be there to stop it from getting out of hand. Those who are desperate to retrieve their lost privileges will do what they can: I will do what I must to stop them.

The third issue is the insurgency. There is talk again about new talks with the NDF. Let me clarify that. The truce ended last February when I ordered the AFP to resume operations against the Communist insurgents. Talk hadn't worked, so it was time to fight. And it is still fighting time. Therefore any talk of resuming talks with the NDF is unauthorized. The insurgents are daily killing our soldiers and civilians. They are destroying bridges and power lines, burning public buildings.

They blow up bridges, we rebuild them. They take down our power lines, we put them up again. All this takes a heavy toll on our economy and meager resources, but it has not and will not in any measure reduce our resolve to fight back and defeat them. The army has orders to hunt them down and pursue the war against the insurgents with absolute vigor.

Poor as our people are, and difficult enough as it is to recover from the ravages of dictatorship, the insurgents are determined to make life worse for everyone. By a twisted logic, they hope that the people will invite them to power so they will stop harassing them. They forget that Marcos tried the same approach with the Filipino people and is now in Hawaii regretting it. The extreme right is using the same strategy. They think that their coups, bombings and assassinations will break the people's resistance to their brand of government and make them accept peace and quiet at any price. I invite them especially to look at their mentor in Hawaii and contemplate his fate.

The war against the Communists must be waged by civilians as well as by the military, by OICs and by officers. I hold both responsible for the results I am still waiting for.

Of course, military initiatives are not enough. Economic improvement and expanded social services are the long-term and final solutions. But we need military victories to buy us the time to make our programs work; to buy us the conditions in which our services can reach the people and change their lives for the better.

One month before the August 28 coup attempt, I devoted a third of my State of the Nation Message to the requirements of a better fighting force, and the Congress is now acting on my specific requests.

My counter-insurgency policy has always been clear. First talk, in keeping with my pledge to negotiate a peace that respects law and democracy. And then fight, should it fail. I have said clearly all that needs to be said. Am I also expected to take up an M-16 myself and do it, just I like I went to the fiscal's office myself to vindicate my honor?

The fourth issue you want a straight answer to is labor. I know you believe that the strike situation has become bad, nor are you willing to accept anymore the answer that this is the exuberance of democracy. And I don't blame you because there is something premeditated and carefully planned I about this exuberance.

I opened my remarks by saying that the future of our nation will be decided on the shop floors and fields of the economy. We have to get our labor relations right. That means labor must accept the same values that drive our democracy: tolerance, fairness, respect for the law, and a shared commitment to bring progress not chaos to our nation.

The right of collective bargaining is enshrined in the Constitution, but so is the duty to preserve order and respect for the law. I believe we must establish a decent daily wage for all our working people and, beyond that, we must have a flexible wage bargaining system that reflects productivity. But I will not tolerate the abuse of any rights. I will not allow an unruly minority to use the rights of labor to improve the conditions of labor to achieve a Communist victory instead. The way to power is the ballot, not the strike.

I therefore order the police and other peacekeeping authorities to give full assistance to the Labor Department to remove all illegal blockades at the factory gates.

A special peacekeeping force has been organized and is now being trained to enforce return-to-work orders and injunctions issued by the Department, so that our response to resistance will be calibrated and reasonable in the application of force.

The Department of National Defense and the Department of Labor will finalize and sign within this week "The Guidelines for the Conduct of the INP/AFP Personnel During Strikes and Lockouts."

The Labor Department has issued the guidelines to clarify the conduct of strikes and lockouts to clarify the rights and obligations of the parties to labor disputes.

But for all that, I ask you, the business community, to do your share. Business operates for profits, and it is hard indeed for all of us to make a go of things while the economy is still struggling to recover. Our laboring class is very poor, and their lives are truly difficult. It amazes me how they survive. I ask you to search your minds and hearts, and probe your pockets, to share with your brothers and sisters in the labor sector the gains you make. Business and labor are indispensable partners in the growth of a free economy. They should act toward each other in that light. Labor has its rights, as much as you have yours. But in the end, what will work is not the mutual enforcement of rights so much as a mutual commitment to grow together in prosperity. That commitment has been demonstrated by the Filipino small businessman and by the Filipino-Chinese entrepreneur who appear to have no problems about this Government's alleged lack of vision, because they have a 20/20 vision for the opportunities that democracy and honest government have opened up.

They know my vision of this nation. A nation immersed in work, and not lost in idle talk. A nation free and at peace with itself and its neighbors; a nation respected in the councils of the world. A nation strong because its people are strong, healthy, well-fed, well-housed, well-educated and firm in their commitment to the rights and freedoms that are the foundation of their dignity. It is a vision we can achieve as surely as we achieved the first: the restoration of democracy which we now enjoy.

The fifth issue I want to raise is foreign debt. That debt is growing even without fresh borrowing. Servicing the debt alone takes up over 40 percent of the budget, and over 45 percent of our export earnings. In the next six years we shall have to pay \$20 billion to our official and private creditors, while we shall be getting only \$4 billion in additional loans. That means we shall pay out \$16 billion more than we will be getting.

Our policy has been very clear from the start: growth must take priority, for the plain and simple reason that if we have no money to pay, we can't. And if we starve the nation of essential services, there may be no one around willing to honor the debt.

Meanwhile, I have instructed our representatives to consolidate the rescheduling agreement by November 15th. That should end speculation and remove at least one excuse for hoarding dollars.

The sixth issue is what really brought you here. The question you all really want to ask is: Can she hack it? Isn't she weak? These are the questions that were asked by all those who have openly challenged my power, authority and resolve, and who have suffered for it. I speak of the shamefaced officers who have abandoned their followers to await trial in LSTs, and the failed politicians who made the last places in the last elections and are now trying to find a backdoor to power.

Well, they can forget it. Although I am a woman and physically small, I have blocked all doors to power except elections in 1992.

You invited me here on the issue of Presidential leadership. The honeymoon is over, isn't it? It didn't last very long. By mid-1986, my Cabinet was getting it. By August, the attacks were hitting closer to the Presidency. And now, it is out openly against me. The Cory who could do no wrong in those early invigorating months after February 1986, is seen as having done nothing at all. Nothing in spite of a Constitution, a Congress, and a well-thought out body of legislation that sets the direction of this nation to progress if you have the courage to follow.

Still you ask, Is she weak? Again, I say, let my scattered enemies answer that.

Still, you have reason to ask. For the style of Government, by consultation, which I hoped would get your understanding and support, has disappointed you, has given you a sense of drift.

It is time again to simplify.

Henceforth I shall rule directly as President. To the ad hoc committees and commissions created to inform me on their special areas, I now add one more: an Action Committee with a single member me.

A President is supposed to be above details, but it seems I must do nearly everything myself.

For a modest start, Metro Manila Governor Jejomar Binay will now turn over the responsibility and authority for collecting the garbage in Manila to OIC Mayor Mel Lopez and the other mayors of Metro Manila. I give Mel Lopez one week to clean up the mess that's been neglected. The public should cooperate. Let's respect ourselves by not making a garbage can of our surroundings.

The Department of Public Works is directed to cover all potholes in the First District of Manila within one week, and is given one-week periods to fix up all the other districts in succession.

The National Power Corporation was poised to increase its rates due to the increase in the international price of crude oil. There will be no increase in power rates this year. Instead, I have directed all concerned agencies to submit immediately the necessary measures to prevent this increase, which measures I will implement this week.

The PLDT must attend to all complaints within 24 to 48 hours, or at least apprise the subscriber that the fault is in the cable and how long it will take to fix it.

I urge the PLDT management to come up with a comprehensive program for improving service and upgrading facilities. The Central Bank, the Department of Transportation and Communications, the NTC, and the NEDA are directed to give them the fullest assistance.

I have ordered an investigation of Meralco on the frequent brownouts, scheduled and unscheduled, that destroy industrial machinery and cut the incomes of our workers.

There is grave doubt about the seriousness of our privatization policy. There is always an excuse for Government not to sell. Fine. Therefore let me make this clear:

I want Government to get out of business. I want it to cash in on all the investments it should never have made.

Non-performing assets listed to be sold, WILL be sold in open bid to the highest bidder. First preference goes to the bidder with most cash up front, using, and let me emphasize this, only fresh money. Buyers who want to use the target company's own funds are obviously going to run it to the ground. The preferred procedure is open bidding. Filipinos and foreigners will compete on the same terms, subject of course to Constitutional limitations. In general, ability to pay the highest price will decide conclusively. That is how PCIBank and Associated Bank will be sold. Combank is a negotiated deal because there is only one serious bidder. I will not tie up hundreds of millions of pesos just to keep some people in their jobs.

All our hotels are up for sale. Including Manila Hotel. Foreigners are invited to bid for the allowable equity. The sale of Philippine Airlines is under serious consideration. We can't have it landing on the South Superhighway. There's enough traffic there.

The policy, in brief, is: no funny deals. No clever schemes. No fears, no favors.

If anyone says that I have made an exception for him or her, report it to the press and to me. I got a copy of an application filed with the Central Bank for the importation of eight million cases of apples. It is signed, "Corazon Aquino, President of the Philippines," as if the signer wasn't sure if the Central Bank knew I was President. Now that's a crook who isn't going to get far. More likely, that's a piece of black propaganda that isn't going to fly. Eight million cases means more apples than there are Filipinos.

I cannot issue a directive to all the banks on this matter, but let it be known that any application for importation of anything, apples, castañas, oranges and guns, alleged to be signed, endorsed, supported or whatever by me or any of my kin should be reported to me and to the NBI.

I have heard the talk of the coffeeshops I addressing your concern about graft and corruption Government. I have directed the Special Prosecutor Office and the NBI to give first priority to the investigation and prosecution of graft and corruption cases against senior Government officials, including the members of my Cabinet.

I am not sorry the honeymoon is over. The sooner we get over the fantasy of the honeymoon and face the hard work of marriage – the marriage of President and nation – the better.

I recently read a formulation of Presidential leadership by Hedley Donovan: "The honesty of Abraham Lincoln, the intelligence of Henry Kissinger and the soothing TV personality of Marcus Welby/Robert Young." He goes on to quote approvingly a former US congressman who said: "The President should like his fellow man, and he should have read Machiavelli." Transposed to this country, you might say the ideal President would have the courage of Abad Santos, the intelligence of Diokno, the charisma of Magsaysay, and the love of country of the men and women and children who converged on EDSA in February '86.

That's quite a tall order, and it is no surprise that the ideal President has never lived and is defined by the traits of different leaders facing different challenges in different times.

I do just fine on the honesty and liking my fellowman, although recently there have been exceptions. But there is no regret on my part if there is not much of Machiavelli. I don't have all those qualities. Some of my enemies, who contributed to the mess left by the previous government, claim to possess them. Maybe, but they lack the one quality I alone have: election to the Presidency and a mandate for my principles and policies that has been tested in a

massive voter's registration, a plebiscite, a sweeping electoral victory for the Congress, and in five coups that were handily beaten by me and my forces. They lack the one thing the people will never give them: trust.

I do not have all the qualities of the ideal President who never existed. But I have the qualities for the leadership of our nation in these times. After years of stealing, degradation and abuse from our leaders, the Filipino people made a clear choice. They wanted a leader whose honesty and commitment to them would never be in doubt; who would not clamp down but rather open up the country so that all could be heard; and who would bind our wounds so that we could, as one nation, work together to overcome our common crisis of economic decline.

I expect sniping from yesterday's men, passed over as they are, by the march of history. To all other Filipinos, though, I say the tide is with us. Together our future can be as bright as we choose to make it. So judge my leadership as the sum of all our strengths. What sets me apart is that I bring us together where others would divide us as a nation. Those who challenge me, challenge us.

The last time I spoke here before you, I left you with a slogan that carried us to victory. I leave you with this:

<i>Sobra</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>ang</i>	<i>komunista</i>
<i>Tama</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>sa</i>	<i>kudeta</i>
<i>Ipaglaban ang demokrasya.</i>			

* Despite another Filipino first: coup by carnapping!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the International Travel Agents

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines Before the International Travel Agents

[Delivered at the Philippine International Convention Center, October 26, 1987]

WE'LL MAKE TOURISM GROW

The President calls upon international travel agents to bring more tourists to the Philippines and “witness this miracle of democracy and progress.” She reminds them that the Government is committed to divest itself to the private sector.

First, let me thank you for coming here. I have read the papers abroad, and know the bad image that recent events have painted. Your coming just the same shows that you can still see the fundamental improvement, beneath the continued attempts of ambitious men to overturn what is this country's greatest selling point: its freedom and democracy, and, the people who made it happen and keep it going.

The chief virtue of this country is not just the scenery, or the beautiful things its skillful people make, but the people themselves – and the experiment they are making in their lives and society. It is an experiment whose beginnings you shared and cheered as you watched the triumph of democracy unfold on television screens and across the headlines of your countries' newspapers. You were with us in spirit and I know you are still with us. That is why you are here, to help make our dream a reality. The dream of a nation progressive, prosperous and strong in democracy, a country whose physical beauty should match the happiness of its people.

You can help us greatly in bringing more people here to witness this miracle of democracy and progress, and in your own way help make it happen.

This Government is pledged to do its part.

Last week at the Manila Hotel, I told the gathered businessmen that I want the Manila Hotel and all other government owned or controlled hotels to be sold at the earliest possible time. Similarly, I pledged to sell the Philippine Airlines – which is plainly too costly for the Government to support and manage properly, according to the principles of free enterprise.

I said that Filipinos and foreigners shall compete equally in bidding for these facilities. None of these enterprises and facilities being essential to national security, I should like to see them all sold, immediately, and fairly. There are areas of development in any country that must be strictly nationalist, but tourism is one important aspect of development that must be international, that requires the hands of friendship and cooperation stretched across the skies to make it happen. So there will be no excuses, no long-term studies, no dilly-dallying in carrying out this commitment to make tourism a growth industry in this country.

The sale of these hotels and other facilities, and especially of the Philippine Airlines, to entities with extensive international networks or chains, will increase tourist traffic to the Philippines. In this way, Philippine tourism will have a secure place in the flow of international tourism. You can help us right off by spreading the message that Government aims to divest swiftly to those in the private sector, both local and foreign, who are most capable and committed to making the tourism industry grow in the Philippines.

Much of this traffic, I am told, stays briefly. It is logical therefore to develop tourist facilities now easily accessible from Manila. While we do not mean to neglect the other potentially great tourist spots in more distant parts of the

Philippines, our objective is to make the most accessible areas attractive to tourism immediately. We shall therefore emphasize projects with the shortest payback times in areas now already accessible. So, the tourism campaign we are waging today is not meant to bear fruit in the distant future. We shall try to realize it as soon as possible.

Aside from public works construction, there are less costly but equally effective ways to bring and keep tourists here. That is why I gave the mayor of Manila the authority and sole responsibility to clean up Manila in one week. That is also why I have given one-week deadlines to the Department of Public Works to fix up the streets of Manila. You will see results very shortly.

I welcome you here also because I would appreciate your own insights and observations. I am sure there is much we can learn from you on how to improve tourism prospects in this country. I shall pay close attention to your discussions here.

Your being here shows your commitment to grow with us in prosperity. I deeply appreciate it and look forward to a long and mutually beneficial partnership. For a start, you can help me spread the message that the tourism business in the Philippines is going to be played by the book the book of free enterprise, where there shall be no favors to a few, but opportunities equal for everyone.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Message of President Corazon Aquino before the World Peace Corps

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the World Peace Corps**

[Released on November, 1987]

**A GENUINE REGARD FOR THE
INDIVIDUAL**

Peace is one that comes from the humble and healing act of kindness. That is what the Peace Corps has been all about. This will lead to lasting peace if the governments would follow their lead and touch the lives of their people directly.

Peace is every government's proclaimed passion. In many cases, I believe, the desire is sincere, but the result has rarely been successful. That is because the rationale for peace has been the costliness of war.

On the strategic plane of war, the price, it is well argued, is unacceptable.

But for as long as we continue to judge wars on a cost benefit basis, the effort will be, not on the total abolition of war, but on the reduction of its cost through the increased swiftness and efficiency of its conduct. For as long as we refuse to question the aims of war, be they national order, national security or, ironically, peace – its horrors will always be us.

The way to lasting peace lies in a genuine regard for the individual who suffers it, for the children who are orphaned but now, more often, killed along with their families; for the communities that are shattered, and for the abiding hatred that is sown to produce the next harvest of conflict.

I have seen only one program for peace that makes sense. And it is one that proceeds from the humble and healing act of kindness.

That is what the Peace Corps has been all about.

It's young and dedicated volunteers in my country have shown the way towards a firmer foundation for peace and harmony than the grand designs that are better known and lauded.

The Summits of the Peace Corps take place in the most inaccessible areas where the poorest of our people coax from tired soils the barest existence.

They are summits between the idealism of American youth and the reciprocal affection of the people they care for, to whom they impart methods of self-reliance and improvement that give them greater dignity than honors of war can confer. They do this by living the same lives and enduring the same discomforts as the people among whom they work.

That the Peace Corps has not achieved lasting peace in the communities they work in derogates in no way from the value of their work. On the contrary, their examples point the way to lasting peace if governments would only follow their lead by going out and putting an improving touch on the lives of their peoples directly.

I am deeply honored to be given this opportunity to pay tribute once more to the Peace Corps. The Corps exemplifies the best virtues of the American people – the preference for action over words and for immediate relief over endless study on the ways to relieve poverty. The Corps is unashamed, in this world that prizes cold and self-seeking realism, to say that love is its motivation and individual acts of kindness its chief program of action.

The Corps is indeed the part of a great American's dream that will surely live on.

On behalf of the Filipino, may I extend our heartfelt congratulations to the Peace Corps.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino on the Guarantee Fund

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Guarantee Fund**

[Released on November, 1987]

ENGINE OF THE ECONOMY

The significant contributions of five banks to the GFSME program is a show of exemplary trust in the entrepreneurial spirit and hardwork of small and medium Filipino businessmen.

I am pleased to welcome the management board of the Guarantee Fund, and most especially the five banks which, in the past 2 years, made the most significant contribution in the delivery of credit to small and medium scale enterprises. For this notable achievement, you have the gratitude of the nation and the heartfelt congratulations of your President.

By their significant contributions to the GFSME program, the Cocobank, Planters Development Bank, PCIBank, Luzon Development Bank and Asia trust have shown a truly exemplary trust in the entrepreneurial spirit and hard work of small and medium Filipino businessmen, who are really the bedrock of our economy; the ones who, complaining least and working hardest, are true Filipinos.

The five banks and the businessmen they support are taking seriously the role that Philippine business has claimed for itself: that of being the engine of the economy.

While we are committed to withdrawing Government from business, rest assured that we shall match, by programs that foster self-reliance and responsibility, the patriotism that your five banks have shown.

Thank you and congratulations.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Inauguration of the Bayto River Irrigation Project, November 7, 1987

**Pagpapasinaya
ng
irrigation
November 7, 1987**

Bayto

**river
project**

PATUBIG SA KAUNLARAN

Sa pamamagitan ng proyektong ito ng pagpapatubig, naniniwala ako na mas uunlad ang pamumuhay ng libu-libong mamamayang Pilipino at ito ay maisasakatuparan kung ang mga mamamayan kabilang na ang mga magsasaka ay makikipagtulungan sa pamahalaan.

Magandang umaga po sa inyong lahat. Ako'y nagagalak na makapiling kayo sa napakahalagang pagtitipong ito kung saan pasisinayaan ang Bayto River Irrigation Project na batid kong siyang pangunahing tugon upang matighaw ang pagkatuyo ng mga lupain dito sa inyong lalawigan. Sa pagkakataong ito'y nais kong basahin sa inyo mula sa Banal na Kasulatan ang magandang salita ng Panginoong Diyos tungkol sa kahalagahan ng tubig. Sa Aklat ng Lumang Tipan ay sinabi ng Panginoon: “. . . Punuin ninyo ang kanal ng lambak na ito. Wala kayong makikitang hangin o ulan ngunit ang lambak na ito ay mapupuno ng tubig na mainom ninyo at ng inyong hayop . . . Kinabukasan nang malapit na ang oras ng paghahandog, dumating ang agos ng tubig mula sa Edom. Ang lupain ay napuno ng tubig.” Idinugtong pa sa Kasulatan, “Maliit na bagay lamang ito sa Panginoon.” Totoong maliit na bagay lamang ito sa Panginoon, subalit sabi nga ng kawikaan, “nasa Diyos ang awa, nasa tao ang gawa.” Kaya ako'y lubos na nagagalak sa araw na ito ng pagpapasinaya ng sistemang ito ng patubig dito sa Sta. Cruz, Zambales.

Napag-alaman ko buhat kay NIA Administrator Freddie Alday na ang proyektong ito ay makapagpapatubig sa humigit-kumulang sa 1,600 ektaryang lupain sa anim na baranggay ng Sta. Cruz.

Dahil dito, inaasahang lalaki ang inyong ani at makapagtatanim pa kayo ng dalawang beses sa loob ng isang taon. Tinatayang tataas ang kabuuang ani sa loob ng isang taon nang mula 60,000 kaban sa kasalukuyan hanggang 160,000 kaban sa kabuuang lawak na sakop ng taniman. Bawat magsasaka ay makapagtatamo ng humigit-kumulang sa 100 kaban sa bawat ektaryang lupang kanyang sinasaka kung ang kanilang pagtatamnan ay lalapatan ng makabagong pamamaraan ng pagsasaka.

Binabati ko ang mga kawani ng Pambansang Pangasiwaan ng Patubig o NIA sa kanilang pagsisikap na mapaunlad ang katayuan ng mga magsasaka sa pamamagitan ng pagtatayo ng mga proyekto ng patubig tulad nitong Bayto River Irrigation Project.

Kaugnay nito ay dadagdagan pa ng ating pamahalaan ang pondo ng NIA mula sa taong 1988 upang maipagpatuloy ang pagpapagawa ng mas marami pang proyekto ng patubig.

Noong Pebrero 1986, sa unang taon ng aking pag-upo bilang Pangulo, ang pondo para sa pagpapalawak ng patubig ay nasa P36.5 milyon. Ito ay nadagdagan ng P1.1 bilyon mula Abril hanggang Disyembre 1986. Sa kasalukuyan, ang badyet ng NIA ay may kabuuang halagang P1.181 bilyon. Sa taong 1988 ay madadagdagan pa ito at aabot sa halagang P2.8 bilyon.

Ako'y nagagalak na sa kabila ng maliit na pondo ng NIA noong 1986, napatubigan natin ang may 30,000 ektaryang tuyong lupain, at nakumpuni o naisaayos ang mga lumang istraktura ng patubig na kasalukuyang nagpapadaloy ng tubig sa 86,000 ektaryang bukirin sa buong kapuluan. Sa kabuuan, ang karagdagang pambansang ani nanakamit dahil sa naturang dagdag na patubig ay tinatayang aabot sa mahigit sa limang milyong kaban ng palay.

Sa kasalukuyan, ang NIA ay nagpapatubig sa 1.4 milyong lupain na tinatamnan ng palay, gulay, mais at iba pang pananim. Ito ay binubuo ng 136 national irrigation systems na nagpapatubig sa 611,690 ektarya; 6,112 communal

irrigation systems na nagpapatubig sa 704,685 ektarya; at 17,031 pump irrigation systems na nagpapatubig sa 152,503 ektarya.

Batay sa 3.1 milyong ektarya ng kabuuang lawak ng lupain na maaaring patubigan o potential areas for irrigation development, may nalalabi pang 1.6 milyong ektarya ng lupa na dapat pang patubigan sa buong kapuluan. Sa kasalukuyan, ito ang pinagsisikapan ng ating pamahalaan na mapatubigan.

Halimbawa ay uumpisahan na ang pagawain sa Balog-Balog Multi-purpose Project. Ang proyektong ito na nasa lalawigan ng Tarlac ay magpapatubig sa 39,150 ektaryang bukirin sa sampung bayan ng Tarlac. Ang imbakan ng tubig na ito ay magbibigay din ng karagdagang koryente sa tinatawag nating Luzon Grid. Ang proyektong ito ay magkakahalaga ng P4.5 bilyon.

Para sa taong 1988 ay uumpisahan naman ng NIA ang 437 communal irrigation projects na makapagpapatubig sa mahigit na 60,000 ektaryang lupa.

Malaki rin ang maitutulong ng mga proyektong ito sa pagbibigay ng hanap-buhay sa libu-libong mamamayang Pilipino. Kung matutupad ang programa ng ating pamahalaan sa pagpapalaganap ng patubig, tiyak na maiiwasan na ang suliranin sa kakapusan ng ani.

Subalit maisasakatuparan lamang ito kung ang mga mamamayan kabilang na ang mga magsasaka ay makikipagtulungan sa pamahalaan.

Kaya tinatawagan ko kayo minamahal kong mga kababayan . . . Ikaw . . . ako . . . kayo . . . tayong lahat. . . magkakabalikat sa pagsasakatuparan ng mga programang tutugon sa pangangailangan ng sambayanang Pilipino.

Iniiwanan ko sa inyo ang malaking paghamong ito . . . Nananalig ako na sa tulong ng Dakilang Maykapal, taas-noo nating maiaahon ang minamahal nating bansa sa kahirapan.

Maraming salamat po!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Philippine Investment Conference, November 12, 1987

**Philippine
Investment
Conference
November 12, 1987**

NO FEARS, NO FAVORS

The President stresses our need for foreign investments to fuel our recovery and growth. To encourage foreign investors, we must set the climate for them. Our policy is one of fairness and within constitutional limitations, one of equality towards Filipinos and foreigners who wish to invest in the future of this country.

Two weeks ago, I had the pleasure of addressing Philippine businessmen and managers on matters ranging from my Administration's economic platform to counter-insurgency, labor relations and presidential leadership. I reiterated in the clearest terms my policies in these areas. And I gave special emphasis to the topic of this conference: privatization of government-held assets.

I am grateful for this opportunity to stress again, before Philippine business's foreign counterparts, the Government's commitment to privatize its assets, to liquefy those investments which Government should never have made.

In that address, I said that I want Government to get out of business, and fast. I targetted specific companies for immediate disposition. I mentioned particularly this hotel, the Hyatt, the Philippine Plaza and the Philippine Airlines. None of these enterprises is of any strategic value to the nation and government. All have been a tragic drain of resources. I mentioned the Commercial Bank of Manila, whose sale should be concluded in a week; the Associated Bank; and controlling stock of PCIBank which will be bidded out on November 18. There will be no more postponements.

I laid down the procedures for disposition: open bidding, total transparency, and award to the bidder with the highest bid and the most cash upfront. Funds generated internally from the target company are unacceptable because illegal. We want fresh funds.

I said there would be no fears, and no favors. No fears that we will favor anyone, whatever his political credentials or history of suffering. We give no special premium for past political agony. We want cash on the barrelhead, because that is what we need to fuel our recovery and growth.

I said there would be no clever schemes, no dilatory tactics. Therefore, once the decision to sell is made, all government appointed directors must submit undated letters of resignation, so they will be in no position to thwart the transfer of control or to interfere in management once the sale is concluded.

I am considering turning over to the Asset Privatization Trust the bidding out of all government assets. The APT is doing a very fine and professional job. There have been no complaints. On the contrary, the APT has been justly praised for the fairness, transparency and speed of its procedure. This will prevent self-interested directors from delaying or distorting privatization.

Our policy, let me repeat, is one of fairness, and within constitutional limitations, one of equality towards Filipinos and foreigners who wish to invest in the future of this country.

The foreign investor is critical to our plans of recovery and growth, given the size of the foreign debt, its improvident investment and the present general reluctance of foreign banks to engage in new lending.

We need foreign investments. And we have set the climate for them. Behind the troubled headlines is the fact that our democracy has met every challenge, and emerged stronger from every confrontation with forces that seek to return this nation to corrupt, unaccountable and irresponsible government. Democracy is here to stay – along with the rule of law, and the equity and justice that mark it. All its institutions are firmly in place.

On structural and economic reforms, we have deregulated where regulation might obstruct progress, and responsibly regulated to promote the general welfare.

We have implemented reforms to improve tax collection and equitably distribute its burden. We have exacted greater financial discipline from government agencies and corporations. The progressive reduction of bank reserve requirements over the past 18 months indicates the expansionary stance that our monetary authorities have taken.

On the external front, we have reached agreement with the advisory group of commercial banks on a multi-year restructuring package. A restructuring agreement with the Paris Club is already effective for the period January 1, 1987 to June 30, 1988.

Along with our privatization policy, we have implemented a debt to equity conversion program to promote long-term equity investments in the country, as well as a moderate reduction in the foreign debt.

These reforms are already producing the desired results. The first half of 1987, shows an increase in gross domestic capital formation of 10.7 percent, after declining 73 percent in the last three years.

Foreign investment, based on balance of payments accounts, posted a significant increase in net flows in the 3rd Quarter: from \$25 Million to \$88 Million. Foreign investments increased by 53.1 percent – from \$96 Million to \$47 Million.

With a 5.1 percent growth in the first half of 1987, and an average inflation rate of 2.8 percent in the first nine months of this year, we can say, with some confidence, that an economic turnaround has occurred. But, unquestionable, the foundation for economic recovery has been laid.

But, like the recipe for dinosaur soap, the trick is to find dinosaur. In this case, it is private investments. For our whole programs of recovery and progress turns on a robust private sector committing its capital to the recovery and long-term growth of this nation. that is the key ingredient. I hope that this Conference will help us find it, in the magnitude and with the enduring commitment that the undertaking requires. I wish the Conference every success. Good day and thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Message of President Corazon Aquino on the Business Sector, November 14, 1987

Business

November 14, 1987

COOPERATION OF ALL SECTORS

One of the long standing policies of the President is to keep government in government and leaving business to business. She stresses her desire to speed up privatization of some of the government corporations through the Asset Privatization Trust. She adds that labor and management must work together in a spirit of common commitment to national recovery, and the key element is the willing cooperation of all sectors in the task of recovery.

Ever since this speech was announced, I have been getting a lot of calls from people who want to know if today's speech will be as good as that of October 20.

First, I have to contend with the Left and then I have to contend with the Right, and now I am expected to outdo myself. Oh, come on, give me a break.

One speech turned a bad situation around. That's what people said after I addressed the businessmen last October 20. But I had merely repeated my long standing policies:

of respect for law and order,
of all-out war against the armed enemies of the State,
of integrity and quick performance in public service,
of the equality of all before the law,
and of keeping government in government and leaving business to business.

What was striking perhaps were the deadlines. For in the end, what is a speech but words, and what are words without action?

Therefore following on my directives of October 20:

I have adopted a package of measures to stop the NPC from increasing its power rate until the end of the year. Otherwise, NPC and MERALCO would have increased their rates by 12 centavos and 25 centavos per kilowatt hour, respectively, effective September this year.

MERALCO has briefed my Office on the measures needed to minimize systems losses, which include pilferage. I have the list of business establishments and individuals who are stealing electricity. The full force of the law will be applied to them. They will not be allowed to pass the cost of their theft onto the great majority who honestly pay their bills.

We have directed MERALCO to take the appropriate measures to reduce its systems losses to less than 10% so we can reduce power rates by the same percentage. This should bring down power costs in our country to the competitive levels of our ASEAN neighbors.

The MERALCO management is itself on the line here. We will not tolerate inefficiencies. Government owns MERALCO and has made a commitment to business to meet its energy needs.

Meanwhile, Government is vigorously pursuing a program for the widespread dispersal of the stock ownership of MERALCO. No single family or group will be allowed to hold a controlling or even a sizable bloc of MERALCO shares. Power is a strategic industry we cannot entrust to any bloc or family. We fought a revolution to restore freedom, but not to return to the past. We expect this divestment program to be completed in 1988.

We have finalized the government position on the rescheduling agreement for submission to our creditors tomorrow. Only two creditor banks have not signed the agreement.

I directed the Special Prosecutor's Office and the NBI to give first priority to the investigation and prosecution of graft and corruption cases against senior government officials, whether appointed or elected, whether related or not to me. Given the number of complaints, NBI Director Carpio has proposed the creation of a committee to implement this directive. Meanwhile, he is actively pursuing the case of Margarita Cojuangco.

I gave Mayor Mel Lopez a week to clean up Manila. I myself looked into the problem. He reports 90% completion. I don't see mounds of garbage anymore, but I still see litter. To augment the dumpsite in Balut, another has been opened which can accommodate garbage for another 6 months.

I issued Memorandum Circular No. 30 creating the Presidential Task Force on Waste Management to review the various proposals and studies on the garbage problem, and consolidate them in one comprehensive plan. There is provision for an alternative livelihood program for scavengers.

I gave the Department of Public Works successive one week deadlines to cover all potholes in the 6 districts of Manila, the Department reports:

100% completion on all national roads.
90% completion on all city and municipal roads.

I mentioned potholes. I should have specified trenches. There is a trench on the corner of Vito Cruz and Taft that's been there for over a year.

PLDT has directed its service centers to respond to complaints and fix them within 24-48 hours, unless there is a cable problem. Further to my directive, the PLDT has prepared a study on the telecommunications industry with recommendations to improve and upgrade telephone service in the country. I direct the NEDA, the Department of Finance and the Central Bank to study PLDT's proposals.

All the laws and regulations in this area were put together in the Telecommunications Code of the Philippines, but the former Batasan failed to act on it. It is being revised to include postal, aviation and maritime matters before submission to Congress.

On the insurgency, the AFP and Integrated National Police have recovered the initiative, launching more offensive actions than the enemy. Firearms have been recovered. The ratio of casualties is 1:3 in our favor. Metro Manila police have conducted saturation drives in the city. Local governments are starting to pitch in with livelihood programs.

The Communist foe has predictably responded by escalating its terrorist activities. This is the price of vigorous action on our part. We must be ready to pay it.

But I am equally concerned about, and as strongly condemn, the terrorism of the ultra right.

Pursuant to my directive, illegal barricades in 31 establishments were removed by the police or voluntarily dismantled by the strikers themselves.

Two barricades in the Bataan Export Processing Zone were voluntarily removed.

The Department of Labor and the Department of National Defense issued the guidelines for the conduct of the AFP/INP during strikes and lockouts. 130 members of the Special Peacekeeping Force have completed a seminar on labor laws and the appropriate procedures for their enforcement.

Last November 10, I met with labor leaders to discuss the creation of a Tripartite Review Committee to review the labor laws in order to promote more effectively the aims of industrial peace, employment generation, social justice and economic recovery. A high-level Tripartite Labor Management Council will serve as a continuing forum for the discussion of policies and measures to achieve these aims.

Now there is more order on the shopfloors, and I hope soon a greater compassion and sense of justice in the hearts of management.

Labor and management must work together in a spirit of common commitment to national recovery. Meek obedience to the law will not give us that explosion of labor energy, ingenuity and dedication that created the newly industrialized nations of Asia.

Only a sense of shared destiny, of common cause, on the part of management and labor will achieve the miracle we need in our economy.

The only way to develop that sense and commitment is by equitably sharing with labor the fruits of the redoubled efforts we are asking them to make.

Remember that labor is not only the producer but the first market of a resurgent Philippine industry.

And now, for a subject equally close to your hearts. Getting government out of business.

Last Thursday, I stressed again our decision to liquefy immediately all government business assets, to cash in on the investments government should have left to the private sector.

I stressed again the importance of speed, transparency, fairness and absolute equality of treatment to all bidders.

To prevent any delay on the part of government appointed directors, I directed that they should prepare undated resignations from their positions so they cannot thwart the transfer of control over these assets, nor interfere in the management after their sale. To assure the integrity of the process, I have entrusted the disposition of these assets, performing or non-performing, to the Asset Privatization Trust, which has earned the respect of all who have dealt with it.

It's been two years since we took over these assets. Complete privatization should have been accomplished by now.

36 NDC companies, such as Semirara, Philphos, National Steel and PASAR, were earmarked for privatization over a year ago. I want this speeded up.

I order the Philippine Airlines management to prepare a net asset valuation of the company by certified accountants with the participation of the Commission on Audit. The same order goes out to the managements of Manila Hotel, the Philippine Plaza and the Hyatt. I give them 60 days to submit these audits to my Office.

Regarding the Broadcast City properties, Channel 9, which had a debt of over P200 Million to PNB, was transferred to the APT. The APT should prepare to bit it out soon. Channel 2 and Channel 13 shall likewise be transferred to the APT, for similar disposition. The incumbent managers of all three stations will remain in their positions until the stations have been sold. We would prefer that these stations be sold to non-political, purely business concerns.

I want us to greet the New Year with complete privatization well underway.

I want 1987 to be the last of the years of excuses and delays, and 1988 to be the year of initiative, action and progress.

My staff and I are going over your list of concerns.

Let me address some of them.

On the matter of credit, the Government of Japan has agreed to increase the amount under the 14th Yen Credit Package and to accelerate its disbursement. This is the type of meaningful and timely support that we welcome. On our part, we are prepared to put all our systems in place so that the projects under this \$570 Million loan package can be implemented without delay.

On the matter specifically of agricultural credit, the Department of Agriculture contributed P100 Million each to the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation, Quedan Guarantee Fund, and the Guarantee Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises.

Yesterday we commended the five banks that have been most supportive of the effort to extend credit to what is the backbone of our economy, small and medium business. The sector that complains least, works hardest, and kept this country afloat when the bottom fell out in 1983. Small and Medium business and the Filipino-Chinese entrepreneurs talk less and work harder, and as a result make more money.

Based on my discussions with them, I think what they want is just to be left alone, not to be harassed and shaken down by elected and appointed public officials, so they can concentrate on their businesses. I hear and I will do something about it.

I have gone over your list of concerns and do not find explicitly stated the regulations, procedures and hassles – of the BIR, the PCGG, Customs, elected officials – that plague you. I should like to meet with you again, not to give a speech, but quietly to discuss your problems.

I truly believe that it is you who will make a difference, because only you have had the faith in this country to invest your honest capital in its recovery.

More on agricultural credit, there are 390 applications for rural banks with the Central Bank, yet, to date, only 19 have been approved. I expect speedier action here.

To take up the slack, the United Coconut Planters Bank has set aside P100 Million for loans to small farmers without security and P200 Million for rice quedan financing.

There is already a market information center: the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics and the Agri-Business Service group in the Department of Agriculture.

The National Food Authority is reminded to confine itself to rice and corn price stabilization. If there is indeed a wheat cartel, the appropriate response is anti-trust legislation, not a sure monopoly with all its evils.

We have converted the Bureau of Agricultural Extension into the Agricultural Training Institute, which works closely with local colleges to train both extension workers and farmers. And, since farmers prefer to learn from their peers, we have the Farmers' Cross-Fertilization Program which facilitates the exchange of technology within the farming sector.

Revisions of the Tariff Code regarding items affected by the import liberalization program were submitted to Congress as Administration Bill No. 1. The bill has been approved on 3rd reading by the House. We expect it to pass the Senate shortly.

I have taken note of the other issues you have raised. My staff are studying some of your proposals. You should know however that practicability is a major consideration. Your solution may be the best, but can we implement, given what we have? Sometimes the cure is worse than the disease.

Given what we have to work with, it is sometimes better to leave some things alone – until we are better prepared to tackle them.

These and other measures proposed are only a fraction of the solution that will work. The key element is the willing cooperation of all sectors in the task of recovery.

We can enforce the laws but we cannot dictate the kind of wholehearted cooperation and vigorous commitment that are behind the tremendous productivity and progress of the developed economies of Asia. For you cannot dictate patriotism, and in the end it is really patriotism that we are asking for when we call for total commitment and cooperation. For at this time, when we are just starting, these are acts of faith.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Message of President Corazon Aquino on Public Works, November 16, 1987

Public
November 16, 1987

Works

A CRITICAL ROLE FOR THE DPWH

The Department of Public Works is the most important agency in the public sector and plays one of the most important and critical roles in our economic recovery efforts. A great part of our hope rests on its performance.

The 52nd anniversary celebration of the Department of Public Works and Highways comes at a most auspicious time. In the past month, I have repeatedly stressed one of the cornerstones of our economic policy: the withdrawal of government from areas that properly belong to the private economy. As I said last Saturday, I want to confine government to government, and keep business in business.

In saying this, we recognize that we have two responsibilities: to get out of the private sector and to support the private sector in its role as the engine of economic growth.

In opting for the minimal state, we still have many responsibilities and tremendous tasks before us. For we still have to provide the security and the infrastructure for the private economy to succeed.

This makes the Department of Public Works the most important agency in the public sector. When we think of pump priming the economy or helping relieve unemployment, we turn to public works construction. We think of increasing farm productivity, we think of farm-to-market roads.

The Department is therefore in the forefront of our economic recovery efforts. All eyes are on it, a great part of our hope rests on its performance.

In the first year of our Administration, we stressed fiscal controls in this Department – the weeding out of corrupt practices. Now, we must move forward to positive action.

The Department plays one of the most important and critical roles in our recovery efforts. Much is expected of its officials and employees: in the way of integrity, and in the way of performance. I know you will not disappoint our people.

I congratulate you all on your Department's 52nd anniversary. Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 31st ASEAN-CCI Council Meeting, November 26, 1987

**31st
Meeting
Manila
November 26, 1987**

Asean-CCI

Council

NEW DIRECTIONS FOR ASEAN

This meeting is an opportune time to review how far ASEAN cooperation has progressed given the advantage of being able to harness political will at the highest level behind summit decisions.

Cooperation on both management and labor has been insured thru a series of policy initiatives to bring about a climate of lasting industrial peace.

The convening of this series of ASEAN-CCI meetings a few weeks before the third Asean Summit in Manila is not only very timely in terms of preparation, but also demonstrates the zeal and readiness of the private sector to move. It is also very appropriate because, as President Suharto expressed to Secretary Concepcion last month when I asked him to convey some messages for me, the main thrust of the summit is on how to promote private sector participation in Asean Economic cooperation. He said that this should be the case, because the private sector should be the primary engine for implementing Asean cooperation programs. From our experience with the first few Asean industrial projects, which were undertaken by the Asean governments, the Asean leaders would now like the private sector to take full initiative in Asean business projects.

In the first ten years of Asean's existence, there were two summits held, the first in Bali in 1976 and the second in Kuala Lumpur in 1977. In its second ten years of existence, the forthcoming summit in Manila will be the first and only one. This summit will therefore be the first opportunity in ten years for the Asean Heads of State to review how far Asean cooperation has progressed, to address outstanding issues, and to adopt new directions and objectives for Asean in a new and fast-changing international environment.

If we were in a corporate setting, the summit would be comparable to a long-range, strategic planning search for the year 2000. However, the basic difference between the two, and the most significant advantage of the summit is being able to harness political will at the highest level behind summit decisions.

The Manila summit agenda will cover political, cultural and social aspects of regional cooperation, but it will focus on economic cooperation. This was the result of a decision of the Asean Foreign Ministers in view of a widespread perception that Asean economic cooperation is lagging behind other aspects of cooperation which, if resolved, would spur the overall upsurge of Asean cooperation in all areas.

Judging from your program of meetings over the past few days, several members of our Cabinet have adequately briefed you on the various new economic initiatives which we expect to formally adopt at the summit a few weeks from now. As you have probably noted, a significant number of these new economic initiatives were originally based on recommendations from the private sector, notably the report of the group of fourteen on Asean economic cooperation and integration. When finally adopted, these few initiatives to enhance regional economic cooperation will be an excellent demonstration of government-private sector collaboration on Asean endeavors.

Just as an example, the government has taken a series of policy initiatives with the cooperation of both management and labor in order to bring about a climate of lasting industrial peace. As a result, while we were averaging 40 strikes per month from January to October this year, in November we recorded only 17 strikes, the lowest over that period.

From all these new initiatives, you can discern the emphasis on private sector initiative to be aided by supportive and transparent government policies, liberalized and streamlined procedures.

Recent developments in the industrialized market economies have led to uncertainties in the international economic environment especially for developing countries significantly dependent upon foreign trade.

At an international conference in Singapore two weeks ago, Prime Minister Lee alerted the Asean countries to the probable unfavorable consequences of these trends. However, he said that with the appropriate international trade policies and strategies, Asean countries can maintain their growth rates in the 1970's and attain half of the present per capita GNP of Japan.

Through the coming Asean Summit, the Asean Heads of State hope to create a substantially improved environment for a new upsurge in Intra-Asean trade and investments. This is therefore a challenge to the private sector to take full advantage of these new dimensions of regional cooperation.

Many Asean leaders have correctly pointed out that regional cooperation cannot be a catchall solution to all our respective national problems. However, an even greater number of leaders have advocated that Asean should go beyond their areas of difference and minimize their areas of cooperation in order to provide the best conditions possible under the prevailing political, economic and social circumstances for the Asean private sector throughout the region, and for the Asean governments to collectively get the best possible deals in negotiations with our major trading partners.

It may be timely to point out that as both the Asean Heads of State and the private sector meet in the closing months of this year, they should prepare to enter the Year of the Dragon with a firm resolution to join the ranks of the four newly industrialized countries of Asia.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the CFM National Convention, November 28, 1987

**CFM
Convention
Heroes
November 28, 1987**

Hall,

**National
Malacañang**

**NO
RENEWAL**

UNITY

WITHOUT

GENUINE

It is pleasing to note that the theme for this year's convention is "Unity and Renewal." There is an urgent need for unity in our nation and we cannot hope to have a lasting unity without genuine renewal. No genuine social and political renewal can ever take place without renewal of the person and this shaping and re-shaping of the person should first take place within the family.

Before events swept me into this office I now occupy, I was a housewife, a woman who had made the care of her husband and children her main occupation. It was a task I gladly took on, for it had not seemed then a duty. It was work that instead gave me great joy and fulfillment, even if, because of the demands on Ninoy's time, the duties of parenting fell mainly on my shoulders. But those days are behind me now, and as I have said time and again, there can be no turning back.

But even as I perform the duties of president and commander-in-chief, at the end of the day, I revert to Cory Aquino, mother, and grandmother. And it is within this loving circle of my family that I find renewal and strength. Which is why I feel such a close kinship with the couples, the solo parents, and your children here today.

I am especially pleased to take note of the theme you have chosen for this year's convention, which is "Unity and Renewal."

The events of the recent past have shown there is an urgent need for *unity* in our nation. Twenty-one months after the events at EDSA, we find our nation wracked by dissent and division. Threats not only to our government, but to our democratic ideals.

The Filipino people have proven impervious so far to these divisive elements, yet there persists a nagging sense of national unease. We cannot hope to have a lasting unity without genuine *renewal*. During the campaign for the presidency, I made a commitment to restore the tenets of public service and public accountability in government. I had hoped to serve notice on the grafters and corrupt officials within our ranks that their days were numbered, because I would not tolerate their putrid presence. But government by example and dictum has proven a puny weapon against their entrenched ways. Which is why we have strived to clean up the ranks of the public service and bureaucracy even more vigorously, with the appointment of men and women of proven integrity and dedication.

But we seek renewal not just in government, for we in the public service do not exist in a vacuum. We operate within a society, and the men and women who serve in government take their signals from the citizens they serve. They would, I suppose, be less brazen or cavalier about corruption, if they knew society would not tolerate it.

Our search for renewal, then, should not stop at merely cleansing the ranks of civil servants. The entire fabric of Philippine society needs not just laundering and repair, but perhaps re-weaving as well, changing ways we relate to one another, our attitudes towards government and civic responsibility, our sense of justice, our spirit of nationhood.

But to re-weave the tangled threads of our social fabric, we must work on the individual filaments. For no genuine social and political renewal can ever take place without renewal of the person. And where else does the shaping and re-shaping of the person take place than within the family?

This is where organizations like the Christian Family Movement could prove most helpful in our task of nation-building. You have made it your mission, as your statement of purpose says, to “promote the human and Christian values of the family, so that it may become in the community a force that forms persons, transmits the faith and through its members, is committed to the total development of family and community.”

I commend you for your programs reaching out not just to every member of the family, but to all kinds of families. I am especially pleased at your Solo Parents program. Being a solo parent myself, I know full well how solace can be provided only by those who have shared the bittersweet experience of loving and then losing. And how strength can be derived from those who have survived the loss and have gone on living full lives, not just for the “sake of the children,” but more important for themselves.

I am also told you have begun a program for wives and husbands of overseas workers. These men and women toiling in foreign lands truly deserve the nation’s gratitude. The amounts they pour into our economy, by way of precious dollars earned by their sweat and paid for by their separation from those they love, have provided our country a buffer against total economic disaster. And I am truly happy to see how the CFM has taken as one of its programs, the task of looking after the spouses and families left behind. That is the least that society and the government owes them.

But let me add that what truly heartens me about the Christian Family Movement is its firm commitment to providing a social dimension to all your activities. For as I have said earlier, of what good to a nation are strong and happy families if they, like the children in our analogy, only end up fighting one another? Beyond your marriage and family enrichment programs, you have placed CFM squarely in the center of the movement for change and social restructuring, which will in the final reckoning, be your source of strength and continuity.

For my part, I have strived, from the very start of my administration, to make the family, and family-centered values, an integral part of government policy and programs.

Earlier this year, I signed the Family Code, which seeks to attune our laws governing relationships between and among spouses, parents, and children to present conditions and changing mores of Filipino society.

The majority of CFM couples and families belong to the more comfortable segment of society. In this sense you have much to lose, but also much to share.

I ask you to consider sharing not just of your time and treasure, which you already do through your CFM involvement, but, as with the Biblical widow, to share of your substance. In our context, I ask you to commit yourselves to building a truly just, equitable and human society.

And lest you readily assent to these beautiful words, let me remind you what they could entail:

* Many of you are employers. Justice, and the papal exhortations, ask you to pay your workers not just a legal wage, not just a living wage, but a family living wage. Which means, paying a worker enough to provide for his family’s basic survival needs, plus education, leisure, medical care, and savings.

* Some of you may be landowners. We have recently promulgated (or are about to promulgate) an agrarian reform law that seeks to redistribute ownership of land and its fruits among a greater number. I ask not only that you throw your full support behind this program which I am convinced could end the age-old cycle of poverty and dependence in the Philippine rural heart-land. I also ask that those of you who receive remuneration for the lands re-distributed to your tenants, re-distribute this wealth, in turn, among people you will employ, re-channeling the wealth you have reaped from the land into economic and business activity that will further fuel our growth.

These are but two examples of what are demanded of you as citizens who profess to believe in the Christian ideals of justice and peace, and commit themselves to seeing them translated into everyday reality. I hope I have not already frightened some of you away.

Thank you for inviting me to share these thoughts and challenges with you. Congratulations and my best wishes for the success of your National Convention. May we as a nation, find unity and renewal soon.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Council of the Laity Magnificat Awarding Ceremony

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Council of the Laity Magnificat Awarding Ceremony

[Delivered on December 4, 1987]

PEACE FROM THE HEART

The President presents the Magnificat Award to Canon Rene Laurentin of Paris, an outstanding Marian scholar and theologian who has dedicated his entire priestly life to Marian studies and whose scholarship and wisdom has enlightened and enriched the church.

I am pleased to welcome the heads, (Cardinal Sin, Ambassador Dee), organizers and staff, of the first International Theological and Pastoral Conference on the Two Hearts, of Jesus and Mary.

In a special way, May I welcome one hundred foreign visitors and guests, especially the speakers and resource persons. It is significant that many of you, who have come for the first time to this country, have come in connection with a major religious event which centers on the themes of UNITY, SELF-DEDICATION, and PEACE: themes particularly meaningful for our nation today.

We are informed that the Holy Father has sent a special Apostolic Letter to this Conference. This is a recognition of its importance as an event for the worldwide Church. The Holy Father underlines the *inner significance* of the conference in relation to peace in the world. With the Holy Father we believe that no authentic peace will come except "from within", ie., *from the heart*. There has to be a conversion to the values of truth, justice, freedom and love. The hearts of men and women, in private and in public life, must learn to make these values their own. Pope John 23rd spoke of these four as the great pillars of society; he spoke of a society

grounded	in	truth
guided	by	justice
realized	in	freedom
perfected	by	love
... and thus flowering in peace		

True, human hearts find it so hard to be unwaveringly committed to these great ideals of human community. And yet without them, an authentic and enduring peace is impossible. We, as people of faith, believe that it is by God's grace alone, by God's power alone, that these values can become truly part of the life of persons, part of the life of communities.

In this I see the relevance of your conference not for the Church alone, but for the larger community. I have myself so often said, "We must work with all our might, we must pray with all our hearts, *but always we must leave "space" for God to work in.*" If I understand it rightly, your conference was concerned precisely to widen," I join myself then, to your prayers and your resolve in this. May your conference bear ample fruitfulness in our country in the months and years to come.

It is with a special joy that I have gladly consented to present the MAGNIFICAT AWARD to Canon Rene Laurentin of Paris. The Council of the Laity has, I believe, done well to confer this award on one who is regarded by many as the outstanding Marian scholar and theologian in the entire Catholic Church today, one who has dedicated his entire priestly life to Marian studies, and whose scholarship and wisdom has enlightened and enriched the entire church. We are honored by Canon Laurentin's presence, as also by the presence of Fr. Michael O'Carroll of Dublin, Msgr.

Luciano Guerra of Fatima, and all the other speakers and visiting resource persons. We trust our visitors are having a pleasant visit with us, and we hope they will want to return.

We may be going through difficult times, but our people are going through them, I believe, with much faith and courage and trust.

Thank you for your visit. I ask you to pray for our people, and for us who try to serve them. May you have a blessed Advent season and a truly happy Christmas.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Diokno Foundation, December 7, 1987

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Diokno Foundation**

[Released on December 7, 1987]

THE MOST BRILLIANT FILIPINO

There is a need to breed more Dioknos, more brilliant Filipinos, so that we can match with competence and cap with real achievements, the passion of our nationalist aspirations.

Foundations like this are meant to keep the memory of a particular individual alive.

Pepe Diokno does not need this foundation. Those who were privileged to have known him directly will never forget him. I mean, both those he helped and those he fought. For in everything he did, he showed the courage, tenacity and brilliance of a champion. As with his co-prisoner in the first years of Martial Law, time and mounting difficulties had no effect but to reconfirm their total commitment to their causes. Every year that passed, every defeat that was suffered was not a reason to relent or regret, but an added reason to see through to the end the investment of courage and endeavor they had already made. As Antoine de Saint-Exupery said, One's love for the flower grows with the attention and care you give it. So it was with their causes.

At Pepe Diokno's funeral, I said:

Diokno, in the days of the Old Republic, prefigured the kind of politics that would be possible in this country only after the painful experience of dictatorship. Diokno represented the possibility that you can mix power and virtue, intelligence and popularity, professed devotion to the highest ideals with the willingness to pay the highest price for one's commitment.

He won several elections without compromising his integrity or diluting his ideals – long before People Power made it possible for us to do the same with equal chance of success. Pepe Diokno showed, before EDSA, that you can be true to yourself, true to your people, and still triumph.

But Pepe has a lesson also for the EDSA generation in the post-EDSA period.

The flash of courage and the sudden surrender to Faith that enabled the Filipino to free himself from tyranny, which were preeminent Diokno qualities, must be supplemented by perseverance and competence if we are to defend and build on that miraculous gain. These qualities, especially supreme intellectual competence, were Diokno's as well, the man Ninoy called the smartest man in the Senate and then the most brilliant Filipino.

I said that Pepe Diokno needs no foundation to be remembered. But to impart his qualities to the rest of his race so that his ideals will live on and prove victorious, a foundation such as this is needed. For we must breed more Dioknos, more brilliant Filipinos, so that we can match with competence, and cap with real achievements, the passion of our nationalist aspirations.

It is not enough to cry for true independence, we must be able to really stand on our own. We must show that we can give the least of Filipinos the economic security and physical well-being that others have offered them – but with a portion of shame.

True nationalism is not the mere rejection of everything that is alien but the confident affirmation of virtues and achievements that are undoubtedly ours.

The Diokno Foundation points the way by its commitment to help in the development of our youth, in the creation of a whole generation of Filipinos who will approximate the fortitude, the courage, and, above all, the brilliance of the great man we honor today.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 3rd ASEAN Meeting of Heads of Government

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the 3rd ASEAN Meeting of Heads of Government**

[Delivered in Manila on December 14, 1987]

**NEW INITIATIVES FOR ASEAN
COOPERATION**

The new initiatives on regional cooperation of the 3rd ASEAN Summit signal a renewed vigor in avowed commitment to ASEAN objectives.

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Philippines in this Third Meeting of ASEAN Heads of Government.

The key to ASEAN's strength, to its increased recognition as a respected force in international affairs, is the economic progress of each and every one of its members. It was hoped, by the founders of ASEAN, that the regional cooperation of its members, the gradual integration of their economies, would enable them to achieve the full measure of progress that none of them could achieve alone.

In my speech to the 19th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting more than a year ago, I expressed the view that "after 19 years of existence, ASEAN should already be evaluating the impact of regional economic cooperation instead of endlessly discussing how to get it off the ground."

This created quite a stir in ASEAN circles with, I should like to think, silent admission.

Today, at this third ASEAN Summit, I am pleased to hear that our Ministers and officials, in consultation with our private sectors, have completed new initiatives on ASEAN cooperation. Their proposals signal a renewed vigor in our avowed commitment to ASEAN aims. There is a greater willingness to cooperate, to share opportunities, even in areas that continue to promise exclusive advantages to those who choose to go it alone.

Our Ministers have recommended expanding the scope of preferential treatment to intra-ASEAN trade, and deepening the margins of preference for the products to which we extend preferential treatment. The agreement to freeze non-tariff barriers and negotiate their elimination or reduction should help in further expanding the ASEAN market for ASEAN products. The proposal to encourage the use of equal commitment to the security of the region, the hemisphere, and the world.

Your presence here underscores our collective determination to measure the progress of ASEAN only by the individual success of each and every one of its members, and to found its security on the strength and stability of each and the solidarity of all.

May I express once more our deep appreciation for your presence and our great pleasure in welcoming you all to the Philippines.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Message of President Corazon Aquino to the ASEAN Delegates, December 14, 1987

**Welcoming Remarks
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the ASEAN Delegates**

[Released on December 14, 1987]

THE PHILIPPINE FACTOR

The Philippines feels a strong responsibility for maintaining peace and stability in the region and beyond. Our presence is said to have contributed to the securing of the air space and all lanes that are vital to the continued economic stability and growth of our neighbors in Southeast Asia, East Asia and the Pacific.

On behalf of the Filipino people, may I extend our warmest welcome to Your Majesty and Your Excellencies, and to the distinguished delegates and other honored guests to the Third ASEAN Meeting of Heads of Government.

May I also express our appreciation of your steadfast decision to proceed with our Summit as scheduled despite efforts to derail it. We have tried to match your unwavering resolve with our best efforts to ensure the peace and safety of these proceedings. We are glad to announce that those efforts paid off before your arrival.

We appreciate your determination to proceed, because the Third ASEAN Summit finds our country once more going through a political and economic transition. We are attempting to rebuild an enduring structure of responsible government, such as we had in an earlier period not so long ago. And such as you, our neighbors, have since attained.

Equally, we are trying to recover the measure of economic strength and promise that was ours in that same period, when some of you were going through your own economic and political trials.

I am reminded that the first time I addressed the issue of ASEAN, at the ASEAN Ministers Meeting in June of '86, I expressed some skepticism about its continued utility. It was not until I made my first ASEAN state visits, that I realized that ASEAN is first about friendship and responsible statesmanship, about the unhesitating support that friends extend to each other and the wisdom to see that, in this day and age, devotion to national security and peace requires an equal commitment to the security of the region, the hemisphere, and the world.

Your presence here underscores our collective determination to measure the progress of ASEAN only by the individual success of each and every one of its members, and to found its security on the strength and stability of each and the solidarity of all.

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This created quite a stir in ASEAN circles with, I should like to think, silent admission.

Today, at this third ASEAN Summit, I am pleased to hear that our Ministers and officials, in consultation with our private sectors, have completed new initiatives on ASEAN cooperation. Their proposals signal a renewed vigor in our avowed commitment to ASEAN aims. There is a greater willingness to cooperate, to share opportunities, even in areas that continue to promise exclusive advantages to those who choose to go it alone.

Our Ministers have recommended expanding the scope of preferential treatment to intra-ASEAN trade, and deepening the margins of preference for the products to which we extend preferential treatment. The agreement to freeze non-tariff barriers and negotiate their elimination or reduction should help in further expanding the ASEAN market for ASEAN products. The proposal to encourage the use of ASEAN currencies for intra-ASEAN trade and investments should increase the volume of business among us. And we are turning to each other more often for mutual support against the efforts of developed countries to undercut our exports, including our agricultural exports.

But what pleases me most is that we are willing now to quantify our measures, to set targets against which we can, in future, judge the sincerity and vigor of our commitment to ASEAN goals.

This willingness to set targets, so that we can measure progress or delay, is one of the most important developments in ASEAN. It shows a commitment to really go forward, to build tangibly towards our aims.

Although the main Philippine preoccupation is economics, the primary Philippine position is nevertheless defined by its geography, and its geo-political implications for the Region.

We are earnestly striving for the day when the Philippine position will be defined primarily by its economic progress, and we look to the economic character of this Summit to help bring this about. But for the present, our geographical position provides the important dimension to our role.

Of all the ASEAN states, the Philippines is the most distant from the Indochinese peninsula. By virtue alone of its geography, it can afford to be indifferent to foreign threats. Except in the event of a global war between the superpowers, we are virtually immune from invasion. Certainly, the country with the fourth largest armed force in the world, Vietnam, poses no threat to us. So, if geography alone were to dictate a foreign policy for the Philippines, it would be one of the coldest indifference to developments in the Region.

But the Philippines, like other ASEAN states, has felt a strong responsibility for maintaining peace and stability in the Region, and beyond. In this respect, it has been said to play a major role in keeping an equilibrium among the great powers in Southeast Asia – perhaps, in the entire Asia-Pacific region.

The Philippine factor is said to have contributed to the securing of the air space and sea lanes that are vital to the continued economic stability and growth of our neighbors in Southeast Asia, and the Pacific.

This is part of the reality that we are going to address in our security discussions this afternoon. In sum, the situation that presents itself is as follows:

Once more the Region is experiencing the convergence of an impressive, and disturbing array of military power. Fortunately, that power has been held in check by the approximate parity of the forces deployed and, we hope, by the lessons of recent history about the folly of intervention and confrontation.

But if history teaches anything, it is that no one learns from history except in sad retrospect amidst the ruins of war.

Not surprisingly, ASEAN has moved to push the protagonists outside the Region, to make it difficult for them to settle their differences on our doorsteps and in our houses. This has led to the vision of a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality and the call for a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in Southeast Asia.

The Philippines anticipates that the coming discussions on the issue of the over-all Asian peace and security situation, in which it plays a most significant role, will enlighten its future decisions on the matter.

Setting aside the larger geo-political picture, the Philippines' chief concern is the recovery of its economy. And we see increased intra-ASEAN trade and economic relations as a significant step in that direction.

Our faith in this parallel route to recovery, running alongside our efforts to improve the strictly domestic economy, is based on the solid achievements of our Association in the more volatile field of diplomacy. Our willingness to stand together and face, as one, imminent dangers to some of our partners, gives us reason to hope that an equal measure of cooperation can be achieved in the safer and peaceful pursuits of trade and industry among us.

We agree that the collective ability of ASEAN to ensure the Region's peace and stability rests first and last on the individual strength of its members, on the vigor of their economies and the material well-being of their populations. Let us be candid: the aims of ASEAN are economic and its means are trade and investments, but the final fruit that we all seek is a just and lasting peace within our homes, within our countries and throughout the Region.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Dinner	Toast	to	Takeshita
December 15, 1987			

A heritage of courage and daring, this is what Japan and the Philippines share in common. Japan's remarkable progress has given her people not only prosperity but it has also devolved upon her serious responsibilities to her people and to those of other nations as well.

Your visit betokens the special relationship that we both seek between our two countries. That relationship is characterized by a profound appreciation on our part for Japan's noble aims in the region, as well as her generous objectives in the Philippines. It is equally marked by Japan's deep and sympathetic understanding of our country and her needs, and by Japan's support, particularly under the leadership of Your Excellency, of our burning ambition to improve the lives of our people.

Prime Minister Takeshita, Japan has generously assisted the Philippines in the past. Yet, let me say that Japan will never feel as rewarded and justified as she will be by the assistance that she will extend to us in the future. For this government aims to make the best use of her friends generosity.

In electing you, Japan has chosen the leader for her future role as a major stabilizing influence on the world and as a force for progress, particularly in countries like the Philippines.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast:

to Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita, friend of Philippine freedom and progress, to the people and Government of Japan, Filipin to/Nihon tono/Aidano/Suenagaki/Yuujo ni/ Kanpai! (and to the long and enduring friendship of our two countries).

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the ASEAN Summit Meeting, December 15, 1987 Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the ASEAN Summit Meeting**

[Released on December 15, 1987]

**FRIENDSHIP AND A SENSE OF
COMMUNITY**

Friendship and a strong desire for community brought the ASEAN members together. These are the overriding aims of ASEAN. These friendship and community find expression in a proud commitment to strive harder for the attainment of ASEAN goals.

I was touched by Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's remark yesterday that he had overruled the decision of his security advisers not to attend the Summit and the information regarding President Soeharto's resolve to show support to the Philippines. In the spirit of ASEAN, the other leaders had also decided to brave the risks and show solidarity with the Philippines. In the spirit of Prime Minister Lee's comments last night about the religious character of our Revolution, I would rejoin by saying: No greater love, indeed, has a man than to lay down his life for a friend. I thank the leaders of ASEAN for this moving demonstration of solidarity.

As I had occasion to remark on my return from my ASEAN visits last year, the aims of ASEAN were already attained at her foundation. For it was friendship that brought us together in the first place; a strong desire for community among nations that might as well have progressed separately. And yet it is friendship and community that are the overriding aims of ASEAN. No necessity compelled our hands to join in the difficult pursuit of the vision that inspires all our labors: the vision of the ASEAN states living in peace, amity and concord, and working together for their common progress and prosperity.

This friendship and sense of community have borne fruit in a mutual regard for each other's safety and stability on many occasions in the past. Our common stand on the Kampuchean crisis being one of the most notable.

Today that friendship and community find expression in a proud commitment to strive harder for the attainment of ASEAN goals, and in concrete measures of greater economic cooperation.

We have signed today the Manila Declaration of 1987. The Declaration reaffirms the principles of our Association and sets forth the decisions arrived at in this Summit. It charts the direction we are determined to take to bring a more progressive, prosperous, and cohesive ASEAN to the 21st century.

The Declaration affirms our solidarity in the face of the dangers to the stability and peace of our region, particularly our persistent search for an enduring solution to the Kampuchean problem.

Our economic ministers have entered into agreements intended to liberalize trade among our countries through the improvement of the preferential treatment that we extend to one another's products, and through other measures to lower the barriers to intra-ASEAN trade.

We have revised our agreement on joint ventures in order to accelerate such investments and encourage them to come from in, rather than from outside the region. Furthermore, to encourage such investments, our countries have signed an agreement for the promotion and protection of intra-ASEAN investments.

In addition, we have directed our governments to adopt measures to strengthen our cooperation in transportation and communications, agriculture and forestry, banking and finance.

The general aim of these measures is our common progress and the great improvement in the lives of all our peoples. For in their hands and in their abiding faith in the meaningfulness of ASEAN lies our countries' continuing commitment to the ASEAN dream. To that end, the Manila Declaration expresses our common determination to involve our peoples in a broader range of ASEAN cooperative endeavors in order to strengthen and enrich the fabric of the Association. If anything has stood out in this meeting of ASEAN heads of government it is precisely this strong emphasis we have placed on the role of the private sector in the activities of ASEAN.

It is the direct linkage between the work we do in ASEAN and the difference it will make in the lives of our peoples that has made my experience of participating in and presiding over this Meeting so rewarding and enriching. I thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the RP-Japan Heads of Government Marketing

Opening Statement of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines To the RP-Japan Heads of Government Marketing

[Released on December 16, 1987]

GREATER ACCESS TO JAPANESE MARKETS

The bond of Philippine-Japan friendship and cooperation is stronger than it has ever been. The President notes that Japan's remarkable progress devolved on her the equal responsibility to use her tremendous economic resources to bring a greater measure of progress and stability to the developing world. At the same time, she admits that the Philippines' contribution would depend largely on its swift economic recovery.

I am very pleased that this dialogue between us has taken place so soon after my state visit to your beautiful country just a year ago.

As we have had occasion to say time and again, the significance of this visit by Your Excellency, Prime Minister Takeshita, has not escaped us and is deeply appreciated.

The meeting which Your Excellency had with me and with the other ASEAN heads of government yesterday was a successful one, despite its brevity, and gives us reason to be confident that our meeting today will prove equally fruitful for our two countries.

Your Excellency, my state visit to Japan started a process of broadening and deepening our bilateral relations. Considerable progress has been achieved, especially during the visit of the high-level economic and technical cooperation mission, and during the first Philippine-Japan subministerial meeting. These consultations produced mutual understanding on many issues, an understanding and an appreciation of our needs and your country's capabilities to assist us. To be sure, those capabilities are less than divine as you pointed out yesterday. But Japan's prosperity is more than normal, and it has been the work of man. Moreover a firm common determination to exhaust all possible means seems to have been achieved. This augurs well of subsequent subministerial meetings next year. I am glad that we are having these talks so that we can consider even more comprehensively certain bilateral issues, and strengthen further our relations.

Much has indeed been achieved, yet much more needs to be done. But this much can be already be said, that the bond of Philippine-Japan friendship and cooperation is stronger than it has ever been.

We observed yesterday that Japan's remarkable progress devolved on her the equal responsibility to use her tremendous economic resources to bring a greater measure of progress, and therefore stability, to the developing world. Japan's announcement of its major program for recycling its surpluses to the developing world is her most recent acknowledgment of this responsibility.

The Philippines, despite its trials and its difficulties, has never faltered in its own contribution to the security, peace and stability of Southeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific region in general. These are areas that are as vital to Japan's own security and continued progress as they are to the countries that are located there.

Therefore, in the spirit of our mutual recognition of each other's critical interests in this area of the world, we call upon Japan to bend her great economic power to support the economic development of the region, particularly that of the Philippines.

Our country's capability to contribute even more meaningfully to the common security and stability depends on its swift economic recovery from the waste and mismanagement of the past government. I need not detail what happened to our economy, nor the enormity of the debt we inherited.

At the core of the Philippine plan of recovery, which is also the core of our economic agenda, is the need to increase exports to, and investments from, Japan. Japan must improve access to her markets and increase the flow of investment into our economy. We have every confidence that she will exert her utmost in these areas.

A great deal of improvement is needed in these areas. Our exports to Japan are far below the level of the early Eighties. At the same time, Japan's direct investments in the Philippines dropped from \$61 Million in 1985 to \$26 Million. This at a time when Japan's investments in the rest of the developing world showed a marked increase.

I have repeatedly stressed that our country aims to recover, as yours did, by increasing its economic activities through a dynamic private sector. Hence, the need to meet the capital requirements of the sector, and the need for much more access to Japanese markets.

To meet capital requirements, we are pleased to reiterate our appreciation for the initiative represented by the ASEAN-Japan Development Fund to promote private ventures.

Market access now appears more probable with Japan's announced intention to open her markets more widely to the rest of the world.

We invite cooperation to improve the international competitiveness of our export products, through such measures as the development of a comprehensive Philippine export promotion plan, and the implementation in the Philippines of the New Aid Plan put forward by Japan to promote Asian export industries.

There are many more areas for increased Philippine-Japan cooperation, which I urge the officials of our two countries to consult on immediately. These include the revitalization of our industrial base, tourism development, the development of export processing zones that could host Japanese manufacturers, and the Philippine Government's industry dispersal program.

These and other like measures will promote the long-term economic recovery of our country, but many of our requirements are urgent. We need to buy time, through measures for immediate relief, so these programs can bear fruit. Immediate external financing is imperative to give the necessary impetus to our economy and to lift in some measure the crushing burden of poverty on our people. Japan has the capability and the will, and the leadership, to help.

We need sustained and higher levels of assistance to support the implementation of the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan. I should like at this point to reiterate our appreciation for the conclusion this year of the Calaca II Special Yen Loan and the Economic Recovery Loan from the Export-Import Bank of Japan. We are also grateful for the 14th Annual OECF Yen Credit Package on which both of us have exchanged notes just this morning. We are encouraged at the effort of your government to make it possible to disburse against the commodity loan component of this package before the end of this year.

Now that the size of the 14th Yen Credit approximates the level of OECF loans being provided to other ASEAN countries, we look forward to swifter negotiations and progressively greater amounts in subsequent packages. Time is of the essence, our needs press ever harder on our scarce resources. We cannot afford the delays encountered in past annual programs. Consequently, we hope to develop the 15th and 16th Yen Credit Packages as soon as possible, with a larger component of commodity loans.

Most urgently, measures are needed to alleviate the impact of the Yen's appreciation that negates the concessionality of Yen loans, and increases the burden they were meant to lighten.

On the related issue of currency risk, allow me to suggest that the solution does not require a godlike ability to anticipate and provide against it, but the human will to mobilize the resources Japan has to compensate for it.

Furthermore, to limit our debt, we need to have more recourse to better quality, non-debt assistance. Grants should be increased so that they will account for a larger component of our bilateral official development assistance flows.

A very special area of concern is agrarian reform. I wish to convey to Your Excellency the readiness of our officials to immediately discuss with their Japanese counterparts the details of a broad-based Japanese assistance for the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, on which so much of the success of our recovery program, and our political stability, depends. This, we hope, can be supported by accelerating the 16th Yen Package.

The Japanese people are aware of my deep concern for Filipino workers in Japan, and I am glad that our respective officials have started to institutionalize consultations for their protection and welfare.

I hope that Japan can ease its immigration rules and liberalize its labor market, particularly where there may be a need for more workers. The dedication and industry of Filipino workers is widely-known; they have proved as valuable to their host, as to their native country. And they deserve respect and dignity.

We are also prepared, Your Excellency, to work for greater cooperation in the educational, social and cultural fields. We can learn a great deal from the educational system that produced that Japanese economic miracle. I expressed my desire for more extensive cultural exchanges between our countries at your alma mater and mine the Waseda University.

I shall conclude, Your Excellency, by reaffirming my country's commitment to increased bilateral cooperation with Japan and by expressing my profound appreciation for your initiatives in increasing Japan's assistance to the Philippines. We shall work together, with equal dedication, to preserve the great friendship that our meeting celebrates today.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 17th PNRC Biennial National Convention

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 17th PNRC Biennial National Convention**

[Released on December 17, 1987]

A RECORD OF CARING AND SHARING

The President pays tribute to the Philippine National Red Cross for its humanitarian endeavors and the impressive record of service of its professional workers and volunteers.

Your convention is a special occasion for me to pay tribute to the good work the Philippine National Red Cross is doing as a trusted private, voluntary and independent organization assisting the Government in humanitarian endeavors. I also accord that wholehearted tribute to all of you, the delegates — adult and young volunteer leaders — who are the backbone of the Red Cross in our country.

As one of the 165 nations that are signatories to the Geneva Conventions, the Philippines stands committed to the goals and objectives of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. I fully recognize the role of the Red Cross especially in our country today, not only the PNRC but the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. I am glad to know that the PNRC and ICRC are working in tandem right in the center of humanitarian needs brought about by the insurgency menace which our Government now is trying hard to put to an end. And that the PNRC and the League have joined hands, too, in a concerted effort to help our Government improve the health care delivery in the rural areas, among other things of equal value.

Although your aim, as true to the mandate of Red Cross the world over, is mainly to alleviate human suffering and to protect life and health, you are promoting to a great extent the spirit of peace in the process. For the Red Cross transcends all ideologies, race, creed, religion and politics in the performance of its duties. Therein lies the uniqueness of Red Cross. And since the Red Cross serves everyone and is open to all, who are willing to help humanity, it is considered a potent instrument of peace. In all its actions, the Red Cross fosters understanding, friendship and cooperation among the people of the world. Ultimately this will lead to harmony and peace.

In your convention, I understand you are aiming for a stronger Red Cross in terms of manpower and financial resources so essential in the delivery of your services. I know your biggest problem is funding. And so, I encourage you to try again to ask for bigger support for your service programs.

Our Government and the general public have high regard for your Organization, not only because of its impressive record of service but the devotion of your professional workers and volunteers as well.

It is heartwarming to know that you are striving to make the broad spectrum of your nationwide service programs more relevant to the present-day needs of our society. Like disaster preparedness and relief, the blood program, safety, youth leadership training, primary health care, home and community nursing care, which you have started to innovate and refurbish, little by little, as funds come in. All these are in cadence with the aspiration of this Government: to take the challenge of building a better and stable future for all of us Filipinos.

Let us therefore continue to work harder together towards that direction – in the spirit of solidarity and in the highest degree of moral sensibility to caring and sharing which defines man's humanity.

In closing, I am wishing you all in advance a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!"

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the anniversary of DBP, January 2, 1988

DBP

January 2, 1988

A NEW CORPORATE CULTURE FOR DBP

President Aquino stresses the need for a high degree of professionalism in the rehabilitated DBP. Political behests nor selfish interests should not be allowed to influence the management decisions of the DBP core of officers. She also warns against special privileges and preferential access to government resources.

Last January 2, 1987, I gave you a gift of a new charter, formalizing my government's commitment to DBP's rehabilitation. This year, on your first anniversary as a rehabilitated bank, I have come in person to join the DBP family, particularly in your celebration for the significant progress you have made.

I am aware of the reforms you have initiated. A new corporate culture has been introduced. New systems and methods have been put in place. Training is emphasized. Prudence and discipline have been brought back to your credit evaluation process. Morale is high, and there is a new eagerness to excel. I want you to know of my government's unwavering commitment to DBP's 3-year rehabilitation program.

No program of rehabilitation can succeed unless a high degree of professionalism is observed. I am determined that no political behests should be allowed to shortcut your credit evaluation procedures. Nor should any selfish interests be allowed to influence the management decisions of your professional core of officers. I have specified under your new charter that ordinary members of your Board of Directors confine themselves solely to policy-making tasks. I expect them to abide by this and other provisions that foster complete professionalism within the Development Bank of the Philippines.

You must be thoroughly professional because so much more is expected of you. You have to be much better than you ever were because now you have to fully compete against so many good banks in the financial system. Moreover, you must be the best, because you are also expected to take the lead in developing lending. And you are to do so while at the same time ensuring your own financial viability. To some, this is an impossible challenge. To you, however, these are your marching orders. Take them as a very special mission you have to carry out for our own people and for the common good of our nation. I know you are equal to the challenge.

I am here to assure you that you are not to be left without the tools to compete effectively. Your special prerogatives and privileges have been removed from you. Even the special government deposits you still have, are being gradually withdrawn. Increasingly, you must rely on your ability to tap sources of funds in competition with other banks which do not have the development duty that is yours. My sense of fairness tells me that you have to be given at least the same tools and the same capabilities that other competing banks have. Let me make clear the operative principles for the new DBP: No special privileges and no preferential access to government resources; but at least equal footing and similar powers as the banks you have to compete against.

As a development bank, you cannot limit your vision to the here and now. You cannot confine yourself to the immediately profitable and to the short term cash cows. You have to nurture a broad vision of development. Your thinking must be longer term. Your concerns must be strategic. Your preoccupations must be more comprehensive. Urban renewal, regional and industrial development, quality education and health are areas that seem to be orphaned by the fixation of others on more pressing problems. They should find a natural home within DBP.

Congratulations on the first year of the new DBP!

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 87th Anniversary of the Western Police District, January 9, 1988

**87th Anniversary of the
Western Police District
January 9, 1988**

STILL MANILA'S FINEST

The President announces a package of incentives to the police like; 1) no equity deposit shall be required to qualify under the NHA plan for police housing; 2) a system of automatic promotion of patrolmen; 3) DOH to formalize specific arrangements for hospitals to fully treat wounded lawmen without requiring a deposit.

Last year, I had the honor to congratulate you on your 86th anniversary. I thank you for giving me that honor again.

Many things have changed since that occasion. I said then that our democracy is fighting two wars:

One against the communist insurgents (and military adventurers); the other against crime, lawlessness, and anarchy. The first is fought by the Armed Forces. The second by the police, not least by the men and women of Manila's Finest: the police of the Western District, under the extremely capable leadership of our fighting Police General Alfredo Lim. He is one reason I sleep well at night.

The first called on our warfighting capability, the second on our crimefighting capability.

Much has changed since then. In the past year, criminality, insurgency and military mutiny struck indiscriminately at anyone who stood in their way. A private citizen or a policeman had as much chance of being shot in the neck by a Communist assassin or mowed down by a rebel soldier, as shot at by a fleeing robber.

Much has also been accomplished,

We stopped talking and went back to fighting the Communist rebels. As expected, they fought back harder and brought the war to the cities. The truce, nonetheless, showed the true colors of the insurgency: as a movement dedicated not to peace and the general good, but to the enslavement by terror of our people. Our people now know the true face of the enemy.

The other enemy of democracy, the rightwing rebels, made an all-or-nothing attempt, a desperate stab at the heart of Philippine democracy. We blunted their attack and hunted them down successfully. The Armed Forces and the Police stood resolutely by democracy on that fateful day, and earned the deep respect and undying gratitude of the nation.

Last January, I pledged to work hard to improve the living conditions of the police. As you kept faith with democracy, so have I kept my pledge to you. A housing plan was prepared, approved and is being implemented by the National Housing Authority and other agencies of the government.

I want to improve on that pledge by announcing that no equity deposit shall be required to qualify under the NHA plan for police housing.

PC-INP Chief, General de Villa, has initiated a process for the automatic promotion of *patrolmen* to *patrolmen first class* after 10 years of service. He is directed to study the feasibility of extending this to progressively higher ranks and longer terms of service.

Likewise, I have told General de Villa to give first priority in promotions to the members of our police forces who distinguish themselves in exceptional deeds, such as the heroic actions that thwarted the August 28 Coup.

The character of a nation, and a government, it has been said, is shown by the decent, not to say noble, manner in which it honors its heroic dead, and cares for its wounded. To that end, I have directed the Acting Metro Manila Governor to set aside an area that will serve as a cemetery for the police dead.

The Department of Health is directed to formalize specific arrangements for government and private hospitals to fully treat wounded lawmen without requiring a deposit. All charges incurred for their full emergency care should be shouldered by the respective Police Districts. It is true that there are existing laws requiring emergency medical care for anyone in need, but the reality has been that only the most cursory treatment is given to our police who are brought in wounded. This shameful treatment of those who lay down their lives each day to protect our lives will end. Any hospital that fails to meet this obligation should be reported to my office.

At the convening of the first Congress, I said, Can we expect our men to fight if we will not give them the means to fight? I know that you continue to lack the necessary arms and equipment that will maximize your efficiency. Our enemies remain better armed than you, our protectors. I pledge here and now to redress the imbalance in firepower between crime and order. I expect a report from General de Villa on the logistical lack and requirements of our police forces. I don't want our men going out there with only a hope and a prayer. To the protection and compassion of Providence, let us not forget to add the stopping power of a. 38.

Let me end by congratulating you on another great year of notable service to our people and our democracy. In a week, local elections will be held. We are going to need every hand, and every brave heart, to make this a peaceful, honest and orderly election. I call on you, the men and women of the Western Police District, and on all police forces throughout the country, to do your part in assuring the success of the elections. Let us show the world again that we Filipinos know as much about working a democracy as winning it.

Congratulations again, and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Fulbright Scholars Association and the Philippine Society of
International Law Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Fulbright Scholars Association and the Philippine Society of International Law**

[Delivered at Malacañang, January 21, 1988]

A FORMIDABLE COMBINATION

President Aquino commends the officers and members of the two associations for their excellent work and contribution to the broadcasting and deepening of Philippine-American relations.

I am indeed deeply grateful to you all for this happy occasion.

For it is in a sense a double celebration, because of which I have the rare opportunity to address an association of scholars and a society of lawyers, a really formidable combination.

This is of course made possible by the accession of Justice Fernan to the Presidency of both distinguished entities.

I gather this is somewhat like a phenomenon in international law called a personal union, when two states have one person as their head.

Seriously, there is in that common choice and in this joint induction ceremonies an underlying significance: that scholarship and law go hand in hand and that this is brought about by the dedication of such men and women as you who are behind the excellent work of your association and society.

The Fulbright scholarship program is of course well-known and appreciated, and through the years it has contributed immensely to broadening and deepening Philippine-American relations.

The Philippine Society of International Law is equally renowned for its outstanding participation in international law activities, particularly its first-rate Philippine yearbook.

I can only commend your endeavors and wish you even more success and accomplishments in the years ahead.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the PARC Meeting, January 22, 1988

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the PARC Meeting**

[Released on January 22, 1988]

KEY TO LASTING PEACE

President Aquino waxes optimistic on the success of the agrarian reform program. She appeals to the landowners to view agrarian reform as an opportunity for the wider partnership of all our people towards progress and peace. She also reiterates her prior commitment to place Hacienda Luisita under the operation of the CARP.

Secretary Juico has reported on the accomplishments of the Department of Agrarian Reform and on the progress of the Program. I am pleased and very happy with what his Department has achieved six months after I signed the CARP. Clearly, the Executive is doing its part to make the dream of land, productivity, welfare and dignity for the tiller come true.

Much has been accomplished, when you consider the obstacles, but much remains to be done. And it will be done – by this Administration. Despite the doomsayers that Agrarian Reform will fail,

that it will make things worse rather than better,

that it is better deferred to another time – in the indefinite future.

We shall persevere and we shall succeed. For I remain firm in my conviction that Agrarian Reform is the key to lasting peace and certain progress in our country.

I am therefore appealing to all our countrymen to give the Program all their support and encouragement.

I am appealing to the landowners. Do not look at Agrarian Reform as a taking of your lands but as an opportunity for the wider partnership of all our people towards progress and peace.

I am told that the landowners are having some difficulty to register their lands before the deadline on February 8. This matter has been discussed extensively at the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council Meeting this morning and it was decided that to enable the landowners to meet the deadline, they will not be required at the present time to accomplish the entire form distributed by the DAR; the only information they will have to supply on or before February 8 are: 1) the area of the land and 2) the fair market value thereof. This will be deemed substantial compliance with the law and relieve the landowners of the consequence of having their lands acquired by the Government at their assessed, rather than their fair market value.

I am aware that people are saying, What about Hacienda Luisita. Have the Cojuangcos registered?

I will be the first to admit that my pronouncements on Agrarian Reform would sound hollow if I cannot get Luisita to come under the coverage of CARP. And so today I should like to reiterate that the Tarlac Development Corporation, the owner of Hacienda Luisita, expresses its readiness to place the Hacienda, which has a total area of 6,100 hectares and is under cultivation by about 7,000 farmworkers, under the operation of the CARP. Hacienda Luisita will, I repeat, comply with the requirements for registration of all agricultural lands pursuant to Executive Order No. 229.

The Department of Agrarian Reform has been given the facilities and the support for the great task that lies before us. We have increased its budget almost fourfold. We have increased its plantilla from 9,000 to 14,000. We have given the DAR its own quarters and increased its mobility.

For its part, the rest of the Cabinet will give DAR the fullest support and encouragement. We are a team. We will work as a team – for Agrarian Reform, for our people, and for our future.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Youth, January 31, 1988

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Youth**

[Delivered at Don Bosco, January 31, 1988]

YOUTH AS THE FUTURE

The President pays tribute to the youth, their idealism, and uncompromising attitudes on matters of right and commitment to the rebuilding of our nation.

The usual thing is to say that the youth are the future of the country.

That is true of course, because many of you will still be around when many of us will be gone.

But that saying makes it seem like the youth are important only tomorrow, when they are already adults. And not today while they are young.

Now *that* is not true.

It is not true because the youth constitute the bulk of the Filipino nation today.

It is not true because the youth, with their idealism and uncompromising attitudes on matters of right, made our new country what it is today.

It is not true because without the commitment of our youth to the rebuilding of our nation we shall have no tomorrow.

I am honored to be here for the centennial celebration of St. John Bosco's death: the friend and patron of youth. He was a man who felt that every young person was of infinite value and that no life should be wasted. The waste of a life through poverty, unemployment, and uselessness was, for him, a kind of sacrilege, a desecration of God. For he took literally what the Bible says, That each person is made in God's image.

I said that the youth are not only the future of our nation, but also that, without the commitment of our youth, we shall have no future. I believe this because only the youth can supply the energy, the time, the intelligence and the patriotism that are needed to make this country strong and progressive.

You are the future, indeed. You are our country, today and tomorrow.

As you will be what you make of yourselves, this country will be what you make of it.

I believe in you, as the saint we honor today believed in you. And I know that you will do us proud.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Garment Industry

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Garment Industry**

[Delivered on February 3, 1988]

SHINING STAR OF THE INDUSTRY

The garments industry turned in a sterling performance in 1987. It has been tagged as the “shining star” of the industrial sector for achieving its target of P1 billion. President Aquino pledges the government’s wholehearted support to the garments industry. It will curb textile smuggling, train the necessary skilled workers for garment factories, provide the equipment and buildings for these trainings, and review garments and textile import/export policies. The government is also taking appropriate measures to make the industry more competitive by not raising taxes on garments.

I am very happy to be here today, speaking to a sector that turned in a sterling performance last year despite the troubles that the ambitious and misguided brought upon us. The garments industry delivered in 1987 and has been tagged as the “shining star” of the industrial sector for achieving its target of P1 Billion. The target next year is P1.3 Billion.

Government will do its best to help you meet that target. We are already implementing the Local Value Added scheme to reduce your dependence on imported fabrics, and to pave the way for the expansion of the Philippine textile industry. This is another goal to which we are deeply committed.

The Philippine textile industry, despite its serious efforts to improve quality and increase capacity, continues to reel from foreign textiles that continue to be dumped and smuggled into the country. From employing over 100,000 workers in 1979, the textile industry has declined to employing some 70,000 workers last year. Smuggling was a major factor in this decline. Smuggling has to stop. And it will.

I have instructed the Commissioner of Customs to increase the bounty for turning in textile smugglers to a level that is sure to kill the profitability of that illicit trade. I expect your cooperation in this campaign. The textile industry has just invested an additional P2 Billion in 65 projects to upgrade its mills. Government will give the textile industry the protection it deserves for the generous commitment it has made to national recovery. But there is more at stake here than investments. Over 70,000 workers depend on the textile industry for their livelihoods; counting their dependents, that could easily run to 300,000 men, women and children. So let me here serve warning on the textile smugglers: We are poised to strike, and we will make no exceptions.

The garment industry has its share of problems too: Lack of raw materials and shortage of accessories, shortage of skilled labor, unavailability of spare parts, quota restrictions, lack of suitable infrastructure, labor relations, and government regulations.

In response to your Association’s appeal for Government to address the shortage of skilled garment workers, I instructed the Labor Department to produce the needed 13,000 to 16,000 skilled workers every year. Government will provide facilities. We hope that the private sector will contribute its share. Right now, it seems that we shall have to import British trainers, since the local industry has said it cannot spare any of its own. That may be a good

sign of heavy demand for your products. Perhaps, what industry can do is already plan for the absorption of the annual crop of graduates. The first batch should be graduating by March 30.

The Department of Trade and Industry has been directed to purchase the high-speed sewing machines, the knitting machines and whatever equipment is required to get the training going. Let me repeat that instruction with this emphasis: Do it fast, and do it straight. The Bureau of Customs is directed to facilitate the entry of these machineries, with due regard of course to the possibility of smuggling unauthorized items. You can never tell what people will do in the name of development. I likewise instruct the Department of Public Works to speed up the construction of the necessary buildings.

I also direct the CB, GTEB and Customs Interagency group to speed up the review of import/export procedures for garments.

The Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Labor and Employment are directed to review the rules on subcontracting with a view to generating more employment without any loss in workers' protection. We have set employment generation as our highest priority this year.

These are just some of the measures we have taken to encourage the industry. You know what you have to contribute: quality and dependability. The textile and garments industries are among the most competitive and volatile businesses in the world. People expect the best and they will get it, if not from us then from the competition.

To that end, I have vetoed Congressional measures to raise the tariff on garments from 50 percent to 75 percent. The increase proposed is beyond the present maximum tariff rate of 50 percent ad valorem, and flies in the face of the cornerstone policy of this Government, which is to invite competition in order to bring out the best in the Filipino. I am not afraid of the competition, and neither are you.

We pin great hopes on the garments industry as one of the leaders of our economic recovery. I know we won't be disappointed.

The last political exercise was completed last month. Those who are entitled to it have each their share of democratic political power and office. The last excuse was played out for delaying a wholehearted commitment to national development. Now it is time to work – together – for the one and only country that is ours. Thank you and good day.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on congratulating the Ten Outstanding Young Men Awardees,
February 4, 1988**

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Congratulating the Ten Outstanding Young Men Awardees of 1986**

[Released on February 4, 1988]

REWARDING EXCELLENCE

The times and the pressing task at hand – national recovery – call for acts of patriotism from each and every Filipino. President Aquino congratulates the TOYM awardees for their achievements in their respective fields and for their contributions towards national recovery.

T-O-Y-M, 1986, I understand, scored many firsts. This is the first time TOYM has two women awardees in a single year, and it is the third year in a row when a woman is cited. I see the men have finally realized that the handwriting on the wall is a woman's.

It won't be long before you'll just have to call this award, T-O-Y-F, or Ten Outstanding Young Filipinos.

It won't be just to avoid being sexist.

Because the trend now, is to be Filipino – in your convictions and in your real commitments. Regardless of sex or age, the times and the pressing task at hand – national recovery – call for acts of patriotism from each and every Filipino.

The judges have chosen wisely because it appears that the awardees' respective spheres of excellence represent our highest priorities.

There is the area of law with Chavez, although he thinks that this principal asset is his unflagging fidelity to his wife, despite his uncanny resemblance to Richard Gere. But his real achievements, for which he is here honored, are his brave defense of human rights under the dictatorship, and his brilliant defense of constitutional principles under the democracy.

There is order with Colonel Coronel, the precondition of sustained development.

There is cultural understanding with Lopez-Gonzaga, the foundation of peace among the diverse cultures that make up our nation. There was no selection just to fill the space. You, who stand here represent the near unanimous choice of the judges. And those judges are some of the most notable men and women in our community. There was little argument, and a great deal of concurrence about your high and remarkably early achievements. I congratulate you on the honor and that has been conferred on you.

May I also express my sympathy for you. You have set the hardest standard to meet – that of your own early achievements was essentially yourselves: your dedication, the skills you developed, and the talents God graced you with at birth. You won't lose them so long as you remain true to yourselves.

I congratulate you again, and wish you all the best.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 86th Foundation Anniversary of the Bureau of Customs

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 86th Foundation Anniversary of the Bureau of Customs**

[Delivered on February 5, 1988]

A CATALYST FOR REFORMS

As a public service agency and revenue collection arm of the government, the Bureau of Customs must be a model of efficiency, honesty and integrity. The Bureau must promote the growth of commerce and industry. It must enforce rules and regulations which protect the higher interest of the people and the government.

President Aquino lauds the meaningful reforms that the Bureau of Customs has undertaken. She commits the government's full support for the Bureau's plans to modernize its operations. She stresses the importance of reorientation of the values of the Bureau officials and employees so that meaningful reforms may be effected not only in management systems but in the lives of those in public service.

Congratulations on your 86th Foundation Anniversary, I did not realize that the Bureau of Customs is that old. Perhaps, the need to rejuvenate the Bureau is long overdue. It must undergo some face-lifting, including the removal of excess bureaucratic fat and worn-out nerves.

I am truly glad that a determined effort is being made to streamline the operations of the Bureau of Customs. As a public service agency and revenue collection arm of the government, this Bureau must be a model of efficiency, honesty and integrity.

You have my assurance that Commissioner Mison and the officials and employees of Customs will receive my full support and backing in this undertaking.

I welcome the creation of a Customs-Industry Consultative Council. The first responsibility of the Bureau is to serve the country's traders and to promote the growth and development of our industries. We cannot collect duties and taxes if the businessmen are not making profits. We cannot squeeze juice from a turnip.

I am sure our businessmen will be more than happy to pay their taxes to the government if they are making money.

The leaders of the business community should take an active interest in Custom affairs and conduct constant dialogue with its officials and employees. The Consultative Council can serve as a forum for this.

Our traders should formulate policies and recommend measures which will expedite their transactions with the Bureau. They have every right to demand prompt and efficient service from our Customs officials and employees. Afterall, they are the customers and they provide income to finance the operations of our government. The Bureau must promote rather than hamper the growth of commerce and industry. Regulations and rules are promulgated for the purpose of ensuring the orderly conduct of business and for reconciling the interest of all concerned. Protecting the higher interest of our people and the government is not a monopoly of those in public service. Most of the true patriots are in the private sector, not in government.

I am happy to note that the Bureau of Customs has exceeded its targeted revenues. I am confident that it will do better this year. I know that our businessmen will fully cooperate for as long as they have a genuine respect and confidence in the leadership of Customs.

I am prepared to support the modernization and professionalization of the customs' service. It is a shame that the Philippines is far behind other countries in terms of facilities and equipment in the processing of shipping documents; in the handling, warehousing, and monitoring of cargoes; and in the expeditious reception of incoming foreign guests and returning residents.

The computerization of the entire operations of the Bureau is a must in this day and age.

I was informed that the present administration of the Bureau is planning to set up modern cold-storage facilities for perishable goods and items sensitive to temperature changes. I was told that a plan to acquire the most sophisticated laboratory equipments and instruments is contemplated.

I give full support to these plans.

I issued Executive Order No. 127 to promote efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of services in our revenue-collection agencies.

By this order, all positions in the Bureau of Customs are deemed vacant. The Commissioner of Customs has the authority to overhaul the entire organization in this agency. I understand Commissioner Mison has just completed the reorganization of the Customs service.

More important than the personnel changes and movement is the reorientation of values of our officials and employees. Meaningful reforms must be effected not only in management systems but in the lives of those who have embraced the public service.

1988 has been decreed as Public Service Year in this agency. I welcome this. Government officials and employees must never forget that their positions are not their private preserves.

I appeal to the leaders of the business community to match the initiatives of the new administration in the Customs service. Without the support and cooperation of the business community, no reforms in the Bureau will work or succeed.

I hope that the Customs-Industry Consultative Council will act as the catalyst in pushing through radical reforms and improvements in Customs service.

I need not stress the urgency of regaining the full trust and confidence of our people in the government.

You are all aware of the magnitude and complexity of our problems. We must address these critical areas of concern with resolute will.

Our people can no longer afford to wait. They have long suffered from government neglect. We must fulfill their expectations and help them realize their aspirations and their dreams.

If we can make the Bureau of Customs a model agency, there is no reason why we cannot improve the performance of other agencies of the government.

What we have initiated in this bureau is just the beginning.

Before I close, I want to bring us back to the Bureau's essential mission: and that is to collect tariffs and catch smugglers. Computerization is fine, but unless this essential mission is accomplished, all that computerization achieves is a detailed record of failure.

Last Wednesday, I directed the Customs Commissioner to put the heat on textile smugglers. I directed him to raise the bounty for turning in textile smugglers. I want the bounty and the heat raised to a pitch where smuggling will be a definite and imminent hazard to the health.

I don't want analysis at the end of this year. I want convictions. I want protection for the industries that are investing their all in the future of this nation. And I want absolute protection for the men and women, and their families, whose livelihoods are threatened by smuggling.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Message of President Corazon Aquino on the Community Employment and Development Program

CEDP

February 15, 1988

TO GENERATE JOBS FAST

The eradication of poverty through the vast creation of jobs is the highest priority of President Aquino's administration. The Community Employment and Development Program (CEDP), launched in August 1986, is designed to generate jobs through numerous small-scale and labor-intensive projects in the countryside.

President Aquino reports on the progress of the CEDP implementation. In 1986 and 1987, the P8.7 billion appropriation for 53,842 projects generated more than one million new jobs. She stressed the need for the participation of the community and nongovernment organizations in the implementation of CEDP. Their participation will contribute towards achieving self-reliance and evolving a government that is truly sensitive and responsive to the people.

From the very start, this Administration set the immediate and vast creation of jobs as its highest priority. Poverty being a widespread and long-time problem, its eradication would require long-term solutions. But the sufferings that poverty inflicts — malnutrition, disease, pain, particularly on children — are always immediate, even as the wounds it leaves behind become permanent afflictions: mental retardation, weakness, and an abiding mistrust for the order of things. And so we set ourselves to implement a program that would create jobs and provide income quickly to as many of our poverty-stricken people as possible. This was the Community Employment & Development Program or CEDP.

The program, launched in August 1986, was designed to generate jobs fast through numerous small-scale and labor intensive projects in the countryside. Projects like barangay roads, water pumps and sewage, and school buildings. The program was also intended to serve as a pump priming measure. P3.9 billion was appropriated in the first year for 22,842 projects which generated 389,853 jobs that year. Purchasing power improved markedly. '86 was a good year for business, the first time in a long time.

For 1987, P4.8 billion was appropriated from the budgets of different line agencies for the implementation of 31,000 projects. A total of 650,000 new jobs were targeted. As of the first of this month, about 20,000 projects were completed, another 8,000 are ongoing — an implementation rate of 94.3 percent. Sixty percent of the targetted jobs had been achieved.

But CEDP had more in mind than just the alternate digging and filling of holes just to put money for the time being in the pockets of our people. The projects, numerous though they were, were carefully reviewed to see how they contributed to long-term improvement in the lives of our people, particularly on heightening a posture of self-reliance. The people were consulted on these projects. An axiom of our thinking is that the various communities know best the directions they should take and how best to get to their goals. Another, corollary to this, is that you have to listen to the people, because only the people collectively have the power to effect the improvements this country needs. We encouraged the participation of non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the Program. It was both a way of harnessing the energies of the people, and enlisting their vigilance against a recurrence of the corruption of government, especially local government. We drew in a host of civic organizations to help us: the Jaycees, Rotary, Namfrel, rural improvement clubs, Madre, and concerned citizens groups such as those in Abra, Benguet, Isabels Cebu and Zamboanga; religious groups such as the Knights of Columbus, parish pastoral councils, the United Methodist Church, the Catholic Women's League, veterans organizations, and others too many to mention here. The Namfrel, being the most experienced and battle-tested, topped them all in the wideness of its reach and the penetration of its vigilance. These organizations have tried to keep an eagle eye on our operations and

rein in government corruption, waste, and incompetence. This is just the beginning. Much more needs to be done to check graft and foot-dragging in the government's implementation of projects. But the participation of those who have monitored the CEDP will go a long way towards evolving a government that is truly sensitive and responsive to the people. The progress of CEDP to date encourages us to believe that people power for development has come of age. It will prove as effective in bringing material and moral progress to our nation as it showed itself unbeatable in achieving and protecting our freedom. Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 1987 Constitution

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon Aquino President of the Philippines On the 1987 Constitution

[Delivered at the PICC, February 18, 1988]

JUSTICE FOR EVERY FILIPINO

The 1987 Constitution gave the Judiciary the power and the responsibility to protect democracy by giving justice to every Filipino. President Aquino calls for a partnership with the Supreme Court in rebuilding the physical infrastructure of the justice system in the country. After having restored democracy, the government should now attend to the needs of improving the practical administration of justice so that the people can work in freedom for progress and with a reasonable expectation of a just and lasting peace.

When this conference ends, you will have said the last word in a long time on constitutionalism and justice.

I want to take this same occasion to say the first word on the practical administration of justice, to the improvement of which this Government now commits itself fully.

Justice, it has been written, is the first virtue of social institutions. Laws, however well drafted and well-meaning, are nothing unless they do justice to every man in the ordinary course of his life. That is my concern and my duty. For I am charged as President with the faithful execution of the laws so that every Filipino gets his due.

I stand here honored by the presence of outstanding men and women of the law, who contributed greatly to the understanding of the law. My own contributions to the field have been modest: 318 laws and the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, in the year and a half of my extraordinary powers. These laws range from the renovation of the apparatus of State to the rectification of old injustices – in general establishing the framework and climate wherein our people can work in freedom for progress, and with a reasonable expectation of a just and lasting peace.

But the promulgation of salutary laws alone establishes merely the standards of right and justice. It is men and institutions that must realize them. In that respect, we have also made some progress. But how much progress remains to be studied. We must measure our progress in the daily administration of ordinary justice both by the standards of a reborn Nation's high expectations, and by the sad conditions of the past from which we freed ourselves.

A year before the Revolution, a handful of brave and honest men prepared a study on the state of the justice system in the Philippines. Not just the system that legitimized an unconstitutional dictatorship, but the system that one expected to give justice, at least, to the ordinary man in his ordinary concerns as a trade-off for the liberty he had lost.

The group of Ricardo J. Romulo produced a White Paper outlining the faults of that system and proposing measures for its reform. It saw a system that was, in its words, "understaffed, underpaid, and under attack on grounds of lack of integrity, efficiency and competence." A system where appointments waited on corrupt loyalties and motivations, where merit took a back seat to connections. A judicial system at the mercy of the Purse and the Sword – of the Legislative power and the Executive power – united in one hand, for its subsistence. And finally a judicial system that I took on the moral tone of the society it served, a society that had lowered its moral standards to the level of its fears and its greed. Fear of the dictatorship, and greed for its favors.

“Once a judge bends the law to please those in positions of power, soon enough he will bend the law to suit himself or whomsoever he may wish to please.” The cure was clear, the same cure for the sickness of the nation: a sense of high purpose, a feeling of security to foster the habit of independence, and a sense of pride in the nobility of the calling, which is no less than the care and giving of justice to everyman.

The Revolution cleared the path to the reforms you sought. Men and women of honor were exalted in the Judiciary, and the corrupt were removed. Laws and practices that conferred privilege to a few, rather than parity on all, were abolished.

The Constitutional Commission I appointed took it from there, and laid the foundation for a system of justice that could do justice if it had the will.

The Commission came up with a constitution that established the independence of the Judiciary by securing the tenure of its judges and the certainty of its budget.

It protected its integrity by removing the selection of judges from the grip of politicians and by limiting the discretion of the appointing power.

It provided measures to assure the relevance of the Judiciary to the demands of Philippine justice by fixing deadlines for the resolution of cases even for the Supreme Court. For justice delayed, is not justice denied, but justice despised and finally despaired of — the germ of destruction of any government or order of society.

In a backhanded tribute to the tragic past when the Judiciary took refuge in dubious doctrine to escape its duty to protect democracy, the Constitution gave it the power — and therefore the responsibility — to call any branch of government to account for abuse of discretion.

Nearly everything that is required has been provided to give justice to everyman, given the will on the part of our judges.

My own responsibilities are not over. Justice in our country today, for all the infusion of new blood and integrity we have made, wears the sad aspect of its past neglect. Our courts are shanties, our law libraries are few and scanty, records are lost or improperly kept, and delay and ignorance still distinguish the Philippine brand of justice.

Here I offer a partnership with the Supreme Court in whom the administration of the courts is now lodged. We need a blueprint for rebuilding the physical infrastructure of the justice system in our country. The aspect of moral and intellectual improvement I leave to you. It would not be proper for the Executive to trench upon the authority to discipline and upgrade the courts. But the rest is our common duty.

I have instructed the Justice Secretary and the Secretary of the Budget to discuss with the Supreme Court the creation of a joint Executive-Judiciary Committee that will prepare an infrastructure plan for the courts. A plan that can fit in with the public works programs we are implementing to generate quick employment.

We have built democracy a worthy house. It is time we attended to the needs of justice.

The work of recovery will still be long and hard; the damage we inherited was that great. There can be no shortcuts. No instant solutions. No manna from heaven, no Marshall plan, mini or maxi. We shall rise only as high as our feet will take us up the steps that we must build with our own hands. Yet, we can make sure that tired as we shall be at the end of the day, no rankling sense of injustice will disturb the equanimity of our souls, the peace of our homes, and the tranquility of our society. It is for this peace that the Constitution would have us work for a just and humane society.

I wish you success in your conference. Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the people of Tawi-Tawi, February 26, 1988

**Tawi-Tawi
February 26, 1988**

A JOURNEY TO PEACE

As the first Philippine President to visit Tawi-Tawi, President Aquino discusses what the government is doing to address the needs of the province. A service and action program, launched in January 1988, will give the people of Tawi-Tawi greater access to basic services such as water, electricity, health, education, agrarian reform, irrigation and infrastructure. The President urges the people to join the government in working out a genuine autonomy law for Mindanao. The country needs their ideas, their revolutionary zeal and energy so that Mindanao and the entire Philippines can be transformed into a land of peace and prosperity.

Assalamu aleikum.

It was not very easy to persuade the people responsible for my safety to permit me to come to Tawi-Tawi. But I am glad that I had this opportunity to visit your lovely island.

I have listened carefully to the concerns expressed by your local officials and sectoral representatives.

Let me say, first of all, that although this is my first trip to Tawi-Tawi, I have kept myself informed about the urgent needs of your province.

You are, perhaps, aware that I have been talking, over the last month, to community leaders from all over Regions 9 and 12. These were the candidates proposed for appointment to the Regional Consultative Commission, the body which shall help Congress formulate the organic act for autonomy in Mindanao. I must have met, by this time, with over 110 such community leaders.

At these meetings, I always tried to probe perceptions of community needs. I learned, for instance, about the pitiful lack of safe, drinking water in many places in Mindanao.

As a result of these meetings, we launched on January 15 a service and action program designed to give the people greater access to basic services.

I know that here in Tawi-Tawi the water district of Bongao can service the nearly 5000 households within its coverage for only one to two hours a day. I have directed the local water utilities administration to undertake the rehabilitation of Bongao's water system.

Since this project will take some time to complete, I have also directed the Department of Public Works and Highways to begin the construction of artesian wells.

I also asked for a report on the status of power service in Bongao. It might interest you to know that within a month of the launching of the service and action program, the National Electrification Administration was able to reach an additional 500 households. But right now you can get power for only four hours a day.

By the end of April, an additional 1000 households will benefit from electric service. And by this time, electricity will be available for 12 hours, from four to nine o'clock in the morning and from five o'clock in the evening to midnight.

Expanded water and power services provide only two examples of the projects currently underway in Tawi-Tawi today. The Department of Health is constructing main health centers in Sitangkai and Tandubas, repairing the Cagayan de Tawi-Tawi hospital and expanding the Languyan municipal hospital. It is also completing the

construction of a kumpit clinic. By next month, this kumpit clinic will be sailing to the coastal communities of the province to provide basic health care services.

The Department of Agriculture will start construction work this month on a water impounding system for irrigation in Magsaggaw and Bato-Bato, Balimbing.

The Department of Education, Culture and Sports has enrolled in selected private high schools over 150 students who could not be accommodated in the public school system. As part of its outreach program, it will start next week the first of ten literacy classes it will conduct this year for 250 participants.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has prepared over 250 land patents for distribution in Bongao alone. It is also working on a coastal reforestation project covering 1200 hectares in Nipa-Bacauan.

The Department of Transportation and Communications has just completed work on the water system at the Sanga-Sanga airport. Arrangements are being made for the asphaltting of the runway at this airport, a project which will make air travel to the province less dependent on weather conditions.

I have mentioned here only those projects which have been completed, which are underway, or which will start within the next four weeks. Other projects are scheduled for start-up or completion within the current fiscal year.

All the frontline agencies of the government are involved in the service and action program. In addition, the Department of Budget and Management, the Commission on Audit, and the Department of National Defense have been instructed to give full support to the implementing agencies.

I trust that the projects we have started meet your needs. They are small projects, many of them, but they have been chosen because they can have an immediate impact on the life of the community. I offer them to you as concrete proof that Cory Aquino cares.

I understand that no Philippine President has ever visited Tawi-Tawi until today. I hope my presence here today sends a clear and unmistakeable message. Tawi-Tawi is part and parcel of the Philippines. Cory Aquino is as much the President of Tawi-Tawi as she is of Tarlac. And Cory Aquino will abide by her sworn duty to protect the territorial integrity, national sovereignty and democratic constitution of the Philippines.

But Cory Aquino and the government need your help. The line agencies have made many promises to implement projects in Tawi-Tawi. I intend to hold them to their promises. You must help me keep them on track.

We will let you know what projects have been planned and what funds have been budgeted for Tawi-Tawi. We expect you to let us know when performance falls short of promises.

But tell us also of the successes. The bureaucracy deserves your support and encouragement. And if we can pull together, we shall make a difference and help bring peace and prosperity to the Philippines, from Aparri to Tawi-Tawi.

Before I conclude my speech, I would like to address this message, in the name of God the most merciful, the most kind, to our brothers, especially those who are abroad working at cross-purposes with us. Come and join us at the drafting table. Let us work out a genuine autonomy law for Mindanao — one that steams from the wellsprings of our people and one that is not imposed upon them. We need your ideas, your revolutionary zeal and energy not only for Mindanao, but for our entire country as well, to transform the Philippines into a land of peace and prosperity where equality and justice can reign supreme.

And to the rest of our countrymen, I would like to reecho the words of the late Desdemona Tan Abubakar, wife of Chairman Nur Misuari before she passed away last year. She asked us to look beyond 1521 and rediscover our roots. There is so much we can learn from the rich heritage bequeathed to us by our Mindanao brothers including our other

cultural communities who never gave in to Islam nor succumbed to western colonization. They have to this day remained true to their traditions – traditions that we as a nation should respect and be proud of. By so doing, we can discover that we are truly brothers and sisters sharing only one homeland: the Philippines.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 2nd anniversary of the PSG

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On the 2nd anniversary of the PSG

[Delivered on March 1, 1988]

DEMOCRACY'S FRONTLINE FIGHTERS

On the 2nd anniversary of the PSG, President Aquino cites and thanks the men and women behind the PSG who have offered their services to protect her and the heart of the Republic. Truly, they deserve a lifelong gratitude.

On its first anniversary, I called the Presidential Security Group "the armor protecting the Heart of Republic." Some people said that I was overdoing it, and charged my zealotry to special friendship.

Not so. If I have any gift for survival, it is my ability to read the character of people. And I had read courage, steadfastness, and absolute loyalty and protectiveness towards me in the ranks of the Presidential Security. Even as I read preparedness, superb intelligence, and decisiveness, in their officers. I had every confidence that when the test came, the PSG would prove equal to the generous praise I had given.

The test came on August 28 last year. The enemy chose a moment of greatest vulnerability. I had scheduled a regional visit to Central Luzon for the following day. A sizable portion of the PSG had therefore to be deployed in the area beforehand.

At this time, the head of my security had already received intelligence of a massive strike by rebel troops against the seat of Government. Yet I was determined to go on with the regional visit.

Clearly, the PSG would have to make up for their lesser number with greater skill and daring. For the first would have to begin and end right here in Malacañang. I had no intention of leaving the field to my enemies.

In the event, the PSG fought like tigers, fell like heroes, and repelled the attack. The stand they made was so valiant, the rebels did not think of trying again.

This was where the coup began and effectively ended, for without taking my life there was no way for the coup to succeed.

My instincts were right in my selection of the men and women who would guard my person, who would shield the heart of the Republic from all its enemies.

On its second anniversary, the PSG is still a young force in terms of years, but in terms of experience, they are tried and tested troops. Few Palace guards anywhere can boast as many challenges as you have faced, nor as a great victory as you have won. Recent history is littered with murdered Presidents, with slain hopes of peace and democracy, and with the lame excuses of their security. But here you showed that soldiers know how to fight and die for their leader.

I thank you, for your sacrifices: for the long tedious hours of guarding and for the flashing acts of courage. I thank you for my life and for the life of our democracy. Congratulations to you all. For all my admiration and respect for your fighting qualities, I hope that this year you will not have to impress me again. Thank you and good day.

After my speech this morning, what can I add except to say that the PSG can walk on water?

Well, whether you can walk on water or not, it's been proved that you can watch like hawks and fight like tigers to protect me and my family, the Presidency and Philippine democracy.

My children and I are deeply grateful and appreciative of the protection you have given us, and take this opportunity to raise a toast, in which I ask everyone to join me:

To democracy's frontline fighters, the shield of the Presidency – the Presidential Security Group, and to Colonel Voltaire Gazmin – the smartest decision I ever made – my profound admiration and the nation's undying gratitude for your courage and loyalty, for the great deeds that you have done, for the care and protection you have given to me and my family.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the elected leaders of the Local Government

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines To the elected leaders of the Local Government

[Delivered at the Philippine International Convention Center, March 4, 1988]

A BLUEPRINT FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY

President Aquino urges all the elected local leaders to work together to give peace and justice a chance to reign. She stresses the institution of the following reforms to help in the national and local government efforts: CORD system, restructuring the RDC, creation of the LDCs. The kind of government we give turns on the kind of people we are.

First, may I welcome you all as partners with me in the task of government. Your election completed the structure of democracy. Everything that needed to be done to bring government to the people, and people to the government has been done. Except for the barangays, we shall have no more elections until 1992.

Now, let's get down to business.

With the local elections, the national and local governments lost the last excuse for shortcomings and failures.

Now you have the mandate, now you have the authority, and you have my full backing. What you no longer have is any excuse for not delivering on the priorities that we have set:

The first and the most important, is law and order throughout the land. This calls for the curbing of criminality, and the destruction of the rightist and leftist elements in our society that are bent on the overthrow of our government and our democracy.

It means hunting down fascist killers and leftist terrorists, breaking up the gambling syndicates, and flushing out and shutting down the vice-dens.

It means a concerted and unrelenting military campaign against the fountainhead of Communist influence and power: the New People's Army.

It means, simultaneously, the prompt and efficient delivery of the basic services for which governments are constituted on this earth and from which they derive the only reason for their expensive existence.

It means securing the property of our people, their ways of livelihood, their enterprises, their savings, their investments in the future of their children.

Needless to say, it means securing their lives. It means dealing punishment, after due process, to those who harm them or threaten their democracy, even to those who did not give due process to their victims.

It means justice for all, whatever the cost. No one above the law. One law above all. No excuses and no delays. That is why a few weeks ago, I chose to pay tribute to Constitutionalism not by uttering generalities, but by modestly ordering the improvement of the facilities and personnel by which the Constitution does justice to the people.

That is our first priority. Order. Law. Justice. Order according to the laws, the laws enforced in the spirit of justice. And in the hope that the vision for which the best of our race had died in the dark years of the dictatorship will be realized in our lifetimes: a just and humane society.

The second priority is economic development. The national government's blueprint for recovery is being implemented. Its complete implementation, not to say success, depends on government's ability to reach all Filipinos and make a difference in their lives. Beyond a certain point, the national government must depend on local governments to supplement its reach and increase its effective assistance and support to the varied efforts of our people to improve the economy and well-being of their families and communities.

The excuse before was that the OICs were not elected, were therefore not believed, and, naturally, were not being followed. Yet Bitay Lacson showed that you need not wait for an election to show how good a local chief executive can be.

The priority of economic development means in the plainest terms: improving the climate so that business may thrive, rather than be stifled. It means taking up your share of governmental responsibility in caring for the poor and helpless, encouraging industry and commerce rather than shaking it down, and protecting property rather than depleting it by improvident measures of taxation and needless expense. It means giving the people the best and most immediate example of the selflessness and total dedication of the true public servant. Before the people see us, who are in the national government, they feel the impact of your actions, good or bad.

We set great store by the role of local governments for we have always said that only the people can show us the right path and the right pace to certain recovery. And no one is better placed than the local governments to directly tap the energy and commitment of the people. To that end, we have instituted the following reforms that should facilitate the coordination of national and local government efforts:

Realizing that each region, not to say each province, has problems and potentialities for success that are peculiar to itself, I have set up the CORD system, or Cabinet Officer for Regional Development. I have appointed one Cabinet member to represent me in each of the 14 regions.

We have restructured the Regional Development Councils, which is meant to be the primary organization for regional progress, to give a more prominent role to local government. And we have created the Local Development Councils over whose undertakings you shall preside.

With these structures in place, we should have a wide channel for two-way traffic in ideas and feedback, and thereby enabling us to refine our programs and implement them better.

Improving the medium of communication between people and government is just the first part. Equally important is the clarity of government programs and directives. Unless local governments know what the national government offers, the best use of government resources cannot be attained.

The draft of a new Local Government Code requires all our departments and agencies to work out with the local governments comprehensive and integrated standards and guidelines for regular and recurring transactions between the national and local governments. The Departments and Agencies must inform the local governments of the central funds and services available to them. Within the Executive Branch itself, arrangements have been made for greater coordination among the various departments in order to bring services and assistance more efficiently to local governments and communities.

We are working on decentralizing the authority and functions of the Executive Departments to parallel the move towards the general decentralization of government which seems to be the spirit of the new Constitution. Thus, Departmental field units are now run by Undersecretaries and Assistant Secretaries, who have greater discretion and fiscal autonomy than ever before. Leading the pack of decentralizing agencies is the Department of Agriculture.

The autonomy of local governments must equally be reinforced. In the plainest terms, that means money: more funds and other resources for local governments. The Departments of Budget and Management, Finance, and Local Governments, in coordination with the Civil Service Commission, have been instructed to rationalize the salaries of local government officials to raise morale and improve performance. At this time, I am directing the Department of Budget and Management and Local Governments to review and recommend more realistic compensation scales and allowances for local government officials.

We are likewise working on a scheme to enable you to tap national funds more easily for your own programs. I shall request the Congress to increase the amounts of national assistance to local government units that can be released directly to local governments from P50,000 currently to P200,000. We are working towards a more equitable sharing with local governments of the proceeds and benefits from the exploitation of natural resources in their vicinities.

We are preparing a scheme to increase internal revenue allotments for local governments, based on their performance, particularly with regard to the efficiency and honesty of their current tax collection efforts under existing laws. The theory is, if local tax collectors cannot collect the right taxes under the old laws, there is no reason to believe they will do better under new ones. The key in this area is honesty.

We aim to relax the statutory contributions of local governments to the various agencies and programs of the national government.

In the first and most important task of local government, which is peace and order, I have approved the reorganization and strengthening of the Peace and Order Councils from the national to the local level so that we can bring to bear on the problems of criminality and insurgency the combined power of government and people.

I take this aspect very seriously, and will regard as critical to continued cooperation between the national and local governments the spotlessness of the local officials' records, as well as their reputation for honesty and obedience to the laws of morals of our society. Without your good example, the fight against crime and insurgency will fail.

In areas of particular ethnic and cultural uniqueness, we have made great progress in laying the groundwork for their eventual genuine autonomy within the framework of the Constitution. The Regional Consultative Council members are being selected to help the Congress draft the organic acts giving and defining the autonomy of the Cordillera and Muslim regions.

These and other measures too many to detail here, will require legislation, such as a new Local Government Code, a new Local Tax Code, the organic laws of the autonomous regions, amendments to laws on revenue allotments and statutory contributions by local governments, and a law creating the Philippine National Police and defining the proper role of local executives in law enforcement.

Let me end on the dominant note of this address: in the end, the kind of government we give turns on the kind of people we are: if we are dishonest, it will be dishonest government. If incompetent, that will show in the economic and social regression of our communities and of our country as a whole. We rule effectively only by example.

The advice I give you is not a counsel of perfection. We are honored to have among us today former OICs who have shown that sincere and uncompromising public service need not spell electoral defeat. On the contrary. That this political pro: given the times, and the changes that have taken place in our people, the only way to re-election is not through empty image-making but through good government.

Let us work together. Not against each other. Our people deserve the best. Let us give them our best.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Philippine Board of Advertising

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Philippine Board of Advertising**

[Delivered at the Heroes Hall, Malacañang, March 8, 1988]

THE POWER OF ADVERTISING

President Aquino encourages the advertisers to use radio, print, and tv to bring the message of democracy to every household through jingles, plugs and subliminals.

First, I want to know how you spell “pray” – with an “e” or with an “a”?

Seriously, what we have here is the lifeblood of press freedom. If you believe in the advantages of a free press, then help the press – be prompt in paying for your ads.

The life and integrity of the press depend on it.

I congratulate the new members.

We have changed for the better and that is certainly good for our country. For better and not for worse we have to link hands in this transition period that demands the very best from all of us Filipinos.

For better and not for worse, you in advertising will expend the amount of P2 Billion in 1988. This is because the economy is expanding and all indicators point to what Filipino businessmen themselves are stating as a boom year. As the economy expands, so does advertising. The happy result is more goods, more services, and certainly more jobs to a deserving citizenry.

For better and certainly not for worse, you in advertising have an obligation to bring the message of democracy to every household. I do not ask you to wage frontal war on our common enemies on the left and right by name. But I do ask you to nudge democracy forward through your jingles, your plugs, your subliminals. For if our restored democracy does not succeed, all of us will go under.

You in advertising have unusual power. You have dominion in print, radio and tv. Use this dominion wisely. When the final word is written on EDS A and on my administration, let it be said that you in advertising delivered best what you deliver most – the goods.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the PMA Graduation

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the PMA Graduation

[Released on March 12, 1988]

NO SUBSTITUTE FOR FIGHTING

Go and live by your commitment: security for every man and the destruction of all who challenge the authority of the government, stability of our society, honor of our country. The supreme ability to lead your men and fight alongside them and the willing sacrifice of your lives in the pursuit of that aim. Nothing else is asked of you, nothing more can be asked of any man.

My message will be brief and clear.

You have been graduated to be officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. That is what you must be: officers – which is to say leaders of men, in the most ancient and honorable calling of soldiering.

Your profession is like no other. Its ethics is the most austere and demanding.

Its aim, the most exalted.

You are expected to do your duty, *even unto death* – acting always with honor, facing danger always with courage. That is not asked of any other profession or occupation in our society.

Your aims are twofold:

No less than the security of every man, woman and child who puts his or her person and human rights under the protection of our laws,

And the destruction of all who challenge the authority of our government, the stability of our society, and the honor of our country.

To achieve this aim, two things in turn are required of you:

The supreme ability to lead your men and fight alongside them;

And the willing sacrifice of your lives in the pursuit of that aim.

Nothing else is asked of you. Nothing more can be asked of any man.

Policy is the business of the civilian authority – the President and the Congress. Fighting the enemies marked out by that policy is your business. So long as that distinction is kept in mind, there will be no misunderstanding.

The civilian authority knows that the problems of right-wing terrorism and Communist insurgency stem both from ambition and the socio-economic conditions in our country today.

Insofar as the problems are rooted in the ambition of certain individuals or groups to dominate our society, the solution is simple to formulate: military action. I know that is easier said than done. But just the same, the only way to defeat ambition is to crush it. As we did, again and again with the criminal ambitions of the Right – and as we continue to do with the totalitarian ambitions of the Left.

Insofar as the problems arise or draw strength from socio-economic conditions, that is the exclusive concern of the civilian departments of government. Let us not confuse these roles, because then we cannot pin the proper blame for failure, or render due praise for success.

Let me stress again that your role is to fight, your duty to fight well.

Your four years at this Academy is supposed to have prepared you for this duty by giving you mastery of combat skills and the ability to lead your men in a fight. We accept you into the Officer Corps on the assumption that you have acquired that mastery and leadership, for on those two things alone shall you be judged – by the nation that supported your training for the past four years and by your Commander-in-Chief.

When you graduate, you will bear the rank of Second Lieutenant or Ensign. You will be the lowest officer in rank but the highest in importance. For it is you who will lead the squads and platoons in the small actions that add up to the real war.

The insurgency war will *not* be fought in the Cabinet, in the Congress or in GHQ, but in the field. And that is where it will be defeated militarily. The insurgency war *cannot* be fought by programs and speeches, nor by commissions and committees. It *must* be fought, and it will be won, only by you and the men you will lead. It is your numerous small victories in the field that will add up to a final victory in the war, even as our economic initiatives and social reforms should abolish its roots forever.

That is where the military burden of counter-insurgency will lie: on your personal valor and group leadership, and on the fighting qualities of the fire teams that you will lead.

We have forgotten that soldiering is about fighting, first and last. We intend to correct that oversight.

I direct the Secretary of Defense and the Chief of Staff to review the emphasis of the Academy and re-focus it on combat abilities and small-unit combat leadership. Staff work is all well and good, but by itself all it can achieve is the efficient administration of impotence and defeat. There is no substitute for fighting. I don't want soldiers pushing papers. I want them pushing the enemy around.

Henceforth, the first crack at military honors and promotions will go to officers and men with distinguished combat records based on the unassailable testimonies of their comrades or on the unimpeachable evidence of their wounds. Such decorations shall be worn on the left side, over hearts that do not faint at the sight of danger.

The change must start here, with this graduating class, whose idealism and valor cry out for testing in the field.

A noble example precedes you: young Lieutenant Felix Brawner III showed the way. I am told that he repeatedly asked for dangerous assignments, believing rightly, as a man trained to fight, that he must be where the fighting is.

I too have felt a death in the family. Let General Brawner, a fighting general, take comfort in the thought that the son was true to the father and to the ideals of the Officer Corps. Let me conclude with a few words of advice, from the leader of the nation to leaders of men:

You cannot order men to fight, you can only lead them into the fight.

Impose no hardships on your men, expose them to no dangers, that you will not share with them.

Put the honor of the Corps and allegiance to the Constitution above your deference to superiors or friendship for your peers. The dishonesty, disloyalty and cowardice of any officer diminish you all.

Do not allow your men to be misused by anyone, politicians or fellow officers. Soldiers will be put in your charge in order that you may fulfill together your common mission: to fight and win the wars of the Republic.

There are those who say the Filipino soldier cannot fight well. I know he can. Provided he has the right leadership, and sees in his officers the courage and daring that are equal to his own. Be worthy of your soldiers.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the 1988 Palarong Pampaaralang Pambansa

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the 1988 Palarong Pampaaralang Pambansa**

[Delivered at Cagayan de Oro, March 13, 1988]

UNITY THROUGH SPORTS

The national sports event, Palarong Pampaaralang Pambansa was revived through the initiatives of the DECS. President Aquino notes the theme: “Sports for National Unity, Peace and Progress.” She said that it is on such occasions that regional boundaries and ethnic differences are overcome. Sports events also serve as avenues for discovering the athletic talent that will put our country in the world map of sports.

I am very pleased to see this gathering of young athletes considered to be among the best in the country.

I also congratulate the Department of Education, Culture and Sports for its initiative in reviving, after five years, this national sports event, the Palarong Pampaaralang Pambansa.

I note with gratification that the 1988 Palarong Pampaaralang Pambansa has for its theme, “Sports for National Unity, Peace and Progress.” I can see the usefulness of athletic competitions as means by which the competitive spirit of man might be channeled towards useful ends. The coming together of young people, their coaches, national and local government officials from all regions of the country, should foster national unity. It is on such occasions that regional boundaries and ethnic differences are overcome as you wade into the main events of each day. The values that are engendered such as sportsmanship, fairplay, honesty, cooperation, punctuality, and concern for others are themselves basic ingredients of a higher value, that of respect for human dignity. It is this deep sense of respect that we need to develop and internalize if we hope to succeed in fostering the unity we seek – that sense of nationhood that is essential to peace, stability, and progress.

Athletics and sports serve another useful purpose – that of discovering the athletic talent that will put our country in the world map of sports. I have given due recognition to those who have brought honor to us in sports. I encourage you who are here to do even better. The honor you bring to yourselves and to our country will enhance goodwill and mutual respect in our relationships with other countries of the world.

It is with these thoughts and in the spirit they engender that I now formally declare the 1988 Palarong Pampaaralang Pambansa officially open.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the farmers of Jalajala, Rizal

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the farmers of Jalajala, Rizal**

[Delivered at the Heroes Hall, Malacañang, March 14, 1988]

KATUPARAN NG PANGARAP

Ang pangarap ng mga magsasaka sa bayan ng Jalajala, Rizal ay natupad na rin. Ipinamahagi na ng Meralco ang may 390 nilang lupa sa Jalajala sa mga magsasaka, kasabay ng iba't-ibang programang inilunsad na maaaring makatulong sa mga benepisyaryo.

Ang pagmamay-ari ng lupang sinasaka ay isang matagal nang pangarap na ipinanalangin at ipinaglalaman ng ating mga kababayang magsasaka. Para sa kanila, ito ang magdadala ng kaluwagan sa matagal ng hirap na kanilang dinaranas. At ito rin ang siyang susi na magbubukas ng pinto tungo sa kanilang pag-unlad.

Ang pangarap na ito ay nagkatotoo sa ilan sa ating mga kababayang magsasaka mula sa munting bayan ng Jalajala sa lalawigan ng Rizal. Kayo ngayon ay tumanggap na ng kani-kanilang mga emancipation patents na katibayan sa pagmamay-ari ng lupang inyong sinasaka.

Habang ang panukalang batas tungkol sa Comprehensive Agrarian Reform program ay tinatalakay ng ating mga mambabatas sa Kongreso at Senado, ang Meralco Foundation at ang Meralco, ay nagsasagawa ng kanilang sariling reporma sa lupa. Ipinamahagi na nito ang kanilang mahigit sa 390 lupa sa Jalajala sa mga magsasaka. At hindi lamang sila tumigil doon sa pagbigay ng lupa, sila din ngayon ay nagsasagawa ng iba't-ibang programa para sa kanilang mga benepisyaryo upang lalong mapaunlad ang kalagayan nila at matiyak ang kanilang kapakinabangan sa lupang kanilang natanggap.

Ang ating magsasaka ay nararapat po nating tulungang umangat ang buhay. Ang pakikiisa at pagtulong sa maliliit at mahihirap na tao ay hindi lamang tungkulin para sa inyong pamahalaan. Ito ay tungkulin din ng mga tao at mamamayan na masasabing may labis na sa kanilang mga pangangailangan. Ito ay isang tungkulin nating mga tao bilang isang mabuting mamamayan at responsableng tagakalinga sa ating mga kapwa. Marami sa mga problema natin bilang isang bayan ang mabibigyang lunas kung ang lahat ay magbibigyan at magkakatutungan.

Ang mga isinasagawang programa ng Meralco Foundation at ng iba pang kumpanya't mamamayan para makatulong sa mga magsasaka at iba pang taong naghihirap sa ating mga kanayunan ay sana magsilbing halimbawa sa iba pa para ating mapabilis ang pagiging maunlad ng ating bayan.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the awarding of the King Faisal International Prize to Senator
Ahmad D. Alonto Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the awarding of the King Faisal International Prize to Senator Ahmad D. Alonto**

[Delivered in Malacañang, March 17, 1988]

TRIBUTE TO A GREAT MUSLIM

A great Filipino and a great Muslim, Senator Ahmad D. Alonto was awarded the prestigious King Faisal International Prize for his tremendous services to Islam in the Philippines. This man symbolizes the wisdom of Islam and brotherhood among Filipinos.

We are privileged to honor today a great Filipino and a great Muslim, Senator Ahmad D. Alonto, who received the prestigious King Faisal International Prize for his tremendous services to Islam in the Philippines. As many of you know, Senator Alonto was one of those I wanted to appoint to the Regional Consultative Commission. But he declined most humbly, citing his age. I was sorry for it was the wisdom of his experience I wanted to tap in the Commission.

For over 30 years, Senator Alonto served our country. He was at the forefront of efforts to promote Islamic education, religion and culture and to advance the political and economic development of the Muslim Filipinos. His most recent service was as a member of the Constitutional Commission, where he worked hard for the recognition of Muslim regional autonomy.

The award conferred upon Senator Alonto establishes the common ground upon which the two great cultures of our country, the Christian and the Muslim, can unite: the ground of excellence in the pursuit of the progress and well-being of all Filipinos.

But, in preparing for these remarks, I learned from the words of King Faisal how much Muslims and Christians have in common, for he said:

“What does man aspire to? The good. That is in the Islamic Shariah.

“He wants justice. That is in the Islamic Shariah.

“He wants security. It is there also.

“He wants freedom. It is there.

“He wants progress. It is there.

“He wants remedies. They are there.

“He wants science. It is there.

“Everything is there, inscribed in the Islamic Shariah.”

Although I do not know Arabic, I can conclude that the meaning of the Islamic Shariah is the heart of man, for all the things that are there are in our hearts.

Today we are pleased indeed to honor a man who brings us all closer to the wisdom of Islam and the brotherhood of all Filipinos, Senator Ahmad Domocao Alonto.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the National Federation of Sugar Planters

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines To the National Federation of Sugar Planters

[Released on March 21, 1988]

THE FILIPINO CONSUMER: A SOURCE OF STRENGTH

President Aquino reads the handwriting on the wall for the sugar industry which dictates long-run economic policies. She admonishes the sugar cane planters to look inwards for a stable source of renewed strength for the sugar industry. That strength is the Filipino consumer.

I am honored to address this Convention. As you know, our family has been engaged in sugar for many decades, and so the problems and opportunities of the industry are not unfamiliar to me.

The theme you have chosen is indeed appropriate: "Philippine Agriculture at the Crossroads: Challenge and Response." It shows your full awareness of the real state of the industry, and more importantly, of its realistic prospects.

Those prospects have markedly improved, largely as a result of the problems that have been solved. We dismantled the monopolies in both sugar and coconut, injected the spirit of enterprise and innovation into these industries, and radically improved the purchasing power of the countryside.

Consider that on the eve of EDSA, domestic sugar production was 1.5 million metric tons; consumption was 800,000 metric tons. Today, production is 1.2 million metric tons, but consumption has skyrocketed to 1.3 million metric tons, a shortfall of 100,000 metric tons. Which is the reason for the importation I have authorized.

The price of sugar on the eve of the Revolution was P200.00 per picul, today it is P550.00.

While the increase is reason for your rejoicing, it is also ground for caution. We may price sugar out of the domestic market, unless the price is stabilized at an acceptable level. Industrial users may be forced to switch to corn sweeteners or other artificial substitutes. This is already the trend abroad. And once the switch is made, a reversion is near to impossible. Beyond that, we have a responsibility to protect the Filipino household consumer. For these reasons, we have imported sugar.

The importation shall be done by the government, to assure that the consumers are protected. Such profits as may accrue from the transactions shall be channeled back to the industry, for the benefit both of the producers and workers.

Many of the industry's ills have been addressed. Certain fundamental problems remain.

In the U.S., per capita demand for natural sugar has declined from 90 lbs. per person in 1975 to 60 lbs. in 1985. The U.S. market has turned increasingly to "caloric sweeteners."

Not only are we taking a beating from the competition, the competition has decided to make it hard for us to even enter their markets. The developed countries continue to subsidize their sugar producers and build protectionist walls around them. They then dump their excess production, in the world market. The blow is felt hardest by the

Philippines, Brazil and the Caribbean countries, whose exports have been thus undercut by this combination of subsidy, exclusion and dumping.

We in the Philippines had to turn to the U.S. quota with its preferential prices.

The U.S. has been, historically, the most important market for Philippine sugar, but even that market has contracted radically. The quota for 1982, for example, was 1.2 million tons. In 1987, it was 106,000 tons.

We have worked hard to increase our share of the U.S. quota. Our friends in Washington have been helpful. But we realize that such help as we have gotten is temporary, that the handwriting on the wall is writ in stone. There is only so much that friendship can do; economic realities will dictate the long-run policies.

These externalities have forced us to look inwards for a stable source of renewed strength for the sugar industry. And we have found it. That strength, it is clear to us all, is the Filipino consumer. It is a source we have overlooked in the past. The Philippines, despite being a major sugar producing country, has one of the lowest per capital consumption of sugar.

Whatever the critics say, the country is experiencing a marked increase in purchasing power, especially in the countryside. Soft drinks, fruit juices, and other heavily sugar-based products have been selling very well. It appears that any measure that serves to increase rural purchasing power can only redound to the tremendous profit of the sugar and other industries.

Yet the industry remains essentially what it has long been: moribund – heavily in debt, direly in need of new capital, and the most prominent target for social criticism because of the abject poverty of its workers – largely the result of the refusal of many planters to pay just, not to say, legal wages. Meanwhile, there are signs that the former profligacy that characterized the planters is creeping back. Justly or unjustly, I will not say, but those are the facts.

While the industry has undoubtedly experienced “a rebirth”, there is no question either that there must be an end to sugar as we have known it.

The glory days of a special U.S. market for Philippine sugar are over. The U.S. will increasingly scale down its quota system, until it finally does away with it, and opens its market to free world competition. While the gradual elimination of the quota is a threat, equally its substitution with an open market is the opportunity we have long needed. But we must prepare for it.

Philippine sugar, as it is today, is in no position to exploit that opportunity when it strikes. The costs of our inefficiencies will simply price us out of the contest. The sugar boom we have been experiencing may be our last chance to prepare ourselves for the coming challenge.

Several steps must be taken.

The first, there must be a renewed and greater effort at diversification. This must start now, for the process of shifting crops will stabilize only three to four years from the time it is started. The abnormal rise in sugar prices may tempt you to delay diversification indefinitely. Let us not repeat our mistakes.

The main effort of diversification must be yours, the private sector's. Government's role can only be supportive through research, credit and infrastructure.

The modernization of the industry must be undertaken immediately, both in its industrial and agricultural components. On the industrial side, we shall need more efficient and cost-effective milling methods and technologies. Thailand and Australia may serve as models. On the agricultural side, we should turn to higher-yielding varieties suitable to local conditions, more rational land-use, and more rational methods of harvesting in order to increase yield per hectare. We are all familiar with this, and know that the secret is better wages and better

working conditions for the sugar worker for them to adopt the more productive system. Workers need not burn the cane crops in order to increase their tonnage, and thereby increase their wages. They can be motivated to gather the trash as fuel for the mill's boilers. These methods will increase yields and lower the cost of milling.

I realize that there is yet another disturbing issue confronting the sugar industry today. And that is agrarian reform.

I can understand your unhappiness with the very idea of agrarian reform. The mere thought of giving up land that generations of your families have worked is a painful experience. More so now when prices are the highest ever in history, since the War. There is nothing more wrenching than nostalgia and profits.

But it is not just parting with the land you have grown to love but of bidding farewell to a way of life. But the nation's circumstances dictate that we look beyond self-interest to national preservation. There are 58 million Filipinos, most of whom are desperately poor and have no means to improve themselves or secure a better life for their children. We have one of the highest population densities in the world: 193 persons per square kilometer of land. Each day that passes increases the general misery and air of hopelessness of the vast majority of our countrymen.

The answer, I have said, is higher incomes through higher productivity. This can also come from the dispersed ownership of land. For what is needed to exploit the full potential of agriculture is the motivation to work better, to plan longer and wiser, and to produce more – things one cannot expect from a mere transient on the land.

The people want land, so they can stand with dignity and work with the assurance that the sweat of their brows and the labor of their hands will enure chiefly to themselves and their children.

The passing of the large estates is long overdue. Size as a precondition of wealth is an idea that belongs to an age long dead. The modern age demands efficiency instead. We have barely tapped its potential for generating greater wealth for the old entrepreneurs of sugar, and of other industries that equally demand modernization. We can get more and better out of less, given an openness to science and a spirit of cooperation with government. More importantly, it is time the planters moved on to more profitable and more challenging ventures.

I have viewed the deliberations in Congress on the CARP with mixed reactions. I know that agrarian reform must be well thought out, so that we do not accomplish a mere subdivision of the present miseries on the land. Undoubtedly, a gradual and phased implementation of agrarian reform would be ideal, in order to accomplish its aims without its pitfalls. Yet what is at stake here is not just an economic program, but an article of faith in the responsiveness of democracy to the wants of the people. Circumspection is needed, but so is speed.

Let me say also, that whatever law finally issues from this long drawn-out process, it shall be the law. And I, as President, shall enforce it – to the letter and in the spirit of sharing the fruits of progress with all our people.

And yet we need not wait on the law to do our part. Voluntary land reform, for which the law provides, will underscore the basic commitment to country that we all share, farmers, planters and government. The opportunity beckons to preempt history and make it ourselves by implementing reforms attuned both to reality and to the demands of justice.

I want you to join me in making this program a success. I need you for that, you have the experience and the love of country for it. I know you will be with me and with all our people to make it work. Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on AFP Day

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On AFP Day

[Delivered at Camp Aguinaldo, March 22, 1988]

THE BEST PROPAGANDA

Local government officials should serve as examples of integrity, competence, and wholehearted devotion to public service and the public good. The best propaganda is that of actual deeds, of tangible achievements, of a real and caring government presence everywhere in our country. Where there is effective government, there can be no viable insurgency. She stresses the duties of the different powers against terrorism: power of military, power of the police, power of the local government and power of the state.

I have, laid the foundations of our strategy:

A double strike against the insurgency by demonstrating, with one hand, what government can do for the people,

And showing with the other, what government will do to those who challenge its authority and threaten the life of democracy.

At the PICC, early this month, I told the governors and mayors what the nation expects from them:

Security for all our people, encouragement to business and labor, and the prudent use of the increased resources will be given to them.

I said I expected them to care for the poor and the helpless in their communities, to encourage the thrift and industry of the farmer, the laborer and the businessmen, and to help government in the delivery of the basic services of health, education and infrastructure.

Above all, I expected them to lead by example; by the example of integrity, competence, and wholehearted devotion to public service and the public good. The renewed faith in government since the Revolution must be kept alive, and only leadership by the example will do it.

This is the best propaganda. The propaganda of actual deeds, of tangible achievements, of a real and caring government presence everywhere in our country.

Where there is effective government, there can be no viable insurgency. Acts of injustice and economic backwardness can give rise to insurgency but cannot sustain it over the long run. What keeps an insurgency alive and makes it grow is the absence of effective government – keeping order, doing justice, and taking care of the basic needs of its citizens.

Two weeks ago, I addressed the new crop of AFP officers graduating from the PMA. I made it as clear to the cadets as I did to the local executives what I and the nation expect from them: no more and no less than the unrelenting pursuit and destruction of fascist terrorists and Communist guerrillas in the cities and in the countryside, so we can end all credible threats to democracy by the end of my term.

Every one to his proper station, I said. The civilian departments shall help build a new country of progress, justice and prosperity on the land that the Armed Forces and police must clear of all elements that are hostile to that vision.

I want a clear-cut division of labor: civilian departments to civilian reconstruction, the military arm to military action.

Let there be no confusion of roles so there can be the strictest accountability for failure, as there will be due recognition of genuine achievement. I do not want one arm pointing at the other as the excuse for its failure.

Within the civilian side itself, responsibilities have been clearly defined and roles delineated. In the frontline of the civilian counter-insurgency campaign are health, social services, education, agriculture and public works. The entire civilian side of government is committed, but these are on the line.

The Armed Forces is being primed for the task assigned to it.

At the PMA, I laid down the essential spirit of the military effort we must mount: the spirit of the offensive, carried out with the skill and bravery we expect of Filipino officers and men. A spirit that seeks no substitute for engaging an armed enemy in combat.

I want the fat trimmed off the military. I want more men behind guns, less than behind desks.

I want the ratio of support to combat units reduced, given the basic character of our logistic support system anyway.

I have long noted the disturbing ratio of patrols to contact, a ratio that shows the urgent need to upgrade tactical intelligence capabilities.

I want the officers out in the field with their men, leading them into the fight – on foot and less vulnerable to mines and ambushes.

I believe that only those who are actually out there know what is needed and what must be done. The Chief of Staff, General Rene de Villa shall therefore prepare for the abolition of the Regional Unified Command system, and of any other unnecessary intervening headquarters. He shall decentralize and devolve operational control of the Armed Forces to the tactical commanders in the field.

Fiscal authority and control shall be likewise decentralized to speed up the release of funds to commanders in charge of military operations.

We have taken two years to consolidate democracy in this country – after 15 years of dictatorship. That is no small achievement. At the same time that is no excuse for further delay.

Poverty, underdevelopment, and unjust social structures are the roots of insurgency and are a challenge to our conscience and our duties as government.

Regular company-size rebel units, united front organizations, infiltrated barrios, assassination squads, on the other hand, are the instrumentalities of insurgency, and as such are challenges to our power.

The indifference and ignorance of government and society feed the roots, but it is the absence of governmental power that gives range and effectiveness to the instruments of insurgency. It is that power we will now supply throughout the length and breadth of our land:

The power of an efficient military presence to face down the military challenge of the New People's Army in field, forest, and city street where the Communist terror strikes.

The power of the police to secure our communities against anarchy and crime, and against the influence of Communist terrorism.

The power of local governments to meet the immediate needs and articulate the basic aspirations of their communities, and to serve as the link between the people and the national government. We hope to make it increasingly the main implementing arm of basic services to the people.

And first and last, the power of the State to guarantee the democratic character of government in this country for all time and in all seasons. In the season of hardship, and in the season of prosperity to come. In a time of troubles, as in the time of the just and lasting peace that we have vowed to give our people.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the significance of the NFA's Food Development Center

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the significance of the NFA's Food Development Center**

[Delivered at the FTI Complex, Taguig, March 25, 1988]

THE FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

President Corazon C. Aquino cites the significance of the contribution of the FDC to our economic activity. She thanks the people and the government of Japan for their continued support for the center. She also congratulates the men and women behind the FDC for a job that has merited recognition and honor for the country.

The FDC started as an adjunct research laboratory and quality control body in 1968. By 1985, this department of the National Food Authority was providing quality control services and setting international standards that would open world markets to our export food products.

The Philippines is an agricultural country. The blessings of nature and the talents of our people all incline this country towards agriculture as its principal livelihood and economic activity. It stands to reason that we must devote our main efforts to the improvement of agriculture and its products. The FDC is one of those efforts. And its achievements have received wide recognition and support, even from our friends abroad.

FDC has received a grant-in-aid of P327 million from the government of Japan through the Japan International Cooperation Agency for the construction of a new Center upon this ground that we are breaking today.

I want to thank the Government and people of Japan for their generous assistance. I wish also to thank the project consultants and contractors from Japan for their work on this project. And I would like to congratulate the men and women of the FDC on the great work that they have done which has merited such high recognition both here and abroad.

Arigato Gozaimasu!

Good afternoon.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the National Prosecutors League

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the National Prosecutors League**

[Delivered at the Manila Hotel, March 25, 1988]

A GROUP OF ACHIEVERS

Justice is the heart and soul of democracy. The local Prosecutors has dedicated themselves to their mission thus speeding up the flow of justice in our country. In the affair, President Aquino has directed the Secretary of Justice to submit recommendations regarding the measures to equalize retirement and other benefits and the establishment of a Prosecutorial Academy to train lawyers in the special acts of Prosecutors. President Aquino also reiterates a study to be prepared for a massive courthouse building program to give justices worthy houses throughout the land.

Here, finally, is an audience I am not going to upbraid, and, so far as I know, here is an audience that has nothing or little to criticize me for. Usually, in preparing for a speech before an agency of government, I get a long list of requirements and complaints. Not from Justice.

The national prosecutors already enjoy the respectable increase in salaries that I mandated to improve morale and performance in government.

We shall study measures to equalize your retirement and other benefits with those enjoyed by the judiciary. I direct the Secretary of Justice to submit his recommendations to me as soon as possible.

What pleases me, as I said, earlier is that I am before achievers, before a self-disciplined organization that has put itself into trim fighting form. You have purged your ranks of the unfit, and, by dedicating yourselves single-mindedly to your mission have greatly speeded up the disposition of the cases brought before you.

I congratulate you.

Reforms in the bureaucracy have reduced your jurisdiction somewhat. The various agencies with special jurisdictions, like the military courts, the Tanodbayan, the PCGG, have removed your former jurisdiction over abusive military and police, crooked public officials, and cronies. What has been left to you, however, is far from modest. For what remains for you to do is protect and vindicate the rights of a little less than the 58 million Filipinos who are honest and law-abiding.

This may not seem as glamorous as what the others are doing, but it is more important, as I had occasion to point out at last month's convention on Constitutionalism. There I said that my first concern and duty is to do justice to the ordinary citizen. I said that if we failed in this, if justice fails for the vast majority of Filipinos, then we can expect the end of order and society as we cherish it.

We can fail in almost anything — in the economy, in health, in education — but we cannot fail to do justice to everyman.

A man who is poor might blame his own lack of diligence or his hard luck for his hardship. A man who is ill might accept that the human body is not perfect. And a man who is ignorant may not know better.

But a man who is abused in his inalienable rights, a man who is maltreated by another, who is hurt or robbed will demand justice, and if he is killed, his blood will cry out for it — whether he is poor or sick or ignorant. For the sense of justice is implanted by God in all of us. It is this sense of justice and its embodiment in the laws of the land that fall under the protecting hand of the prosecutor.

I promised the judges to do all I can to assist them in their tasks. I now extend the same promise to you.

I ordered a study to be prepared for a massive courthouse building program to give Justice worthy houses throughout our land. Buildings that will improve efficiency in the administration and lend that noble aspect of dignity it deserves. I now extend this program to include facilities for the prosecutorial arm of government.

I should make myself clear on this matter. The budget for this building program is not meant to come from the budget of the Justice Department. That is why I instructed the Secretary of the Budget to sit with the Secretary of Justice to discuss with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court the creation of a joint Executive-Judiciary Committee that will oversee the program.

I am still waiting for a response to that directive.

We take note also of a suggestion to establish a Prosecutorial Academy to train lawyers in the special arts of prosecutors and ask the Secretary of Justice to prepare a recommendation on the matter.

May I congratulate you again on your performance. Much remains to be done, of course. Please apprise me of all your requirements. Your accomplishments thus far, despite limited resources, encourages government to extend to you every help it can. Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on RCC Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On RCC**

[Delivered in Cotabato City, March 26, 1988]

A COMMITMENT TO SERVE

President Aquino is very much aware of the rigorous screening the Commissioners had to go through. Many people will surely envy those who were chosen but for as long as they remain true to their commitment, President Aquino assures them of giving her support the best she can.

It is graduation time. All over the country, colleges and universities are holding graduation ceremonies. This is perhaps the reason why I feel that I am in a graduation ceremony this morning. For in a sense this is a commencement exercise – a graduation of sorts from a rigorous process of selection and the start of a new kind of political involvement.

I followed very carefully the testing and trial of the RCC nominees all the way up to their appointment. No other group of public officials has had so rigorous a screening as these commissioners.

The first step was their endorsement by sectoral groups for appointment to the RCC. The five candidates thus chosen were individually interviewed by a committee composed of the Peace Commission and the Mindanao Consensus-Building Panel. This was the second step, which reduced the number of candidates from five to three for each district. Their names were then published in national and local newspapers. This gave the public at large a chance to give feedback on the candidates.

At the third step, I stepped in. I studied the files on the candidates and then interviewed them myself. I met and talked with all three candidates from each district. Only after I had done so did I make my selection.

The last step was Congress. The Commission on Appointments passed carefully upon the qualifications of all the nominees. I understand that the commissioners-designate acquitted themselves impressively before the Commission.

I have reviewed the search and selection process for the RCC members in some detail and would like to underscore two key points:

First, the process followed the guidelines laid down by the Constitution; and

Second, the process reflects our commitment to the principle of popular consultation.

Elections are indeed the sacred route to power in a democracy. Yet the present-day practices of democracy have not always guaranteed respect for all the values that democracy seeks to advance and preserve.

The first and highest value that democracy protects is the people's free choice. Yet democracy in a poor land has sometimes failed to give the people the widest choice of the best who could be their leaders. Wisely, our Constitution has sought to remedy this temporary shortcoming by the process that I have outlined. Its products stand proudly here before us.

But the real value of the process is the way it engaged the energies of communities on issues that required them to divide, discuss, and finally converge upon a common choice – all in the spirit of mutual tolerance, respect for divergent opinion, and country above self.

People at the grass-roots had to come together to form a consensus on who should represent their interests. They had to listen to different, sometimes disagreeable points of view, and resolve their differences. In brief, the process provoked the kind of active participation in decision-making without which elections are a sham and democracy an illusion.

I have made a great personal investment in this experiment. It is a source of pleasure and pride for me to be able to say that I have met and talked with each and everyone of the commissioners. Let me address my final remarks to them.

You face a difficult and thankless task. Nobody paid much attention to the RCC when it was being organized and needed attention and encouragement. Yet now, after the careful and time-consuming work we have done, those who ignored it now attack it as a threat to the old ways of power to which they have become accustomed and at which they are experts.

Let me reassure you. You stand upon the rock of the Constitution; your existence and important role are clearly mandated by it.

As with all honest public service, the material reward is small. If it isn't, you are doing something wrong.

No one who joins government should expect to have it easy. Especially, when the country is one that has suffered so much as ours. Even now, the forces that nearly destroyed our country, continue to harass our efforts to rebuild the country and give it peace. You are joining me in that struggle.

It is expected that you have many different ideas among you. But it is also expected that in the end you shall come together in one united effort to achieve our common goal of progress and peace, much as your respective sectors and communities came together to select you.

I sense in all of you a common concern for the protection of human rights, a commitment to the peaceful resolution of conflict, and a common compassion for the disadvantaged among our people.

You will be the objects of close and critical scrutiny. You will find that you have indeed enemies among those you expect will be your enemies, but you, will find them also among those you help. That is part of public service.

Many will want you to fail, but if you are firmly grounded in high principle and remain deeply rooted in your communities, you will prevail.

This I promise you. For as long as you are true to the people, I shall be constantly beside you, giving you all the support I can.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the 40th Anniversary of the World Health Organization

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the 40th Anniversary of the World Health Organization**

[Released on April 7, 1988]

A COLLECTIVE VOICE FOR HEALTH

The President congratulates the staff of W.H.O., globally, and in particular the Regional Office which considers the Philippines as its home. The Philippines celebrates the anniversary of this organization and takes pride in its successes.

I am honored to have been invited here today to participate in the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the World Health Organization. I am especially pleased to note that, for thirty-eight of those forty years, Manila has been home to W.H.O.'s Western Pacific Regional Office, handling the affairs of the largest and the most diverse of the organization's six regions.

As the world's collective voice for health, W.H.Q. has contributed substantially to the well-being of many of the world's peoples. Through its programs, it has led the fight against many endemic diseases which afflict particularly the poorest of the world's population. With its vast network of consultants as well as its own expert staff, the organization is able to generate expert opinions and timely technical advice to guide the health policies.

W.H.O. had consistently stressed the principles of self-reliance and social equity in helping member states confront and solve their problems. The objective of health for all by the year 2000 through the primary health care approach is an outstanding goal to which the Philippines is firmly committed.

Our National Drug Policy, which I initiated -a year ago, consisting of safe and effective medicines, rational use of pharmaceuticals and the development of our capability for basic manufacturing translate into reality many of W.H.O. s pharmaceutical concepts, such as the essential drugs concept and generic labels. I am indeed confident that with the full support of the World Health Organization in technical, material and moral terms — we shall persevere and succeed in fully implementing this policy which can only result in better health care for the Filipino people.

There are good reasons indeed for this organization to celebrate its 40th anniversary. Its past accomplishments justify it, its future contributions will confirm its merits even more. As one of the member states of W.H.O., the Philippines celebrates the history of our organization. As host of the Western Pacific Regional Office, the Philippines takes pride in W.H.O.'s successes.

Of particular note to this region is the information recently given to me that our distinguished Regional Director, Dr. Hiroshi Nakajima, has recently been nominated to the post of Director-General of W.H.O. in Geneva This news gives us greater reason to celebrate today's happy event.

And so, I would now like to offer congratulations on behalf of the Philippines, its government and its people, to W.H.O. and its staff, globally, and, in particular to this Regional office, its staff and its Regional Director, Dr. Nakajima.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Ateneo Law Commencement Rites

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Ateneo Law Commencement Rites**

[Released on April 8, 1988]

THE PRESSING ISSUE OF LAW

In the commencement rites of Ateneo's College of Law, the President talks about freedom of the press and its limitations. She also congratulates the graduates and expresses confidence that the graduates will apply what they have learned in the practice of their profession: justice for all.

As the date of this occasion approached, I was wondering what I could tell you that was new. But somehow I had the feeling that something would turn up. Something unfortunately did.

I would not have minded, even if you did, to have just stood here and shaken hands with each of you, giving no speech except for some brief congratulatory remarks. Things had settled down quite a bit. Everyone was saying that the economy was taking off. Developments were speaking more eloquently than I could about our country. This buoyant feeling increased when the military captured the top leadership of the Communist insurgency. But, as always, it was "win some, lose some." Never a perfect week.

A well-known — I prefer to call him a "notorious" — prisoner escaped. His first act upon unlawfully regaining his illegal freedom was to impose upon the constitutional guarantee of free speech. This gives you a fair idea of how he understands freedom of speech, as a weapon rather than as a forum. He gave a radio interview the very day of his escape.

The Secretary of Justice warned that radio franchises may be cancelled if such interviews were aired. The interview was not aired. Since then, the government has received a great deal of criticism for the chilling of the Justice Secretary's warning on free expression.

The question was asked: Is there really an emergency so grave as to justify a curtailment of speech, given that the government, from the start of the incident, had repeatedly assured the public that everything was under control? Wasn't that a contradiction?

Let me deal with that apparent contradiction. Government had everything under control because we had decided to take full and complete control of the situation. We had resolved to isolate the rebel escapee so he could not repeat the damage he had done nor the murder and mayhem he had wrought on August 28 last year. By instituting checkpoints, a manhunt, and issuing a warning about aiding and abetting the fugitive, we had sharply curtailed his capability to increase the number of his confederates. So it is true that we were in control, and it is also true that we had to take emergency measures to achieve this control. There was no contradiction. We were in complete control of the situation because nothing and no one would be allowed to stand in our way.

That warning was issued about the dire consequences of airing the Honasan interview because coup-by-mouth and instability by public alarm had become this man's chief stock-in-trade. We had to isolate the incident, clearly identify the perpetrators, and get a true estimate of the extent of the danger they posed to the public. In that man's

hands, media was not a means for the communication of ideas or the expression of feelings but a weapon of destabilization aimed at the institutions that protect the fundamental rights that give life to media and democracy. Had he gone on the air and falsely claimed that a large segment of the military itself had sprung him from imprisonment, the country would have been thrown into a panic. It would have been, indeed, like falsely shouting “Fire” in a crowded theater. As it was, for all the control we had achieved and the isolation we had succeeded in imposing upon him, the stock market was adversely affected.

With his right to speak and seek an audience, we have no quarrel. But we continue to reserve the right to punish those who allow themselves to be used as instruments of his evil purposes. This is a free country. You are free to say what you please, air what you want, but within the limits of the rights of others to their privacy and honor, of our democratic institutions to self-preservation.

There has been a complaint that the warning was ambiguous or too broad. Let me clarify it. My instructions to Commissioner Alcuaz are not to prevent any radio or TV interview from being aired, on the one hand, and not to give clearance for the airing of any interview, on the other. But all media are forewarned that there are consequences they must be prepared to face, including the cancellation of franchises if, in our opinion, they have overstepped the line of public safety.

My first duty is to protect the state, and, yes, to protect democracy, even from those who would abuse its highest guarantees in order to destroy it. We have been accused of fostering Freedom of the Press. Let me tell you, I haven’t the slightest interest in being praised by the press, for I take satisfaction only in doing what my conscience and my duty tell me is right. Our people and I have come this far by ourselves, building patiently and tirelessly from the “ruin we inherited. Sadly, we have had to see others destroy immediately what we had just built up.

I have neither time nor interest in praises from any but the people to whose progress, well-being, prosperity and enduring freedom alone I am dedicated.

I am pleased and honored to have been invited here to address this next generation of Ateneo lawyers. I spared you a lengthy and rhetorical speech and went straight instead to a pressing issue of law because that is how I hope you will apply yourselves in the practice of your profession. With unshakeable resolve to do quickly, unhesitatingly what is right, whatever the price. Only God and history in the long run know what is absolutely right. We are only human’ with only the single light of Christian conscience to guide us on the path of duty.

Congratulations on your graduation. God go with you and may success attend all your virtuous endeavors. Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Departure Message of President Corazon Aquino on Visiting China

Departure Message of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On Visiting China

[Released on April 13, 1988]

A REAFFIRMATION OF FRIENDSHIP

President Aquino states her reasons for visiting China.

I am leaving for a two day visit to the People's Republic of China. Aside from members of the Executive Branch, a representative each of the Senate and the House of Representatives will be accompanying me.

A state visit to the premier Asian power by the new leader of an Asian state explains and justifies itself. Face-to-face meetings of the highest leaders have been the most effective and ancient form of diplomacy, even when they involve democracies.

Leaders have visited one another to strike up new, or strengthen old friendships; to acquire a deeper understanding of each other's thinking and intentions; and to promote beneficial relations between their peoples. These meetings between heads of states set the tone of their relationships, or at least reflect what the two leaders hope will be the relations between their countries.

This search for understanding extends beyond the character of states, and their official attitudes and policies. The greatest benefit of such visits may well be the first-hand knowledge and understanding that each leader acquires of another. For in the last analysis, it is not historic trends or impersonal forces that shape events but peoples as represented by their leaders. Modern communications technology has not diminished in any way the irreplaceability and importance of these personal encounters.

Given its size and power, its destiny as the pivot of the most important developments in Asia, its racial affinity with the Filipino nation, and its territorial proximity to us, a visit to China indeed explains and justifies itself. Beyond such obvious considerations, there is the fact that China is a leading trade partner of the Philippines. During our visit, we expect to conclude a trade protocol setting targets in, and further diversifying our bilateral trade. We hope to conclude agreements for scientific and technological exchange, and to widen our cultural contacts with the Chinese people.

The visit will also give me the opportunity to sound out China's views on the geopolitical situation of our part of the world. And this seems the best time for it, for the National People's Congress has just ended its current session. The directions of China's political and economic policies have been further clarified. And a new president, Yang Shangkun has been elected. I shall be paying a call, the first by any head of state, on the new Chinese president, as well on other Chinese leaders.

The visit will provide an opportunity for a reaffirmation of friendship, a renewal of our mutual commitment to the principle of non-interference in each other's internal affairs, and a reaffirmation of a common resolve to settle and encourage the settlement of international disputes through law and reason, and in peace.

China too is eager for this visit. It was one of the first countries to invite me.

In sum, I visit China to enhance our national security, expand our trade, promote cultural and scientific exchanges, achieve a better understanding of this pivotal state and its leadership, and reaffirm the ancient ties of friendship between our two countries.

The prudence of this visit, at this time, after a recent incident, has been questioned. On the contrary, its cancellation would be the greatest folly. For our visit to China will show our great neighbor that we have at least achieved the internal political stability and maturity to play the responsible and important role that is expected of us in Asian Affairs

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on her official visit in Hong Jian Village

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On her official visit in Hong Jian Village**

[Released on April 13, 1988]

A NECESSARY STOP

President Aquino retraces her steps and goes back to the land of her ancestors. Though her ancestral beginnings come from this land, the President belongs to the Philippines where she is the leader.

I came to China for reasons of state and for reasons personal to me, for I am both head of state of my country and, in a way, a daughter of this village. My first stop on this official visit to China has been here, at Hong Jian, the village where my family came from. The first steps in my own family's history, as well as in the histories of many Filipinos, were taken here in this village.

Da-thia too shuo, wo tse jee lu-xhing de moo-di, sherh fan-xiang she-te wo-way sherh wei-la wo-deh jia-ting, ye-sherh weila, shu-do wa huayi te Filiping-kung ming, teh huai-lien han, liao-jie ta-men-teh tse zien she tung yang yung chin-lao han chuang-shing de tching-zhen dao high-way kerh-kerh-di chu kai-chuang tah-men de shing sheng-huo.

The end of travelling, we are told, is to return. I have returned for my family, and for other Filipinos of Chinese descent, to retrace their steps and attain some understanding of the industry and creativity that lead them forth to new beginnings in other lands.

I am proud to discover that our ancient lines can still be traced, that certain valuable traditions and memorials of the family have lived on in the very place where they started from. But I am most happy that I am making these discoveries in a new country and a new village – a new China, and a new Hong Jian. Here are still the same kind of people, even the same families, with the same warmth and goodness, but free now of feudal injustices.

The end of my travelling is not here, of course, because, although my family came from this village many, many years ago, my home is the Philippines of which I am the leader. And I have so far still to take my countrymen to the “home” we wish to have — a country where peace and justice and progress reign.

Yet this has been a worthwhile and necessary stop in my travels. Being here, among the good people of Hong Jian, among my relatives has given me a deeper sense of my own history. More importantly, it has impressed upon me this truth: that, for all the many different countries that have sprung up in the world, all good people everywhere are the same. And wherever they establish themselves and make a community, there a visitor will feel as though returning to her home.

I wish to thank my “uncle” Mr. Xu Yuanxing for his warm welcome of his wandering relatives, and the people of Hong Jian for their hospitality. As is customary among Chinese and the Filipinos, a returning relative must bring presents. I have brought a few gifts to celebrate this homecoming.

Wo pen ren, wo de nu-er Pinky han Kris, hai yo wo deh tong shing manh, tsai ee tse, gan sye ni-manh, dway women leh liyeh deh chow tai, sherh women tsong shen lan wang. Siye-siye!

My daughters, Pinky and Kris, and I, and our companions once more thank you deeply for this memorable occasion.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Banquet Speech of President Corazon Aquino in Beijing

Banquet Speech of Her Excellency Corazon Aquino President of the Philippines In Beijing

[Delivered on April 15, 1988]

A TRULY INDEPENDENT CHINA

The affiliation of the Chinese and the Filipinos goes back to the times of our ancestors. Through the years, we have managed to keep the spirit of friendship burning and in this another milestone, the President expresses her hope that this may be another ace in the relationship.

We are honored and grateful for this invitation to visit the People's Republic of China, more so at such an auspicious time. It is indeed a privilege to be the first foreign head of government to visit China after the milestone First Session of the 7th National People's Congress, where China's new course is being set by her great people and wise leaders. I take this occasion also to congratulate the new President on his election.

My party and I have received a most warm welcome from the Chinese people. The hospitality we have enjoyed rightly symbolizes the cordiality and strong friendship that have long existed between our two peoples. As head of a new government of a country that is trying to remold itself in the image of justice and progress, it is fitting that we visit here at this juncture in China's history when a reaffirmation of its own vision of justice and progress is being made.

A strong, proud and truly independent China emerged from her great revolutionary struggle against oppression. National strength, pride and independence were also our goals when we made a revolution two years ago. The scale of China's struggle, given her circumstances, obviously far exceeds my people's own struggle for those same goals of genuine independence through national strength. But the elements of courage and persevering faith are the same for our two peoples.

So too have been the problems that beset our respective courses: a severely damaged economy and political system, and, in the midst of a national resolve to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles to material progress and social justice, the presence of recalcitrant elements that seek to return us to the injustices, the weakness, and the humiliations of the past. China is well on the road to that strength that will assure the permanence of its vision. We have only started. And we look to China to give us the moral support to achieve our own special aims, in our own unique way.

We look confidently to China for such encouragement because of the ancient ties between our two peoples. While colonialism and the Cold War had strained and severed those ties, yet the centuries of cultural exchange, trade relations and racial mixture must obliterate that tragic period from our hearts, more especially now that we have reaffirmed and broadened those ties by wider trade relations and diplomatic exchanges.

The new course of greater economic progress and political reforms that China and the Philippines have set themselves these recent years promises even greater harmony and more meaningful cooperation between them. This is especially true of our common efforts to achieve stability, peace and progress in the world. On many of the great issues of international politics and economics, China and the Philippines stand on common ground.

We seek true independence through national strength but in a world of mutual trust and assistance. And we hope that every nation, super or small, shall respect in others the same desire for national independence and security that it seeks for itself.

We seek justice in the economic relations of rich and poor countries and share the same faith that the progress of each nation need not be purchased with the impoverishment of others.

We accept that there will always be differences between nations, yet continue to hope and work that these divisions shall not be covered over by the rubble of war, or obliterated along with the human race in a nuclear war. We are impatient in our hope and oftentimes disappointed in our labors to achieve peace and understanding in the world, yet accept that the work must proceed slowly, in step with all other nations, for peace and understanding cannot be imposed. In the way of lasting friendships, it must grow from within each of us by the habit of mutual respect. In that regard, the Asia of today has shown the way.

There is the friendship among the ASEAN states, and the amicable relations of those states with the premier Asian state of China. Those relations are marked by the greatest mutual respect for each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and way of life, and by the determination, when differences arise on these matters, to resolve them always with justice and reason and unwavering commitment to keep the peace.

From this, in my country's particular regard, has flowed our One-China policy, recognizing the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China and denying itself any pretention to influence the final configuration of China's geographical identity. That policy is not only a counsel of respect, but an admission that no force external to China can influence the destiny of a people whose struggle for national liberation shook the world.

From this also has flowed the Chinese assurance that, for all of China's size and power, it will not interfere in the internal affairs of her neighbors. And from that resolve to do justice, to act with reason, and to keep the peace among us has come the commitment we share to encourage the same justice, reason and the ways of peace in the settlement of disputes in the rest of the world. And so we stand together in seeking an end to conflict and insecurity in Kampuchea, in Afghanistan, and in South Africa, even as we look with hope to the measures, recently adopted by the Soviet Union and the United States, to reduce the threat of world destruction by nuclear war.

In talks earlier in the day with the President, and in discussions with Premier Li Peng, we reviewed our bilateral relations and agreed to strengthen those relations in ways that will contribute significantly to the economic upliftment of our two peoples. For only upon the material foundation of their common progress can one hope to set their long-lasting friendship. Here, in Beijing, the center of the Chinese universe, from where the Lord of Ten Thousand Years maintained the equilibrium, prosperity and harmony of the realm, a start has been made in that direction by China and the Philippines.

I thank you again, on behalf of all Filipinos, for the noble reception and warm hospitality you have given their government and for the honor you have done to my country.

Tsu-shi, tsong-li, keh-wei, tong-tse ni-sheh-men wo ching ta tsiya sien-tsai tong wo chan-chi-lai (stand up), tsu fu di chi-chieh ren-tai-huway deh chung-kong, tsu-fu *chong-kwoh ren-ming*, tsi-shi-fa-iyang kwang ta tsu-fu ling taw *chong kwoh*, Jo-xiang xian-tai-hua deh wei-ta ling-shou-men kan tsu-fu women Chung-Fei liang-kwo yong-djo de yo-ee tsai women kong tang tsu-pay siye-siye keh huway! Mr. President, Mr. Prime Minister, ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast —

To the success of the Seventh Congress and the continuing triumph of the Chinese people, to the great leader who set China upon her new course, and to the eternal friendship of our two peoples.

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Bilateral Relations with China

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Bilateral Relations with China**

[Delivered in Beijing, April 15, 1988]

MUTUAL RESPECT FOR SOVEREIGNTY

The relationship of China and the Philippines is more than diplomatic. It goes back to centuries. President Aquino takes note of the various contributions China is extending to the Philippines and is grateful for all these. She invites China to come and visit the Philippines to further endure the friendship of the two countries.

First of all, may I express my gratitude and that of my party for the warm and generous hospitality which the Chinese government and people have extended to us. I wish to thank you and your government for your gracious invitation. It was one of the first to be received by the new democratic government of the Philippines. The gesture is deeply appreciated by me and the Filipino people.

I have, however, two regrets. The first is that the pressure of duties kept me from accepting your government's invitation until this time. Yet, it may all be for the best. For this is a good time to be here, in the Beijing spring; a time also of renewed political and economic vitality for the Chinese nation after the successful first session of the Seventh National People's Congress. I feel, of course, specially honored to be the first head of state to visit with you after your election as Premier of the State Council.

My second regret is that this visit has to be much too brief. Equally pressing duties again demand my early return to my country. But, in the brief period I shall be here, much will be accomplished.

***Ancient ties** Our ties are ancient, spanning culture, trade and race. Yesterday, we paid a brief visit and a heartfelt tribute to our common heritage in the village of my ancestors where so many other Filipinos trace their ancestry.

Our friendship is virtually an unbroken line going back centuries. It has been sustained by our respect for each other's sovereignty despite the proximity of our two countries, and by a mutual refusal to interfere in each other's internal affairs.

***Non-support of insurgents/One China Policy** This has been repeatedly shown by China's unbending rule not to offer any support whatsoever to groups seeking the overthrow of the Philippine Government, as well as by the Philippine's One China policy recognizing the People's Republic of China as the sole legitimate government of China. Our mutual respect for each other's sovereignty is further strengthened by a common commitment to the rule of reason and law in the settlement of international disputes. Certainly, with regard to possible conflicting claims on the part of our two countries over certain islands and reefs in the South China Sea, that respect and lawful regard have been consistently maintained.

***Common positions** Conflicts external to our ancient friendship kept us apart for a brief period. But in 1975 we reestablished diplomatic ties with China. This was well and good for our two nations have pivotal roles in maintaining the balance of power and the peace in East and Southeast Asia. China of course is Asia's greatest state, and one of the great nations of history and of the contemporary world. On many issues, China and the Philippines stand on common ground, especially on the issues of decolonization, racism, and nuclear disarmament.

*Trade Trade between our two countries has flourished and continues steadily to grow. One wishes, of course, that this growth shall keep in step with the expansion of our respective economies.

A more diversified and balanced trade between our two nations will make our diplomatic relations more meaningful and valuable to our two peoples.

*Oil In this respect, we hope that China would consider providing the Philippines once more with crude oil at friendship prices. This would be deeply appreciated, as it was in the past.

*Scientific & Cultural Exchanges Both Our peoples place a great value on learning, particularly scientific learning which is the key to modernization, power, and true sovereignty. We look forward to more exchanges of knowledge and technique between our countries. But the thirst for learning extends as well to each other's arts and culture. Exchanges in this area are already extensive. Still, one hopes there will be more of them.

*Release of Seamen Since 1978, the flow of visitors between our two countries has increased many times, proving, I believe a natural and unbreakable friendship. In this regard, I would like to express my appreciation for the act of compassion shown by your government towards the Filipino seamen who had been detained in Xiamen. I would hope the same compassion will be shown to the ship captain, who remains detained.

*Invitation to visit Philippines There have been also many official visits between our two countries. I hope this visit of mine will be reciprocated by your excellency's visit to my country, further underscoring the deep and enduring friendship of our two peoples. I thank you again for your hospitality.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino to the HB Trade Development Council

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the HB Trade Development Council**

[Released on April 16, 1988]

SO SMALL YET SO RICH

The President candidly states that she expects to learn a lot from Hongkong's experience, the tiny area regarded as one of the most successful economies in the world. She invites the investors to come to the Philippines and judge for themselves what the country can offer in terms of business opportunities.

Some of the shrewdest and most successful businessmen in the world are here in Hong Kong. Hong Kong itself is widely regarded as one of the most successful economies in the world. As the leader of a country taking its first steps on the road to economic recovery, I expect to learn a lot from the experience of coming to Hong Kong and talking to its business leaders. I want to know how something so small, could become so rich and strong. Because Hong Kong is strong — strong enough to have its tiny voice listened to with respect in the determination of the future of all China. How could something so small make such a difference?

Not too long ago, Hong Kong was written off. Only to be written back again as one of the world's most promising areas of growth. This write-off/write-on phenomenon recurs with the regularity of a ritual. I know Filipinos and Filipino companies that sold out their real estate holdings here during one of the "scares" about Hong Kong's future. They must be banging their heads against the wall now.

Not too long ago, the Philippines was the darling of international opinion. This was immediately after the Four Day Revolution. It was widely said that thenceforth everything would go well for us. About a month later, a negative image of the Philippines began to take shape in newspapers and television screens throughout the world.

The image was that of a country whose newly-born freedom and constitutionalism served merely as shield for anarchy and violence, and a standing excuse for impotence. It was that of a government committed to civil peace, and therefore foredoomed to ceaseless turmoil and defeat. The image was also that of a government run by a woman and therefore weak and indecisive, and certain to fall before the importunities of military adventurers and canny politicians. That image has scarcely been revised, despite the following developments:

On October 20 last year, I lowered the boom on a too-exuberant labor movement whose extreme militancy was shrinking the very pie of which it kept demanding a greater share. I made clear my resolve to enforce the letter of the labor laws which, for your information, protect both management and labor. Cases of illegal strikes, illegal barricades and open defiance of return-to-work orders drop to almost zero.

From a high figure of 147 work stoppages during the first quarter of 1987, the figure dropped drastically to only 44 — a decrease of 70 percent.

I felt that the nation had had enough of exuberance and it was time for work. My honeymoon with the media was over, so why should everyone's holiday from a sense of responsibility to the nation not likewise be terminated?

But we are not a strike-free country. I hope we never become one. The only countries that are strike-free are those that are candidates for violent social revolutions. We prefer long-term stability purchased with occasional turmoil, to the slow, silent buildup of a head of steam that will one day burst all valves of social and political control.

The return of democracy and an initial offer to negotiate an end to the insurgency seemed to have been interpreted by the insurgent leadership as an admission of weakness and a preparation for political surrender. We swiftly corrected this misimpression by a combination of military offensives and police operations, the latest of which bagged the top Communist leadership.

The extreme right in the military began to believe its own lies about the weakness of this housewife's government. Last August, it launched its boldest and bloodiest attempt to seize the government. The attempt certainly blackened the Philippine image further, but the outcome definitively established the permanence of democracy, and of my government — only for the duration of my term, of course.

Where there's smoke, there's fire. I admit that. Certain initiatives have failed, others were choked in the red tape and narrow self-interest we are trying to prune away. But what I am saying is that there's been altogether too much smoke for the small fires that I have put out. There are some large burning issues admittedly, but there have been adequate and sincere attempts to address them.

And there are things we have outright achieved, such as everything the nation set out to do when it mobilized to expel the dictatorship. We elected and seated a duly elected President. We restored integrity and independence to the courts, and, by electing a Congress, reestablished the threefold separation of powers that is the sheet anchor of democracy.

We restored the Armed Forces to the trust and respect of the people by reorienting it to its proper role — that of fighting and winning the wars of the Republic, no more, no less; leaving policymaking where it rightfully belongs — to the elected leadership of the nation.

Simultaneously, we laid down the framework for the reconstruction and progress of our pillaged economy. I speak carefully of the “framework” of reconstruction and progress, not of a detailed scheme of business. For a detailed economic program that entails the unilateral direction and pervasive presence of government in the private sector has worked out, in our sad experience, like the written instructions of a gunman to a bank teller.

These developments may be discerned in the country's growing mood of confidence and in certain economic indicators. 1986, for example, arrested a two-year decline in GNP and posted a growth of 1.5 percent. In 1987, GNP growth was 5.6 percent. Much of this growth was generated by the industrial sector which grew by 8.2 percent in 1987, largely as a result of Government's unwavering resolve to privatize the economy the dictatorship had virtually usurped. I announced that everything would go on the auction block, in open and transparent biddings that should forestall any doubt about the integrity of the proceedings. In our own way, we are trying to replicate the lesson of Hong Kong: Government should be nowhere in business.

Despite certain externalities and an economy still healing, we maintained the stability of the peso and held down inflation to 3.8 percent last year. Three years ago, inflation was galloping at 40 to 50 percent.

After two consecutive years of decline, investments last year reached US\$420 million, the highest level registered by our Board of Investments in 20 years.

In short, inspite of the negative image we have had, we have achieved a great deal. There is a growing sense that the country is finally on the move, as there is increasing impatience with those fitful attempts you read about here to derail it

Like Hong Kong, we have been written off time and again. The mistake is to believe it, and to be left out of what one might reasonably expect will be the next miracle in Asia.

But even before the miracle, there are enough opportunities worth exploring. Consider, for example, that next year Hong Kong can no longer avail of duty free treatment under the U.S. Generalized System of Preferences. The

Philippines will continue to enjoy this advantage and therefore offers the opportunity to manufacture GSP-eligible items in the Philippines for export to the U.S. market.

I will not presume to give this audience specific investment advice. That's your forte. I invite you to come to the Philippines and see for yourselves whether on the whole the confidence in the country that I have tried to impart to you has a reasonable basis. I invite you to see and judge for yourselves whether or not I am right in asserting that there is a great future in the Philippines of which you can be a part. Thank you for this opportunity to talk to you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Address of President Corazon Aquino to the Filipinas working in Hong Kong

**Address
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Filipinas working in Hong Kong**

[Released on April 17, 1988]

**A TRIBUTE TO HARDWORK AND
SACRIFICE**

President Aquino addresses the Filipinas working in Hong Kong — the nation's living manifestation of hardwork and sacrifice. The President urges the Filipinas to continue the good work they're doing which garners honor for the country. She also tells the women not to forget their culture and promises that the Philippines will be worth their sacrifice.

Mga minamahal kong kababayan, isang malaking kasiyahan sa akin ang makasama kayo sa araw na ito – kayo na kinikilala kong bayani ng ekonomiya ng ating bansa.

Kayo na mga manggagawang Pilipino sa ibang bansa na nagtiis ng lungkot at nagsakripisyo na malayo sa inyong mga mahal sa buhay ang siyang tumulong ng malaki upang buhayin at ibangon ang ating bansa noong tayo ay nasa ilalim pa ng diktador. Sa ngayon, ang sakripisyong ito ay patuloy pa rin sa pagtatayo muli ng ating bansa.

Tulad ng marami sa inyo, ako rin po ay isang maybahay at isang ina, at alam ko rin na mas nais ninyo, kung maari lamang, na lagi sana kayo sa tabi ng inyong pamilya. Alam ko rin, at naranasan ko, ang sakit ng mawalay sa sariling bayan.

2.5 million Filipinos are unemployed. Had you not taken the hard decision to leave our homeland, you could have been a part of that statistic.

Napakadali ang magsalita at magmagaling tungkol sa dangal, kapurihan, karangalan ng ating bansa, subalit ang katotohanan ay dapat nating harapin na kailangan nating mabuhay sa paraan na kaya natin.

Bilang inyong Pangulo, hayaan ninyong sabihin kong muli sa inyo: nasa inyo ang lahat ng dahilan upang taas-noo ninyong ipagmalaki ang inyong gawain. Ano man ang inyong gawain, gaano man ito kahamak sa paningin ng iba, tandaan lamang ninyo na dakila ang lahat ng hanapbuhay. Tandaan din ninyo na hindi lamang ang inyong mga kabiyak, mga anak at mga kamag-anak ang magpapasalamat sa sakripisyo na inyong dinaranas, kundi ang buong sambayanang Pilipino.

Kayo ay makasisiguro na ang inyong pamahalaan ay ga-gawin ang lahat para sa inyong ikabubuti. Ito ang dahilan kung bakit natin pansamantalang itinigil ang pagpapadala ng mga domestic helpers sa ibang bansa — ito ay para pag-aralan ang mga hakbang na makabubuti at mangangalaga sa inyo. Nais kong ipaalam sa inyo na ang pagbabawal sa pagpapalabas ng mga domestic helpers sa Hongkong ay ibinaba na, gayundin sa Canada, matapos ng maayos na pakikipag-usap sa mga labor officials ng dalawang bansa. Marahil iba sa inyo, tulad ng iba sa ating mga kababayan, ay hindi sang-ayon sa desisyon ng pagtigil ng pagpapadala ng domestic helpers sa ibang bansa. Subalit tungkulin ko ang pangalagaan ang bawa't Pilipino.

Sa inyo, isang bagay lamang ang aking hinihiling: gawin ninyo ng buong husay at katapatan ang inyong gawain. Ang kahusayan at kasipagan ng mga Pilipino ay kinikilala sa buong mundo – panindigan ninyo itong reputasyon.

Habang malayo kayo sa inyong bayan, sana'y huwag ninyong kalimutan ang ating mga magagandang kaugalian at tradisyong Pilipino.

Ipinangangako ko sa inyong lahat ang isang Pilipinas na mapagmamalaki ninyo.

Maraming salamat

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Arrival Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the results of her visit in China

Arrival Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On the results of her visit in China

[Released on April 17, 1988]

A DEEPER MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

President Aquino reports on the results of her visit of China. The visit netted an agreement and a protocol whereby China and the Philippines undertake to increase trade between them this year from 293 million dollars to \$450 million.

I am happy to be home. I see that things were handled well while I was away. No one can say now that political stability in the Philippines is a daily battle that must be waged by the President herself. In Hong Kong, the headline about the capture of Honasan's guards underscored my message that the conditions for Philippine progress are nearly all in place.

Materially, the visit netted us an agreement and a protocol whereby China and the Philippines undertake to increase trade between them this year from \$293 million to \$450 million – and over 5 years to \$600 to \$800 million. In addition, China has promised to help us achieve a true balance of trade with the Philippines.

In return for my modest gift of some playthings (donated by some businessmen) for the school yard in Hong Jian, China donated \$3 million of rice, to help us make up for the drop in production as a result of the drought.

On the intangible but far from unimportant side, a truer and deeper mutual understanding has been achieved by the leaders of China and the Philippines, and with that understanding has come, apparently, an appreciation on China's part for what we are trying to achieve here.

Deng Xiaoping expressed the support of the Chinese Communist Party for our government and our aims to achieve economic progress.

I was heartened to note that we share the same conviction that peace within our respective countries, and harmony with our neighbors are essential conditions for the economic development and material upliftment we seek for our peoples.

With this deep understanding should come more meaningful cooperation between China and the Philippines.

I think we have done our country proud during this trip, more particularly the Filipino people who have shown once and for all, that freedom and stability are not weak and fragile achievements but the permanent condition in the Philippines.

It is good indeed to be home again.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to Chief Justice Claudio Teehankee

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To Chief Justice Claudio Teehankee**

[Released on April 21, 1988]

A SELF MADE MAN

President Aquino pays tribute and offers a toast to Chief Justice Teehankee as one of the few justices who has managed to keep his integrity and dignity intact amidst these confusing moments.

I feel a certain political affinity with Justice Teehankee. For in a sense, both of us created our offices. He was there with me at the restoration of Philippine democracy, administering to me the President's oath of office, in the glare of the kleig lights and bursting flashbulbs. Had things turned out differently, the occasion would have been the most photographed and documented act of rebellion in history.

Both the dictator and I took our oaths of office on the same day, yet mine stuck while the dictator's just peeled off. The future was with me. Yet even at that moment, I and many others felt that my oath was the real one. The dictator's was just a sham. We felt this because the man before me on that historic morning, robed in black, stood for all that was still honorable and true in the State.

In qualifying me to the power and authority of the Presidency, Justice Teehankee, of course, created the power and authority that would appoint him Chief Justice of the Philippines. He is what you call a self-made man.

By being there, at grave risk to his life, and certainly at the price of ending his judicial career, Justice Teehankee did one thing even more important. He demonstrated by historic fact, and not just by constitutional logic, that the Supreme Court should be an independent and co-equal branch of government. By this signal act of courage, by his indispensable role at the creation, the Supreme Court can truly say that its independence, honor and co-equality are not gifts but the hard-won triumph of its most illustrious son.

By a clever maneuver, Chief Justice Marshall established the principle of judicial review. By a greater act of courage, Chief Justice Teehankee reestablished the Supreme Court upon a footing of equality with the two other branches of government, and in the highest esteem of the Filipino people.

Ladies and gentlemen, fellow Filipinos, join me now in a toast: To Chief Justice Claudio Teehankee — for want of a greater word, a Filipino patriot.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 21st Annual Meeting of ADB

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the 21st Annual Meeting of ADB**

[Released on April 28, 1988]

BANKER TO HALF THE WORLD

The President lauds the Bank's mission of helping a nation achieve a sustainable level of progress by whatever reasonable means regardless of political ideology a sovereign nation has adopted. She stresses that ADB has been extremely generous in its support to the Philippines.

The last time I stood before you, I spoke of faith, of the faith that gave us the courage to stand our ground, and of the freedom that courage enabled us to achieve. I spoke of the new and promising directions that our newly won freedom would allow us to take.

I spoke of Providence. For it seemed, so soon after the February Revolution, that only the hand of Providence could have snatched my country from the worst oppression and set it safely down in freedom. Indeed, it seemed not inappropriate then to talk only about my country before this international forum, for what had just happened had attracted the deepest sympathy and attention of the world.

But that time has passed. What we have since done with our newly won freedom and the opportunities it created is a matter of record. We have had gains, I will insist on that, but on balance they have been modest. So much more remains to be done.

I spoke of miracles then.

Miracles are still needed, but one hesitates to speak of miracles now. The last miracle was when God put back into the hands of the Filipino people the fate of the Filipino nation. The next miracles must be the work of those hands.

It is a happy accident that my country has been the site of the headquarters of the Asian Development Bank. But this fortuitous honor does not diminish the pan-Asian character of this great institution. That character is as evident in its aim, which is the material upliftment of all Asian countries to the levels achieved by their most developed partners, as in the Asian style that increasingly marks its work.

Speaking from the Philippine experience, the ADB has been extremely generous in its support. Allow me again this opportunity to intrude a purely national matter by thanking the Asian Development Bank for the generous support it has given the Philippines, and for the profound understanding and sympathy it has shown for the country's particular plight. I am a little embarrassed to say this, but, while we certainly need more help than you have offered, there was a time when you offered more help than we were prepared to handle. Yet, in the distinctive way of the ADB, you offered to help us improve our capability to fully utilize the support that the Bank would like to give the Philippine economic recovery effort.

This is distinctively Asian and it has worked. It has made us a very satisfied client of the Bank, as it has made many other satisfied clients.

That satisfaction is derived from the manner in which the Bank has extended assistance to the developing countries of Asia. This assistance is usually extended with a modest assessment by the Bank of its prescriptive capabilities regarding the problems of developing nations.

This modesty is Asian; but the wisdom it reflects is universal.

This modesty, again, is articulated in the preferred manner of ADB decision-making, which is by consensus rather than confrontation. For every hand is needed in the enormous tasks before it. No one presumes he can force through a successful solution simply by the strength of the blind conviction that he is right.

We see this modesty again in the Bank's view of its role as essentially a bundle of responsibilities towards its constituents. The Bank does not see its mission as one of vindicating a particular economic philosophy regardless of the political cost, but one of helping a nation achieve a sustainable level of progress by whatever reasonably acceptable means lie at hand, regardless of the political ideology a sovereign nation has adopted.

For policy deliberations on structural reform and short-run stabilization can no longer ignore the socio-political consequences of these prescriptions on the target nations. I know that politics cannot be measured and can find no place in the parsimony of economic models. But politics is real, and, at the risk of irrelevance and surprise, it must be accommodated, at least by a substantial flexibility, in policy dialogues with the developing nations.

This is the Asian way, the ADB way. And the success of the Bank argues strongly for its universal imitation.

Among the developed countries there is a growing sense of crisis, a vague but deeply felt conviction that something is terribly wrong with the way things have been run. There is a sense of a terrifying complexity beyond the power of man to understand and control.

In sharp contrast, the newly developed countries of Asia achieved a measure of coherence and progress through policies that violated the conventional wisdom at the time. Perhaps it is time for those of us who once aspired to follow in the footsteps of the developed world to come upon our own age of reason.

Bigness and complexity, and the tremendous power they generate, demand collective leadership and extensive consultation. Increasingly, this is the nature of the ADB organization – banker to half the world, and the issues of net resource transfer and poverty alleviation confronting it. The dominant culture must allow, even promote, wider consultation among its member-clients. It must encourage the formulation of appropriate conditionalities. It must continue to have patience in its endeavors. It must continue to view banking, especially development banking, as a relationship rather than a transaction (as wind upon wanting sails rather than a yoke upon the buffalo). It must, in short, continue to be Asian in the way of its leadership and must look from within Asia to the rest of the world.

A Chinese philosopher described a good leader as one who talks little. When his work is done, his task fulfilled, the people say, "We did this ourselves." As a result, the accomplishments endure; the people continue to build on it. Therein lies the best prospect of the greater success of the Bank and the progress of the countries it serves.

I wish you every success on your 21st annual meeting. Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Labor Day

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On Labor Day

[Delivered in Diliman, May 1, 1988]

FREEDOM AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Addressing the country's powerful labor force, President Aquino points out that the unemployment problem is staggering; that labor-intensive techniques and an emergency employment program have barely made a dent on the problem. She directs DOLE to monitor the different agencies engaged in various employment programs.

She announces price rollbacks of petroleum products emphasizing that she is doing this to reduce the cost of living and not to create windfall profits for business.

There is a widespread notion that Labor Day is the one day of the year when Government pays attention to labor. It is regarded as the day of the laborers, as opposed to the 364 days of the capitalists and managers. That was true under the dictatorship; it is not true in this democracy. For me, every day is labor day, because it is the daily labor of the workman that sustains our economy and society, and brings us closer to the national strength and prosperity we seek.

On this day, the nation pays tribute to the power that daily propels our economy, the force without which we can never rebuild from the economic destruction of the past to the progressive economy and equitable society we have promised to all our people.

It is also the day when we reaffirm the overriding labor policy of our government, and for that matter of any real democracy. That policy seeks to achieve for the Filipino workingman the greatest freedom and equality of opportunity possible. It does not seek to cradle labor in a state of dependency on the state, but to encourage its development to the greatest independence, self-reliance and well-being. That policy explicitly recognizes that the workingman is not just the means of development. The improvement of his well-being is the end of development itself.

The means to this end is the generation of well-paid and sustainable employment. Those with the means to adequately support themselves and their families, have the means to assert their freedom and their dignity.

This aim requires the partnership of labor and management in sincere efforts to get the economy moving. It also requires time – time in which the basic needs of labor, that is to say, of the vast majority of our people, must be attended to. This is where the state comes in – to fill the gap between the prosperity we aim for, and the present condition of labor that only a vibrant economy can overcome.

In the meantime, Government must fill the gap between basic needs today and the hoped-for progress of our economy.

I see this gap being filled by well-thought out policies rather than by dramatic ad hoc pronouncements designed to catch headlines; by the provision of social services to meet labor's essential requirements for health, housing and education; and by the building of infrastructure to make labor more productive and better paying.

The gap is wide; the needs to be met are many; the unemployment problem is staggering. Despite the sincere attempts to at least control the problem, such as the government's preference for labor-intensive techniques and an emergency employment program, we have barely made a dent on the problem. The unemployment rate dropped from 11.8 percent to 11.3, and dropped further to 9.2 as of January 1988.

I again called the attention of the Department of Public Works and Highways and the other infrastructure agencies to the role they are expected to play in soaking up some of the unemployment by emphasizing labor-intensive methods in its infrastructure program.

I hereby direct the Department of Labor to monitor the various employment programs and, with DTI and NEDA render periodic reports to the Cabinet.

It seems also that our youth are not being given the right education for the jobs that are or will be available. There is an urgent need to trim the irrelevance from our elementary and high school curricula and to put all the emphasis on the core subjects – literacy, math, and science – that have been responsible for the remarkable productivity and inventiveness of Japanese, Korean and Taiwanese labor. I expect the Department of Education and Culture to come up with immediate proposals in this direction.

Likewise, the National Manpower and Youth Councils should have all three regional training centers in Cagayan de Oro, Tacloban and Zamboanga operational by the end of the year.

And of course we have to assure that our population growth does not outstrip our other resources and annul what gains we make every year.

The Population Commission assures me that its program will be ready in six months.

These and other measures look to the long term, but there are basic needs that must be met now.

Last year, I said that I don't need Labor Day to remind me of the needs of the working people, that I would give a wage increase regardless of the time, if conditions permitted it. Last December, I signed into law Republic Act 6640 increasing the minimum wages for non-agricultural workers inside Metro Manila and outside Metro Manila by P10.00 and P11.00 a day.

Organized labor has asked for a further increase to mark this day. It is ill-advised at the moment. Wage increases are not the only means to improve workers' incomes, which can also be achieved by reducing the prices of commodities, and increasing social services. I recommended to the Energy Regulatory Board the reduction of the prices of petroleum products, if possible and warranted to pre-August 1987 levels, to stimulate economic activity and, more importantly, reduce the cost of living.

The ERB has acted favorably on my recommendation and has ordered price rollbacks of petroleum products as follows:

A fifty centavo rollback for Premium gasoline to P7.00 per liter.

A fifty centavo rollback for Regular gasoline to P6.65 per liter.

A twenty-five centavo rollback for diesel to P5.00 per liter. And a thirty centavo rollback for kerosene to P5.00 per liter.

These will take effect on May 3.

These rollbacks, as I said, are intended to reduce the cost of living. Of course, they may not. Business establishments may not reduce their prices correspondingly. Still, we can hope and pray – and we can tax. I am not reducing

petroleum prices to create windfall profits for business. I am doing it for the people, even at this time, in the midst of roller coasting, volatile crude oil prices. This week, members and non-members of OPEC are meeting to adjust crude prices upwards. Our Oil Price Stabilization Fund, which is meant to buffer the country against a sudden oil price increase, is still in the negative by P500 million as of March 31, 1988. But the people need some relief. I cannot promise it can last. But I have said that whenever an opportunity presents itself, I will seize it to make life better for all our people.

I have also directed the NPC and the NEA to impose a ceiling of P2.50 per kilowatt hour throughout the country.

And I have asked the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Finance to look into additional tax and other incentives to enterprises that adopt production gain-sharing schemes similar to that provided in the CARP Executive Order.

Government is providing technical and financial assistance, including training in self-employment and specific skills, to help augment incomes. I commend the worker's organizations that have gone into such projects and appeal to others to do likewise.

Government has increased expenditures for public health and nutrition from P3.6 billion to P4.95 billion. Education and manpower development increased from P15 billion to P18 billion. Starting June this year, free secondary education will be available. This is an investment in the future.

Another example of which is the Centre we inaugurate today for the safety and protection of workers against the dangers posed by working conditions. Suffering is not a necessary cost of industrialization.

Housing is both one of our highest social concerns and one of the best means of stimulating further economic activity through the multiplier effect of construction.

To that end, we have increased total funding for economic housing to P4.4 billion in 1988 for 32,800 housing units. We are aiming for 40,600 units.

Effective May 1, the interest rate on new NHA mortgages will be 9 percent, down from the present 12 to 14 percent. This should reduce monthly amortizations by 25 percent for the new beneficiaries.

Starting May 16, the Home Development Mutual Fund will make P500 million available for appliance and furniture loans to its members.

I take this occasion to remind our social security institutions, the SSS and the GSIS, of the singularly social purpose of both bodies. The reasons for their existence first and last is to help the common people who are their members.

The SSS is particularly well-placed to help finance housing. We commend its long-standing policy of fiscal prudence but it must be satisfied with the minimum actuarial rate of return plus a fair margin of safety. Over and above that, its resources should be devoted to its social aim through liberal terms for housing, education, salary and other loans and benefits. The interest it charges must reflect this social purpose.

While I have expressed that the freedom, autonomy, and well-being of the worker in a progressive economy, is the aim of our labor policy, we have paid equal attention to strengthen the legal protection of labor.

I have resisted all proposals for a strike ban on a national or even area-specific basis. As I told the Hong Kong businessmen, we are not and never will be, while we are a democracy, a strike free country. A strike-free country is asking for a revolution.

I am heartened to note the response of my earlier appeals to both labor and management to cooperate with each other more, so we can get this economy back in shape faster. Relative industrial peace was achieved by the end of 1987.

In the area of government unionism, I directed the heads of all government agencies and corporations not to discourage their employees from organizing and to respect their rights to organize. In June last year, I issued Executive Order 180 to accelerate unionism in government.

A comprehensive review of labor legislation has been undertaken by the Tripartite Review Committee. I have certified to the Senate the draft bill amending portions of the Labor Code. I have asked the Committee to continue wages and incomes, and to report its conclusions to me as soon as possible.

I was here last year at the ground-breaking of this Centre, which is a gift of the people and government of Japan to Philippine labor. Japan has proved to be one of the most sympathetic and dependable friends of the Philippines in this critical stage of its economic recovery. I would like to thank the people of Japan on behalf of all Filipinos for their generous assistance.

It is good to have friends, especially friends like the Japanese. But the main burden of recovery will be borne by the Filipino people alone. We have a huge debt to service and pay; tremendous mistakes to rectify; and a long road still to be travelled to the security and well-being we desire.

Ako po ay umaasa na ang lahat ng sektor ng ating lipunan – namumuhunan at manggagawa, pamahalaan at mamamayan – ay magpapatuloy na magtutulongan at magkakaisa tulad ng ating ginagawa mula pa ng EDSA.

Napakarami pa ang kinakailangan nating gawin, kaya hindi natin dapat aksayahin ang ating panahon sa ibat-ibang magkakatanggaling direksyon.

Malaki ang aking paniwala na magiging mas matibay ang ating pagkakaisa kung matanto natin na iisa lamang ang maaari nating ituring na tahanan – maging namumuhunan o manggagawa – at ito ay ang ating bayang minamahal.

Tulad ng aking panimulang salita, bawat araw ay araw ng manggagawa sapagka't ang ating hinahangad na kasaganaan ay makakamtan lamang sa pamamagitan ng walang humpay na pagbubuhos ng lakas at paninindigan ng lahat ng manggagawa.

Maraming salamat po at magandang umaga sa inyong lahat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 52nd Anniversary of the Philippine Air Force

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 52nd Anniversary of the Philippine Air Force**

[Released on May 2, 1988]

COURAGE AND LOYALTY

On the 52nd anniversary of the Philippine Air Force, the President recalls how in February 1986, the air force did the extraordinary by heeding the call of the country and people against the insistent orders of a corrupt and illegitimate government to destroy them. She orders the decentralization of the armed forces by abolishing the Regional Unified Commands. She intones that adequate resources should be available whenever the need for them is most pressing. She lauds the PAF's eagerness to fight for honor, duty and country.

Today marks the 52nd anniversary of Lt. William L. Lee's test flight on the first aircraft to bear the insignia of the air arm of the Philippine Armed Forces. This was the birth of the Philippine Air Force. The plane was a basic trainer, a rudimentary aircraft. The event was symbolic because, in its subsequent history, the Philippine Air Force would always be short on equipment, but long on courage and loyalty.

When the Japanese Air Force struck in 1941, the first thing the PAF pilots and cadets reached for were – not planes but rifles. Kulanganamansamakina, ngunitsobrasakatapangan. Nevertheless, the PAF got six planes off the ground and went into hot pursuit of the enemy that outnumbered them 3 to 1. In this hopeless dogfight, one of our pilots, Lt. Gozar, got his machinegun jammed. As usual, defective equipment. In that situation, the ordinary fighter pilot just heads back for home. Not the Filipino. Instead Lt. Gozar tried to ram a Japanese fighter with his plane. The Japanese, who belonged to the bravest breed of warrior in the history, fled from the scene of combat. Probably not out of fear, but surprise.

Two days later, another Philippine hero, Lt. Cesar Basa, although low on fuel, joined a dogfight on the way back from a reconnaissance mission. He had no duty to be there, but then the Filipino airman has often performed over and above the call of duty and the adequacy of logistics.

In February, 1986, the air force did the extraordinary again by heeding the call of country and people against the insistent orders of a corrupt and illegitimate government to destroy them. In the succeeding two years, the Air Force, resisted the call of a misguided camaraderie and stood by its historic decision to stand by the people and democracy. In that time of deep uncertainty and confusion of loyalties, I was at least certain that our forces on the ground would always be safe from any threats from above.

This brief history of the Philippine Air Force shows its basic belief that what a soldier needs and must always have to get his job done, are courage and loyalty. Superior equipment has sometimes decided the outcome of a battle, but only the courage and loyalty to commit will decide whether the battle will take place at all.

“Making do” has always distinguished the PAF, coming into a fight on a wing and a prayer has often been its lot, but the country can always depend on the Air Force to give everything it's got in the wars the country calls them out to fight

It is time to arm that courage and skill with equipment and firepower that will do them justice. In last year's State of the Nation Message I asked the Congress whether it is fair to expect men to fight without giving them the means to do it well I underlined the essential unfairness of sending our boys to battle without providing the Medevac to get

the wounded out to safety. The budget that was submitted by the Department of Defense, I was assured, incorporated these concerns. In reviewing the Defense Budget for the next year, I shall look very closely to see how well the higher defense budget has been utilized to improve the condition and fighting capability of our soldiers, and shall take into serious consideration what else may be needed.

With regard to the utilization of resources, I ordered the decentralization of the Armed Forces by abolishing the Regional Unified Commands. It is my hope that adequate resources will always be available wherever the need for them is most pressing. I want the generals to make their presence felt among the troops who are fighting. I don't want any bottlenecks in the bureaucracy. The age of pencil pushing and paper filing in the AFP is over. The premium now is on combat. Recognition and rewards will be given strictly on that basis.

The new spirit of the AFP expressed by me at the PMA and on AFP day has already achieved notable successes. The capture of the top leadership of the Communist insurgency is one. The complete neutralization of the rebels in the military is another.

That spirit should be familiar to the Philippine Air Force because it is the unbroken thread that runs along its entire history: the eagerness to fight for honor, duty and country.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

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**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 35th National Convention of the Rural Bankers Association of the
Philippines**

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the 35th National Convention of the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines**

[Delivered in Iloilo City, May 5, 1988]

THE RURAL BANKS: UP AND ALIVE

Very noticeable during the past year was the improved profitability of the rural banks. President Aquino notes this is another healthy indicator of recovery in the Rural Banking System, which is closely tied to the emerging effects of our government program of financial reforms. The President also outlines important measures which will serve as strategic interventions and innovations in the financial sector during the transition process.

First, let me congratulate you for holding your national convention near the countryside, in the fair and progressive City of Iloilo. Rural banks, by definition, know the rural areas. It is thus fitting that your annual gathering is held outside Metropolitan Manila and closer to the rural community served by your members. This reinforces your convention theme: “Rural Banks: Catalysts of Agricultural Productivity and Countryside Development.” The city and province of Iloilo, and in fact the entire island of Panay, are models of rural entrepreneurship and agricultural productivity that we can all be proud of. I am told that Iloilo and Panay Island have become one of the most productive agricultural areas of our country, particularly in the production of rice and in aquaculture which is now earning a substantial proportion of our foreign exchange. I therefore commend the people of Panay and Iloilo, and your leaders and officials. You are setting an example worthy of emulation for the entire country in rural and agricultural development.

I am pleased to be with you again. Last year, when you honored me as your guest at your 34th National Convention in Manila, I pledged to keep a close watch on the rural banks. I have been observing the developments in rural banking over the past year with great interest. In the past year, the growth in capital base, total assets and particularly loan portfolio of the rural banks has been faster than that of most other types of banks. The acceleration in the lending activities of the rural banks is all the more remarkable, at a time when the number of operating rural banks decreased. The financial reports of the rural banks also show that the past year has improved in profitability. These developments are in sharp contrast to the trends for the rural banks up until 1986. At that time the performance of the rural banks was less impressive than that of the other types of banks. The relatively greater growth in rural bank lending and profitability in the recent period therefore is another healthy indicator of recovery in the rural banking system which, I believe, is closely tied to the emerging effects of our government’s program of financial reforms, in combination with increasing productive activities in our rural and agricultural sector.

While encouraged by the improving performance of the rural banks over the past year, more still needs to be done to accelerate development in our rural and agricultural sector along with the rural financial system. I note that as many as 500 rural banks have applied to participate in the rehabilitation program for rural banks now being implemented by the Central Bank of the Philippines. These applicants include many of the 350 or so banks that had been classified as being in poor financial health. The fact that only about one-half have been approved, raises concern about the slow processing of the applications. Undue delay in the rehabilitation program, I am afraid, may lead to

more failures among the rural banks than desirable. I therefore strongly encourage the Central Bank and the Rural Bankers Association to work, independently or together, to implement measures to streamline and speed up the processing of applications for participation in the rehabilitation program.

I understand that there have been comments made describing the rehabilitation program as being overly restrictive and having conditions difficult to comply with. I believe that the program is more accurately described as selective, in that the only rural banks which will be able to participate are those with reasonable prospects for viability, independent of continuing subsidies. A program which is easily entered into and whose conditions are easily fulfilled is probably not a rehabilitation program at all, since the fundamental reasons for non-viability would not have been faced squarely and dealt with.

However, given the government's objective of implementing a rehabilitation program that is selective and long-lasting, there have already been at least three stages wherein the selectivity of the program has been liberalized: *first*, as a result of the dialogues and discussions between your RBAP officers and the Rural Bank Review and Rationalization Committee and the Central Bank; *second*, in the issuance of CB Circular 1158 which amended CB Circular 1143, the original circular on the rehabilitation program; and *finally*, in late March this year, in issuing CB Circular 1172, the Central Bank further liberalized the program in response to your recommendations and the intercession of the Congressional Committee on Banks and Financial Institutions chaired by Representative Isidro Real of Zamboanga.

The liberalizing changes that have been introduced into the rehabilitation process underlines our understanding that the rehabilitation of rural banks is a dynamic process. It is also an effort that focuses not only on the rural banks but involves the entire rural financial market, and all the economic agents in the rural sector as well. It is clear that the rehabilitation program for the rural banks will be an exercise in futility if the rural economy is not also revitalized. We have already learned from painful and costly experience that credit programs are wasted when borrower's capacity to repay are not enhanced by support for production. Thus credit programs have to be preceded and complemented by savings mobilization, investment into physical and social infrastructure, and improvements in agricultural productivity and rural enterprises.

It is this vision of a dynamic and complex rural economy that leads us to view the development of the countryside and of our entire nation as the task of creating an atmosphere within which the private sector can freely respond to productive opportunities with a minimum of intervention by the government. The responsibility of government in this context is to be supportive of the efforts of the private sector. The government must thus focus its limited resources on providing the goods and services which the private sector cannot; public goods like roads, bridges, ports, irrigation, research, information, electrification, price stabilization and extension. At the same time the government must act as the custodian of public welfare, by promoting social justice and equity, safeguarding food security and health, and maintaining peace and order.

In short, both the government and the private sector have roles to play in rural development. These roles are equally important and critical. The partnership is necessary, but neither is self-sufficient. Both have to be present, and one without the other will not be adequate for the task. Thus the banks must mobilize savings and provide loans, and the government must act to ensure that savings are indeed available and that borrowers develop credit worthiness.

I realize that the task of accelerating development is a long, drawn-out process, and that our nation is still at the beginning stages of the journey. Along this road, the government must also implement certain measures which serve as strategic interventions and innovations which will help bridge any gaps in the transition process. In the financial sector our government has already undertaken a number of measures, including:

1. The enlargement of the guarantee capacity and operations of the Quedan Guarantee Fund Board, the Guarantee Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises and the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation. From the resources of the CALF, the Department of Agriculture has allocated a total of three hundred million pesos to these agencies, so that they may encourage private banks to lend to agri-based projects on a collateral-short or even collateral-free basis. I am told that in the few months that these guarantee facilities have been available, a total of about P29.6 million in loans for about 1,531 beneficiaries have been

guaranteed or programmed for guarantee. Furthermore, at least 114 rural banks and cooperative rural banks are already accredited to participate in these guarantee programs.

2. The continued implementation of the Agricultural Loan Fund by the Central Bank of the Philippines, the total size of which is about P3 billion. A grand cumulative total of P1.434 billion has been provided by the ALF. Currently some 41 rural banks are participants in the ALF program.
3. The continued implementation of the Cooperative Marketing Program, which provides loans through cooperative rural banks for coop-based projects. The CMP has a fund of about P88 million.
4. The provision of rediscounting facilities for qualified rural banks by the Land Bank of the Philippines, in addition to rediscounting from the Central Bank that has always been available to qualified rural banks.
5. A number of rural banks have also been regular participants in the Industrial Guarantee and Loan Fund, which is also administered by the CB. The IGLF is a longstanding program which has provided significant support for rural industrialization. Qualified rural banks may participate in the IGLF.
6. The continued implementation of the Agro-Industrial Technology Transfer Program, which has supported pioneering ventures in agribusiness, especially aquaculture. The AITTP is run by the Technology and Livelihood Resource Center, and has a fund totalling P590 million. Again, qualified rural banks may participate in the AITTP program.

Finally, the most recent measure which our government has taken to provide liquidity and support for the rural banks is the continuation and expansion of the Integrated Rural Financing (IRF) Program. The IRF is one of the more successful financing programs of the government, having maintained very high repayment rates on both the borrower-to-bank and bank-to-Central Bank levels. The IRF program provides special time deposits from the CALF into qualified rural banks, and the rural banks then relend the funds to agri-based projects. Under the IRF, there are no restrictions on the types and combinations of agricultural commodities that may be financed. The STDs are treated like credit lines. In addition, the IRF program provides intensive training in project management for both borrowers and bank staff. The IRF therefore provides maximum flexibility and support for the participating rural banks. The Department of Agriculture has expanded the funds available to the IRF program from P100-P300 million, effective immediately.

In closing, let me emphasize that the programs of the government in support of the lending activities of the rural banks are merely instruments of the transition process. Wide spread development and revitalization can only take place with the effectivity of reforms which spread wealth and income among most of our countrymen, and allow them to make full use of productive opportunities. Therefore, agrarian reform must be a key element of our development efforts. The effective delivery of basic services in agriculture and rural development provides additional necessary elements. Finally, for effective and efficient financial intermediation, the maintenance of a policy atmosphere which encourages freedom and flexibility is another critical element. All these factors, working together, provide the fertile ground for recovery, growth and development.

I recognize that the rural banks have the potential for playing the critical role of countryside development, specially in support of the poor. This is specially true of the sound rural banks, those that have survived the years when government subsidies for rural banking could no longer be maintained. These rural banks have learned how to mobilize the small deposits of the rural savers. The good rural bankers have also developed the practical expertise in lending to small, often uncollateralized farmers and rural entrepreneurs. This expertise is the unique comparative advantage of the rural banks. It is also the basic rationale for their rehabilitation, and in your much-needed efforts to assume your rightful place as key catalysts of agricultural productivity and countryside development.

Thank you and good day!

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade Consultative Meeting

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade Consultative Meeting**

[Delivered at the Philippine Plaza, May 10, 1988]

NGOs AS WILLING PARTNERS

The shortage of safe water sources has caused the spread of water-borne diseases. Further, only 69 per cent of total households are provided with sanitary toilet facilities. Given the primitive or non-existent state of toilet facilities, the President responds to the challenge and announces the launching of the nation's first comprehensive Water Supply, Sewerage and Sanitation Master Plan. The Plan aims to eliminate the huge backlog in the delivery of basic water supply services by 1991 and would rely heavily on certain non-government organizations for help in shouldering the cost of implementing the Plan.

The Eighties have been declared by the United Nations as the International Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade. In 1981, the Philippines initially responded to this call to divert more attention and resources towards the provision of safe water and proper sanitation to larger segments of the population. In the next seven years, some eleven (11) billion pesos were funnelled into the effort.

Despite the inroads made, facilities remain primitive or are nonexistent for a large number of communities throughout the country. To date, only 63 percent of all Filipinos have access to safe water. Service coverage is broken down into 86 percent for Metro Manila and its adjoining areas, 55 percent for other urban centers and 62 percent for the rural areas. The shortage of safe water sources has caused the spread of water-borne diseases. Further, only 69 percent of total households in the nation are provided with sanitary toilet facilities; 15 percent are equipped with crude and unsanitary toilets and 16 percent have no facilities at all.

Because of the prohibitive cost of materials and installation, provisions for sewerage are even more scanty. Only limited areas of Manila, Baguio, Zamboanga and Cebu City are serviced by a sewerage system.

Through the past years, the Philippine effort for the Decade moved in fits and starts. But at last, this year, we have completed and are launching the nation's first comprehensive Water Supply, Sewerage and Sanitation Master Plan. One of its general goals is to eliminate the huge backlog in the delivery of basic water supply services by 1991. It also includes the first long-term approach for provision of sewerage facilities. The specific policies and strategies involved in the Plan include a delineation of the responsibilities and contribution of pertinent government agencies like the Department of Public Works and Highways, the LWUA, the Metro Manila Waterworks and Sewerage System and the Department of Health. The plan also defines the methods for provision of cost-sharing and cost-recovery mechanisms and the extent of participation of beneficiary communities. For instance, one approach is to harness the support of rural womenfolk in fostering water conservation consciousness among their families and the community as a whole. The rationale is that it is the women who normally operate hand-pumps and fetch water for their washing and cooking chores, and who can be tapped as systems managers in Water Districts and Rural Waterworks and Sanitation Associations.

Though the Plan will be activated and operable, government concedes that its resources are scarce and thinly spread out among other pressing projects and programs for development. We will therefore be relying on certain non-

government organizations for help in shouldering the effort and cost of implementing the Plan. Those who have already put in their time and resources are the Tulungan sa Tubigan Foundation, the Philippine Business for Social Progress and other civic organizations. The UNICEF deserves special mention for its efforts in this endeavour.

The type of services usually rendered by these groups are project identification, subsidy in construction cost, assistance in operations, and maintenance, and administration in training programs. An additional service we look forward to receiving from private groups is the documentation of success stories and the development of implementation models. This is to promote water sanitation awareness at all levels. Meanwhile, let me state that the efforts of nongovernment groups have been highly appreciated and we hope they will be sustained.

May I think all the individuals, organizations and agencies who have already contributed or who have pledged their support in helping Filipinos help themselves in improving the quality of their lives. Even as the decade nears to a close, we already see brighter prospects ahead in the next one.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

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**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Capital Markets Development Conference

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Capital Markets Development Conference**

[Delivered on May 25, 1988]

TIME FOR BUSINESS TO DO ITS PART

The President reiterates call for the immediate privatization of government-owned or controlled private corporations and assets to preclude competition between government corporations and private enterprise.

The issue of economic growth being fueled by investments of Filipino capital becomes particularly urgent. There is a need to generate more capital to respond to the dramatic increase in demand.

The day before Labor Day I told an audience composed of capitalists and managers that the people and their leadership had fulfilled almost all the conditions of the full revival of the economy.

There is political stability and constitutional order.

All the political institutions critical to a healthy investment climate have been put in place. The democratic process was tested repeatedly – against corruption, fraud, terrorism, and, even against the bane of Western democracies, the indifference of electorates. Each test has proved the durability of the social and political order and the-strength of the popular commitment to this government and the principles of democracy.

All the enemies of freedom and progress have been put to flight. The rightwing is on the run, and the leftwing has been clipped – most recently by the capture of its top leadership.

There is, by and large, honest government. Such corruption as exists does not interfere with business transactions and relationships. There are no cronies forcing anyone to sell out or buy into a business. There is only the minimum of economic regulation. And I have, time and again, with increasing impatience, called for the immediate privatization of government-owned or controlled private corporations and assets, so there will be no competition between government corporations and private enterprise which supports these companies, one way or another, through taxes.

It is now the turn of business to do its part.

Business and I pledged to the people during the SNAP election that we would never again ask government to bankroll private enterprise and private fortunes. There would be no more of those public loans that lined private pockets, both here and abroad, which account for almost our entire foreign debt.

What this means, however, is that further economic growth must be fueled by investments of Filipino capital. This issue has become particularly urgent. The revival of the economy is consumer-led. The dramatic increase in demand

is putting, however, a strain on existing productive capacity. To sustain the present growth, we must generate more capital.

I am painfully aware of the history of our domestic capital markets. Unscrupulous practices in the management of companies and in the trading of shares has made the public wary of investing in industry. And yet we have the infrastructure to improve our capital markets – the banks, the financial intermediaries, and the stock exchanges. But these institutions have not been fully or properly utilized. There has been, for instance, too great an emphasis on short term capital, which prevents long range business planning and creates instability in interest rates.

An analysis of commercial bank loans for the third quarter of 1987 shows that 73 percent of all loans were demand or short term loans, reinforcing the observation that commercial banks have not been a major source of long term capital.

Neither has there been a development of our equities market. We have two exchanges, one of them is the oldest in Southeast Asia, and yet our market capitalization is P61 Billion, which is the lowest in the region. Together, the exchanges have a combined listing of only 130 companies, of which only 20 are actually traded. Of the top 1,000 corporations, only 61 are listed.

We do not have active secondary markets for commercial papers, bonds, debentures or even government securities. And yet, it is the secondary markets that will allow our industries to confidently source their long term capital needs and, at the same time, provide the investor the mechanism for liquidity.

This situation should not continue. We must reorder our priorities in this field. We need long term capital. We need new instruments in the financial markets. We need liquidity for investors. We need stable interest rates. We must make the development of our domestic capital markets a national priority.

Thank you and Good Day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

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**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 71st anniversary of the Department of Agriculture and Food

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 71st anniversary of the Department of Agriculture and Food**

[Released on May 27, 1988]

BALIK-YAMAN SA SAKAHAN

The choice of the theme: “Balikyaman sa Sakahan” is very timely. The threat to the country’s natural resources is ever growing and it is more discernible in agriculture. In addressing the poverty of our farm, we must also address the long-term viability of our finite resources. The President advocates a full partnership with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Ikinalulugod kong batiin ang pamunuan at mga kawani ng Kagawaran ng Agrikultura sa inyong ika-pitumpu’t isang anibersaryo. Nagagalak din akong batiin ang mga outstanding awardees. Higit sa lahat, binabati ko ang mga kababayan nating magsasaka at mangingisda na kasama natin ngayong umaga sa ating pagtitipon.

It has been two years now since the Filipino people gave me the mandate to lead this country. Over these two years, I have endeavored to govern with this basic parameter: The well-being of the majority especially the disadvantaged.

The Department of Agriculture has capsulized this parameter explicitly in your primary objective: that of increasing incomes for farmers and fishermen and improving the quality of their lives. You have set to achieve this by encouraging the initiative of and enabling the agricultural worker to produce profitably.

Your objective has led you, unavoidably, to the issue of our diminishing resources. And so it encourages me that you have chosen for your theme this year, “Balik-Yaman Sa Sakahan”. Your choice is very timely.

For the threat to our Natural Resources is ever growing, it is also marked and conspicuous in Agriculture. We can easily cite our denuded forests, erosion and loss of fertility of our soils, the continuing destruction of our coral reefs and mangroves.

Therefore, in addressing the poverty of our farm and fishing communities, we must also address the long-term viability of our finite resources. In improving the productivity of our farmers and fishermen, we must do so in a way that will not unduly tax the production base. In this way, and only thus, can we ensure renewability of our resources, guarantee sustainability of agricultural yields and realize increased farm incomes.

As you work to achieve these objectives, I urge you to be full partners with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. DENR supplements and complements your Department, and we expect you to work together in close coordination; where one leads in protecting the production base, and the other in cultivating it.

I also urge you to intensify your work in communities. Resource renewal and sustainability is not exclusively our concern. It is theirs as well, and very much so. Let us learn from the people and work most closely with them. I think you know very well, how, for instance, in fishing communities, it is the poor fisherfolk who really understand the

need for environmental protection. More than anybody else, they know too well how greed has caused the wanton destruction of our fishery resources. Community involvement, I believe, will spell the difference between the success and failure of our initiatives.

Our thrust in rationalizing the management of our Agri-Ecosystem entails determining appropriate methods suited to the local climate, culture, and economy. Your emphasis on locality – specific technologies applies very well. I am pleased to know how seriously you are re-learning from our time-tested, locally-suited indigenous practices.

It is therefore commendable that you have included in your plan of action the resource base as one of your major sectoral concerns. I wish to encourage you as you strive toward regenerative, rather than exploitative agriculture – agriculture that ensures productivity and income not only for the present but also for the future.

To concretize this commitment, we are launching today the livelihood enhancement for Agricultural Development Program or LEAD.

LEAD is an assistance program for organized rural communities to engage in Agro and Fishery based enterprises. As such, it shall generate rural employment and develop the entrepreneurial skills of our farmers and fishermen. Through LEAD, we shall be able to move agricultural workers from their present subsistence production to a level where they can run business enterprises on their own.

I am happy to inform you that we have initial funding in the amount of 256 million pesos. This grant, courtesy of the RP-Japan food production program, will provide start-up capital for water-impounding projects, the construction of artificial reefs, the establishment of nurseries, the provision of post-harvest facilities like solar dryers which can even alternate as a recreation facility, and the like.

The local Councils, the Municipal, Provincial and Regional Agricultural and Fishery Councils, mostly made up of farmers, have identified and will continue to identify specific projects that address their needs.

To complement the extended capitalization, the farmers will put in equity, such as land and labor.

An interesting feature of the program is that payments are not required to be given back to the source. Instead, these will go to the next-in-line beneficiary who will use these in another project. Such roll-over scheme is really an ingenious way of ensuring that limited funds can be extended to as many beneficiaries as possible.

In the packaging of projects, the Department of Agriculture and the non-government organizations involved in the respective project areas will provide assistance.

Marketing linkages have been established involving the Department of Agriculture, Department of Trade and Industry, the members of the Management Association of the Philippines Foundation, the non-government organizations, as well as private companies.

Financing, besides what we now have, will come from other banks with guarantees from the comprehensive Agricultural Loan Fund supporting guarantee organizations.

In a capsule, the LEAD program exhibits how the principal actors in the agricultural sector can work together in profitable enterprises that strictly take into account the needs of the beneficiaries who determine these themselves; locally-developed or developing technology; and certainly, the critical environmental factors.

Moreover, I wish to reiterate that we have in the LEAD a program whose avowed commitment to the farmer we can trust. This is because it aims to develop the farmer from a mere producer to a full-fledged entrepreneur by training him to identify a project, to package it, to source funds for it, and to manage it well. All these in consideration of the need, on the other hand to provide an immediate and reliable source of livelihood for the farm family and community; and on the other, to enhance the life support systems of the surrounding environment.

When we speak of the farmer, surely we also mean the farm youth — a farmer in his own right. We deem him eligible, therefore, to participate in the LEAD program, provided he is between 15 to 25 years old, belongs to a family whose basic occupation is farming and fishing, and is a member of the 4-H club as validated by the local Councils. Under the provision of our technicians, model farm youths will be trained to prepare and manage their own projects which will serve as models to inspire their peers.

To sum up, let me point out that what you will be fulfilling in all of these efforts do not merely spring from an economic imperative. The call for farming profitability hand in hand with agricultural sustainability is a moral obligation.

We in government, with the distinct task to lead, cannot shirk from this responsibility. The Department of Agriculture can do no less. I assure you that you have the full support of the Office of the President.

For when man and woman were created, God commanded them to rule and subdue the earth. We have inherited that task. We are to bring order, to control, to cultivate. Created in the creator's image, we are to maintain the creation process, to re-create, not to destroy.

For it is the earth that nourishes us. Let us nourish it in turn, that it shall ensure life for us, for our children's children.

Like you have said in your slogan, "Alaga Ka Ng Lupa; Alagaan Mo Rin."

Binabati ko kayong lahat Mabuhay ang Kagawaran Ng Magsasaka! Mabuhay ang ating mga magsasaka!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the Management Association of the Philippines

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the Management Association of the Philippines**

[Delivered on May 30, 1988]

**CHALLENGE
AGRICULTURAL SECTOR**

TO

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The President underscores one of the overriding concerns of her administration – employment. The general focus of the effort centers on the reform of agricultural policies so as to improve the delivery of basic services and make farming a more profitable enterprise. The Livelihood Enhancement for Agricultural Development Program (LEA) therefore intends to move farmers from their present subsistence level to a stage where they can sustain business enterprises on their own.

During my first meeting with the Cabinet this year, I underscored one of the overriding concerns of all our endeavors – employment. When I said this however, I did not mean we were to do it all by ourselves.

The agricultural sector in particular, with its huge, underutilized and undercompensated labor force, poses a challenge that requires more than all the efforts, expertise and resources the government can provide. This sector, as you know, comprises almost seventy percent of our country's population. Its contribution to our economy constitutes a third of our gross national product. And yet it is this sector that remains mired in the lowest stages of underdevelopment. Rural families account for about 80 percent of the poorest 30 percent of our total households. Furthermore, the disparity between urban and rural incomes has widened steadily over the past years. The average farm family income is only 40 percent of the urban income, down from 75 percent in 1975. Such economic and social inequities have served to fan the flames of insurgency in the rural areas over the past decade.

At the start of my administration, I had already identified the rehabilitation and development of the countryside as a priority thrust of the new government. As a start, we moved to abolish agricultural monopolies that has stunted the growth of small, independent farming enterprises. We also lifted the burden of export taxes, eliminated or reduced tariffs on farm inputs and initiated reforms inputs and cultural credit system. We also disengaged ourselves from the trading of agricultural products and inputs to allow the free and more energetic interplay of market forces. The general focus of our efforts was on the reform of agricultural policies so as to improve the delivery of basic services and make farming a more profitable enterprise.

While we continue to remove the stumbling blocks and impediments in the way of agricultural growth, we have also become increasingly aware of other needs and difficulties that prevent farmers from taking full advantage of the freedom and space provided for such growth. While many farmers' associations would like to embark on specific livelihood projects, they are unable to secure financing from commercial banks for several reasons. These include a lack of know-how in project packaging, no track record in running such projects and enterprises, no known linkages with existing commercial banks and lack of collateral and equity.

It is precisely for the purpose of meeting these needs that the Department of Agriculture recently launched the Livelihood Enhancement for Agricultural Development Program or LEAD. As Secretary Dominguez has already explained to you, the LEAD intends to move farmers from their present subsistence level to a stage where they can sustain business enterprises on their own. This involves assistance in setting up business enterprises, the provisions of mechanisms to move foreign grants and other funds to the countryside efficiently, and the implementation of these through private-sector led local agriculture and fishery councils. The envisioned effect is the raising of farmers' incomes from the present P1,330 and below a month to at least P2,000 a month. And while the LEAD, as it is aptly named, has taken the initiative in this direction, it has called on the private sector to help in fleshing out the

major thrusts of the program. These are the provisions of management skills and market orientation and link-ups for the farming sector. And it is to this call that the Management Association of the Philippines has so quickly and generously responded.

Since government initiated the launch of a Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, it has been observed that the sharing of resources must go beyond the mere reallocation of such a basic commodity as farmland. The agreements that have been made between the Department of Agriculture and the Management Association of the Philippines addresses this issue squarely by redistributing one of the most vital and valuable resources of all – the brains and expertise of big business. The profits of such a partnership, I am sure, will go beyond the normal expectations of any public or private enterprise. The yield is a better climate for peace and prosperity, and the knowledge that where it counts, business and the bureaucracy can indeed walk in step and in the same direction.

I hope that like all the best partnerships, yours will be sustained, harmonious and productive way beyond the honeymoon stage. In behalf of all the families and individuals your combined endeavors will benefit, I thank you and wish you all success.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino before the Federation of Filipino Drug Industries

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the Federation of Filipino Drug Industries**

[Delivered on June 1, 1988]

INSURING SAFE AND AFFORDABLE DRUGS

There is a pressing need for safe and affordable drugs. The National Drug Policy aims to solve this problem. President Aquino congratulates the officers and members of the Federation of Filipino Drug Industries and the Association of Drug Industries of the Philippines for their much valued support to the National Drug Policy.

I would like to congratulate the officers and members of the Federation of Filipino Drug Industries and the Association of Drug Industries of the Philippines for their resounding support for the National Drug Policy. The recent public debates on this issue underlined the fact that we Filipinos need to stand up to uphold our own interests. We have no one to rely on except ourselves to assure for our nation safe, efficacious and affordable drugs.

On this occasion, I wish to re-affirm the key goals of our National Drug Policy. The policy contemplates nothing less than the systematic recasting of the rules under which our people obtain the drugs and medicines they need to preserve their health.

First, government is committed to insure that the Filipino consumer gains full and convenient access to information about drugs. Our support for extensive use of generic names in all aspects of pharmaceutical marketing, prescribing and dispensing comes from their commitment. The Filipino consumers must be given the means to recognize different products for the same uses. Generic names are the technically accepted means available.

Second, government is committed to serve as the effective and reliable guarantor of safety and efficacy of drugs and medicines. Through our regulatory authorities, the safety and efficacy of drugs allowed to be sold and used shall not be compromised. While there are many opportunities for dialogue and debate, we shall condemn any attempt to use technicalities and maneuverings to preserve pharmaceutical profit despite disturbing questions about safety and efficacy. No one must be allowed to profit from drug of doubtful safety or doubtful efficacy. Those responsible members of the drug industry who have responded to the call of the Department of Health to voluntarily withdraw questionable drugs should be extolled. Those others who remain adamantly wedded to their profits despite questions raised on the sources of such profits will have to learn. This government will have to teach them.

I am glad that the Filipino entrepreneurs involved in the drug industry are supportive of the policies which I enunciated last year. We really have no one to rely on except ourselves. You are part of what is now an infant local pharmaceutical industry but with due care, support and attention, I have no doubt that we can have a fully grown industry that will be a true resources for self-reliance. Our national masterplan for pharmaceutical development is presently being formulated. I look forward to your continuing support and participation.

In sum, the National Drug Policy is promotive, not restrictive. It is not anti-foreign or anti-business; it is pro-Filipino and pro-people. *Huwag nating kalimutan kailanman: ang mag-aalaga at makapagtatanggol sa Pilipino ay kapwa Pilipino din.*

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 40th anniversary of the Far East Broadcasting Company

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 40th anniversary of the Far East Broadcasting Company**

[Held at the Kalayaan Hall, June 3, 1988]

A COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION

The President appreciates the partnership of Christian Organizations like the Far East Broadcasting Company in the promotion of peace, understanding and true spirituality. She states that its emphasis on reconciliation with God and men is vital in bringing about peace and stability in the country.

I wish, at the outset, to congratulate Far East Broadcasting Company on its 40th year of broadcasting the Good News of Jesus Christ all over Asia in more than 70 languages.

I am happy to note that the theme of your celebration is “Committed to the Ministry of Reconciliation.” When Ninoy decided to come back to the Philippines, he was committed to make peace, to do the work of reconciliation. I believe that reconciliation between man and man can best be effected if there is first reconciliation between God and man.

The Filipino people are grateful to the men and women of Far East Broadcasting Company for their holistic approach to radio programming in that they try to meet, not only the physical and social needs of men, but also their spiritual needs. We are also appreciative of the partnership of Christian organizations like Far East Broadcasting Company in the promotion of peace, understanding and true spirituality. Your emphasis on reconciliation with God and among men is vital in promoting international understanding and in bringing about internal peace and stability in our nation.

I have been told that during the EDSA revolution, FEBC used all its domestic and international facilities to broadcast the events as they happened to keep the nation and the world informed of what was going on. But more importantly, you used your facilities to mobilize people to pray so that the conflict could be resolved peacefully and with a minimum of bloodshed. As we all know, the Lord answered our prayers.

Because of the immense reservoir of faith and peace that FEBC is generating, I am convinced that gospel broadcasting should be encouraged by the government. Accordingly, I have issued Proclamation No. 262 declaring the first week of June of every year as National Gospel Broadcast Week, to be celebrated under the auspices of FEBC and other cooperating agencies.

May God continue to bless Far East Broadcasting Company as it pursues its unique ministry through gospel broadcasting.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the opening ceremonies of the International Conference of Newly Restored Democracies

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the opening ceremonies of the International Conference of Newly Restored Democracies**

[Delivered on June 3, 1988]

**A NEW SYNONYM FOR DEMOCRACY:
PEOPLE POWER**

Soon the world learned of a dramatic new synonym for democracy: people power. The Philippines joins the restored democracies of the world in proclaiming freedom and proudly declares that in this capital city, there has begun to take shape today a non-violent challenge to tyranny in the world.

I am told that the title of this celebration, The International Conference of Newly Restored Democracies, was carefully crafted a few months ago, in a meeting of diplomatic representatives of some of the participating countries here today. I congratulate them for the choice of title.

For, indeed, democracy can only be restored. It cannot be invented; it cannot be transplanted. As freedom is the natural state of man, so is democracy the natural shelter of freedom. Democracy's forms and shapes may be passed from one nation to another. But its substance is always native, is ever original in every culture, since the freedom that makes it possible is truly the people's own.

As G.K. Chesterton reminds us, it was freedom, not bondage, that gave rise to the first communities on earth, with "peasants tilling patches of their own land in a rough equality, and meeting to vote directly under a village tree, . . . the most truly self-governing of men."

It was for that simple dignity of human freedom and not for some complex, perhaps borrowed, parliamentary or presidential form that, I am sure, these nations in conference here today brought down their dictatorships and returned to constitutional pluralism.

The word democracy is Greek in its origin, and we salute the delegation from Greece here today for the historic contribution of Hellas to the perfection of both form and substance of rule by the people. There is added reason to salute them for I understand that within the fifteen year period of returning democracies celebrated in this reunion, it was Greece, in 1973, that first unseated its dictator and unleashed the modern wave of returning democracies.

After Greece, it was Portugal that, ending the longest of dictatorship among those present, regained freedom. At the center of that transition was a determined democrat named Mario Soares and he is here today as our most distinguished guest, the President of a free, prosperous and gallant Portuguese Republic. The dictatorship in Spain fell in 1975 and, thence, the democratic wave rolled the Atlantic to Latin America where one after another dictatorships fell in impressive sequence – Ecuador, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Peru, Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Uruguay, El Salvador, Guatemala.

Soon it was the Filipino's turn and the world learned of a dramatic new synonym for democracy – people power – a mass of humanity confronting tanks with religious statues, military commands with prayers, and a dictator's last political gasps with militant but peaceful yells of "Laban" – the fighting cry of a people impatient for the resurgence of their liberties. Let me point out that the four days of that revolution were the culmination and final vindication of the struggle of many from the first day of martial law in September 1972.

In Asia we are joined by South Korea where its revitalized democracy has permitted the opposition to control a free parliament

Which direction shall democracy's wave take? Will it retain its driving power? Part of the answer to these questions will depend on what we do here in the next few days. We are here to share experiences, problems, solutions, mistakes, agonies and triumphs. The eyes of the world are upon this gathering and we are honored that it is happening here in this city, in this country which, like yours, can be united, can flourish, indeed, can survive only if it remains in the original free state of humankind.

As our national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal, once said: "There are no tyrants where there are no slaves." We, the restored democracies of the world, join the long standing democracies of the Americas, Europe, Asia and Africa, in proclaiming freedom. Let the universe take note that in this capital city honored by your coming, there has begun to take shape today a new non-violent challenge to tyranny in the world.

The Philippines is proud to be one of the bearers of that challenge. The Philippines is proud to host you, our fellow newly restored democrats of the world.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 14th anniversary of the DENR

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 14th anniversary of the DENR**

[Delivered at the EDSA Heroes Park, Quezon City, June 5, 1988]

A TIME TO MAKE AMENDS WITH NATURE

The President laments the way we have utilized and neglected our forest resources. For many years there was wanton destruction and today we reckon with reality – we have felled most of our trees. She exhorts the Filipinos to plant trees with the same vigor and interest they had when they cut them down.

As a nation, some twenty-eight months ago, we displayed a heroism with few parallels in history. In those glorious days of February, we regained the freedoms we cherished as a people. That singular display of heroism has come to be known as the EDSA Revolution. And we celebrate that experience each day that we enjoy our freedom.

Thus, we are here today to proclaim this site as EDSA Heroes Park. We shall here enshrine that unique achievement, and look to this Park as a symbol of our deep gratitude to all those who made our break from tyranny possible.

But even as we do this, there are developments that continue to threaten our freedom, and in fact, our very existence. This threat affects us more profoundly than any political, economic or social displacement thinkable. It can in fact spell the fall of our nation and the misery of future generations.

I speak of the continued destruction of the elements that make up our environment.

This is a concern that I would like to impress upon all as we mark, also today, World Environment Day. The United Nations has declared every 5th of June as such, to focus attention on the worsening condition of the environment around the world. And here in our country, we have for the same reason declared the month of June as environment month.

The threat to the environment must be faced conceitedly and no time must be lost in addressing it. Such urgency demands from each and every Filipino a new heroism not unlike the one shown at EDSA.

But unlike EDSA, we are not rallying against a single force, for environmental destruction is not something that only one person, or a small group of people, is responsible for. In one way or another, we have all caused this peril to fall on us. So, too, we must all get together to banish it.

Neglect of the environment is most apparent in the way we have utilized, and neglected our forest resources. For many years, we lived off our forests as if there were no tomorrow. We cut trees whenever we saw them, as if it were a natural, reflex action. It did not matter whether these trees were in one's backyard, on the steepest of mountain slopes, or in the deepest of rainforests. All that mattered then was that every tree cut meant profit or gain. It did not bother us then to think that, without equivalent efforts at replanting, one tree cut was one tree forever gone.

And thus, today, we must reckon with reality. We have felled most of our trees. But along with our trees, we have also thrown away the environmental security they had afforded. In exchange for the millions of trees we have cut,

we must now content with nature run amok. This means ravaging floods, drought, destruction of crops, and hunger. To compromise any further would mean surrendering our future.

Already we are experiencing the effects of a timber famine, and this nation, once a mighty producer of wood, is now a humbled importer of logs. Frankly, this is not a good way to begin an economic recovery and development program. We need our trees, not only for ecological reasons, but also because they can provide us with a stable, and renewable, source of income and livelihood.

So much has already been given up. Now is the time to make amends with nature. We must plant trees with the same vigor and interest we had when we cut them down. This will be a huge task, with considerable demands on all of us for a major shift in human values. We must learn to match human needs with nature's elements. A new ethic in the use of material resources is required. For permanence is incompatible with predatory attitudes. A new heroism is therefore expected of us.

At this very moment, in various parts of the country, tree planting activities are simultaneously going on. I must say that there could be no more appropriate occasion than World Environment Day to give this national reforestation effort an auspicious beginning. It is my hope that reforestation will continue after today, and that this focus of interest will remain in the months and years to come, until we shall have accomplished our goal.

As we have painfully learned, heroism does not thrive amidst shortage of interest or will. Let us therefore put our minds and hearts to the cause of our most precious resources so that we will fully learn of their value, and restore them to the abundance and the majesty that they rightfully deserve.

Therefore, in the name of our new heroes, the rest of the Filipino people, and the memory of EDSA, I hereby dedicate this portion of the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Nature Center as the EDSA Heroes Park. May this new park serve as a living reminder of our glorious past, and inspire us to even greater heroism, as we steer our nation through the present, and prepare it for the future.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the DAP Graduation

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the DAP Graduation

[Delivered at DAP Tagaytay, June 9, 1988]

SERVANTS OF THE PEOPLE

The reorganization was meant to promote performance, not to create anxieties. Those who remain shall constitute the face and substance of this government. We must serve with all dedication the Filipino people – our master.

According to the Bible, two are better than one, but a multitude is not necessarily the best. Since then government has been a search for ways to resolve the tension between the efficiency of less and the necessity for more to cover all the work of government. Is the bureaucracy bloated? Or is the size appropriate to the government of one of the most populous countries in the world – a country with tremendous problems and tasks? Is the bureaucracy in fact one of the principal reasons for the many problems we face? Is its reform one of the most important tasks we must set ourselves? This government's reorganization policy is the first sincere effort to resolve that tension since the birth of the Republic.

We are called civil servants. "Civil" to denote the public character of our duties and "servants" to underscore the master we must serve, with all civility and dedication: the Filipino people. And, as with servants and other wage workers, we are entitled, as the parable says, to no more than the just wage of the worker in the vineyard, with no right to complain of the amount or the justice of its distribution. In the last analysis, our reward is the conviction, which not all may share, that we have served our country well.

When I took power two years ago, I knew of course that government is not a one-woman affair, and that its success would turn on the competence, dedication and cooperation of the government bureaucracy that would translate my policies into operational realities. I discovered quickly enough that there is never any lack of ideas, only of honest and capable men and women with the pragmatism to know what needs to be done, what can be done, and the competence and dedication to do them, and do them well.

I have found many such men and women in our civil service. I found also how poorly they were regarded by the past government they had served. I immediately ordered salary increases in order to keep and properly recompense their invaluable services. In addition, I instructed the Cabinet Committee for Energizing the Bureaucracy to prepare, together with the Civil Service Commission, an integrated program of rewards and incentives. A full report on the status of this program is expected by September of this year.

Respecting as we all should, the contributions of the civil service, I insisted that it be accorded the rights that workers in the private sector have long enjoyed. I enjoined the heads of offices to encourage their personnel to exercise the constitutional right to organize. Further to that, I signed Executive Order 180 into law. A year has passed and yet the Public Sector Labor Management Council which I created under that Order has not issued its implementing guidelines. It is against such inaction and complacency that I have again and again issued calls for greater energy in government. I view the organization of government workers as a further demonstration of this government's preference for consultation and transparency, and as an added mechanism for uncovering corruption and incompetence in the public service. The CSC will soon begin a nation-wide education program on the rights and responsibilities of government workers. I urge everyone concerned to avail of it.

The first training and development program for government managers, called "Managing the Bureaucracy for Results," ends today. We shall start another session next month. This signals the revival of the program for

government career executives. I am announcing also the reactivation of the Career Executive Service Board whose members I shall soon appoint.

Finally, let me say that reorganization, as one of the first acts of this government, was meant to promote performance, not to create anxieties. I am confident that the value of that exercise – the reform of institutions to conform to need and the matching of jobs with the right people – will eventually be evident. But I don't want to prolong the agony. I am giving all reorganizing offices 30 days from today to end the process. Those civil servants who should go, must be notified within that time. Phased-out government workers may register with an inter-agency committee that will train them for work in the private sector, as well as provide soft loans for their transition to private life. When that is done, let us close ranks and get on with the task of government.

Those who remain shall constitute the face and substance of this government. Let us hope the new face we present will not be just a leaner visage of incompetence and delay. To avoid this result we must truly energize the bureaucracy. The question is how to do it.

For a start, let us look at the most efficient private firms and model our expectations after their operations. There are similarities and differences, of course. The bottom line of the private firm is profits for the stockholders. For the public institution, the bottomline is service to the people who support it with their taxes. The first is driven by the profit motive, the second by civic virtue. This is the fundamental difference that accounts for the disparity in their performances. That difference can be eliminated by instilling in the bureaucracy both a new spirit of public service and a just apprehension that they will be fired if they fall short of the public expectation. The bottomlines, however, are essentially the same: an advantage to the stockholder or the taxpayer – cash or stock for the former; public services, security, and national honor for the latter. I want the public income statement to show a profit, a just return on the tremendous investments in taxpayers' money that is being made.

Next, let us focus on our activities. Each department should focus on its mandate. Between now and year's end, I want each department to review its mandate and channel its energy and resources exclusively to that. If its mandate is agriculture or natural resources, then clearly it should involve itself with nothing more than promoting agricultural productivity or conserving the national patrimony. I am asking the Department Secretaries to submit a list to me of the things that their Departments should stop doing, continue doing, or go into – in line with their respective mandates. We shall judge their performance against it, which is fair. I expect that list a month before I deliver my next State of the Nation message. I want you to clarify your mandate, define your appropriate functions and thereby justify your continued incumbency.

Third, let us make it easy for our clients to avail of our services. Graft and corruption grows with discretion and regulatory functions. I support the initiative to Do Away With Red Tape, in which the public will be asked to rank each department according to the complexity and length of their procedures, and its insistence on regulating the private economy. The most complex will be the first to be trimmed on the chopping block.

Finally, let us take accountability seriously, because I am. I represent the people you are obligated to serve. Fail the people, disappoint their expectations, and you fail me. I need not say more.

I close my speech with the expressed hope that you will meet my high expectations of your improved competence in public service and your heightened sense of patriotic duty. Congratulations on your graduation and good day.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino upon the bill signing of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP)

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Upon the bill signing of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP)**

[Held at the Malacañang, June 10, 1988]

THE UPLIFTMENT OF THE FILIPINO MASSES

CARP is viewed as a way of liberating the hitherto suppressed energies and creativity of the nation for the material upliftment of the many and the prosperity of all.

I have just signed into law the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. This act, I hope, will end all the acrimony and misgivings of the contending parties to the Program, and unite the nation behind the effort to make agrarian reform a success in our country. Every side has been respectfully heard; few measures have been as rigorously scrutinized and discussed as this Program has been by representatives of the people and by the people themselves.

It was my intention from the start to assign the substantive portions of the Program to those who would be most affected and therefore most informed about them – the people themselves through their elected representatives. I should hope that, now, the various interests in the land will be able to work together to achieve the twin goals of the Program: a radical leap in agricultural productivity and therefore a significant contribution by the agricultural sector to Philippine progress, and the upliftment of the Filipino masses from their ancient poverty.

Let us see the Program not as a taking of property from some and a giving of it to others, but as a way of liberating the hitherto suppressed energies and creativity of the nation for the material upliftment of the many and the prosperity of all.

The division of lands that the Program will gradually implement merely sets the stage for the more important task ahead: turning the land to its most productive use achieving, as a first objective at least, a permanent self-sufficiency in food for our country.

The stewardship of the land that the landlords were said to have neglected shall now pass as the law is implemented to the tillers. The stewardship should weigh as heavily on the many as it did on the few. The same bottomline applies to them: the wisest use of the land for the greatest generation of wealth for themselves and for the entire nation.

The main responsibility for the implementation of the Program lies with the Department of Agrarian Reform but I expect all the other departments, the entire apparatus of government, civil and military, be as deeply involved and as committed to its success. I will not tolerate disputes over jurisdiction, jealousy over turf, to derail this Program. Agrarian Reform is now a legal reality and it will be around as a compelling obligation long after I have changed those who fail to do their part.

The law itself, in the equal emphasis it puts on support services for the success of the Program, underscores the necessity of cooperation on the part of all departments.

Agrarian Reform Secretary Juico is hereby instructed to prepare his department, and to advise all the other departments to prepare themselves, for the meeting of the PARC which I shall convene upon my return.

I would like to express my congratulations to the Congress for the work it has done. The task of course is far from complete. This is only the beginning, and the greater part that remains requires the cooperation of the President and the Congress.

Let me end with a reiteration of what I have always believed was the basic justification for agrarian reform: beyond the justice of giving land to the landless tiller, this is the means by which we shall truly achieve the independence that we will celebrate on Sunday. Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the National Artists Awards

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the National Artists Awards

[Delivered at the Ceremonial Hall, June 11, 1988]

THE RIGHT TO CULTURE

The President honors the Filipino Artist and its artistic expression in music and dance during the inauguration of the UN Decade for Cultural Development. She confers the National Artist Award to Col. Antonio R. Buena Ventura and Ms. Lucrecia Reyes-Urtula who are the finest embodiments of the Filipino soul.

We are here today to recognize and honor the Filipino spirit and its artistic expression in music and dance. The conferment of these honors is most appropriate at this time, for this year the Philippines, together with the United Nations, inaugurates the World Decade for Cultural Development. By a happy coincidence, we too are inaugurating the commemorative decade for the centennial of Filipino nationalism which culminates in 1998.

The World Decade for Cultural Development was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly, upon recommendation of the UNESCO, during its 100th plenary meeting on December 8, 1986. The objectives of the Decade are: (1) recognizing the cultural dimension of development; (2) affirming and enriching cultural identities; (3) broadening participation in culture; and (4) promoting international cultural cooperation.

In the rush of nations to achieve material progress, to create jobs for the multitude of unemployed, and to produce more to alleviate mass hunger in many parts of the world, culture has frequently been forgotten or given a low priority. The Decade seeks to correct this oversight, by emphasizing that development is not merely a matter of raising the GNP, but equally of promoting that for which GNPs are raised, the development of the total person through the improvement of the material and spiritual quality of life.

That quality is not a matter merely of better food and housing, better health, and adequate clothing for everybody. It means, also the opportunity to express the human condition in art, and support the talents that make that possible.

The UN recognizes the right of peoples to their culture; and a great part of colonial injustice lay in the Western attempt to eradicate native cultures. The affirmation of this right to one's native culture, and the right to national self-determination, have been the vital principle of nationalism for a century in our country, since the first Philippine Revolution.

In that period of self-affirmation and self-definition, it was in the arts that the Filipino first began to speak with a distinctive voice. In 1885, Pedro Paterno wrote his novel *Ninay*, filled with local color. The implied message was that the Filipino need not apologize for his country. In 1887, Jose Rizal published his novel *Noli Me Tangere*. He was saying, not only that his country deserved respect, but it was an outrage not to give it that respect for we are all equal under our skins. In 1889, our patriots in Europe put out the *La Solidaridad* to spread that message abroad. To prove that equality – if proof was needed – there were the artists Juan Luna and Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo. Their artistic victories in Spain expressed the proposition best – we can all be equal in excellence.

Our own recent liberation from two decades of tyranny was aided by the commitment of some artists to the cause of liberation. In fiction, essay, and poetry some of our writers attacked the dictatorship. Our singers sang against the oppression. Our painters drew the faces of violence against the body and spirit of our people. And a handful of journalists went to jail, but remained steadfast in the cause of liberty.

In the spirit of the UN Decade for Cultural Development and the Decade of Filipino nationalism, we wish to publicly recognize and honor the Filipino Artist. And we honor them without exception. As a tangible expression of this recognition we confer and award the National Artist Award to two noble spirits whose art is as ancient as our country – Music and Dance. Four hundred years ago when the European first set foot in our country, they noted the dance and music traditions of our forefathers. These traditions still live. The honorees with us today Col. Antonio R. Buenaventura and Ms. Lucrecia Reyes-Urtula stand in the proud line of Filipinos who are the finest embodiments of the Filipino soul. We congratulate them, and ask all our people to feel honored with them. For what they have achieved is not only theirs to glory in; it is also the glory of their country.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Revised Vin D'honneur Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the value of nationalism

**Revised Vin D'honneur Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the value of nationalism**

[Released on June 12, 1988]

THE VALUE OF NATIONALISM

Today's celebration marks the start of a 10-year effort to inculcate in our people the primary value of nationalism. It is a nationalism that looks to the progress we must attain because we trusted others to do that which we alone will do: take care of our country.

Today we celebrate the 90th anniversary of the declaration of Philippine independence. This year we begin the decade of nationalism in hopes that we may celebrate June 12, 1998, the centennial, truly free at last.

We thus inaugurate today a 10-year effort to inculcate in our people the primary value of nationalism.

By nationalism we mean thinking directed to the growth of national power, to the enhancement of this nation's ability to control its fate in the world, and to be respected as an equal by any foreign power that seeks its friendship and cooperation or dares its enmity.

We shall foster national pride only after, not before, we build for our people a country they can be proud of because it takes care of them, because it can help them realize their full potential as human beings, and a country respected abroad.

The February Revolution was a good start. No other people won their freedom by the individual courage of a mass. Every man, woman and child made a personal decision to stand their ground for freedom. In that stirring event, no one helped the Filipino who stood alone until it was clear he had won.

This is the nationalism we mean. A nationalism not of bitter recriminations and fault-finding but of a forward ambition to be strong. A nationalism that looks to the progress we must attain, and not to the backwardness and abuses we have suffered because we allowed ourselves to be weak, because we trusted others to do that which we alone will do: take care of our country.

Let us make a start in true nationalism. I ask this Government and our people to join us in this long-delayed task of finally creating a genuinely independent Filipino nation by the progress of its economy, the justice of its laws, the well-being and prosperity of its people, the effectiveness of its arms, and the independence and wisdom of its policies.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me now in a toast:

To the next ten years, and the Filipinos' shared and unflagging commitment to build a strong and therefore truly independent Philippines;

To the peace and mutual respect among the nations of the world.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Independence Day

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On Independence Day

[Delivered on June 12, 1988]

NO EASY ROAD TO DEMOCRACY

As we celebrate this momentous event, we also recall those who sacrificed to help us find our way and acknowledge with gratitude their valuable contribution to the country and people. The President hopes that as we begin our ten-year march to nationhood, we will be guided by the fixed star of nationalism.

We first took the road to nationhood and democracy 90 years ago. It did not take long for us to lose our way. Those who tried to pick up the trail of true nationhood again, found only martyrdom.

There is no easy road to nationhood and enduring democracy. And the road signs have been erased or confused by those who do not want us to complete the journey.

Today, we recall those who sacrificed to help us find our way and rededicate ourselves to continue their search and undertake their sacrifices. We cherish their memory and acknowledge with gratitude the sacrifices they made on the altar of country and democracy.

This year, we begin the decade of nationalism, in hopes that we may celebrate June 12, 1998, the Centennial of Independence, as a nation fully free at last. Free from the threat of renewed tyranny, free from poverty, disease, ignorance, homelessness, and conflict.

We got rid of the first.

We applaud the initiative towards peace abroad taken by the superpowers, and towards peace at home taken by your government.

Congress is about to pass a Bill mandating generic labelling of drugs, making them more accessible to our people.

On Monday next week, 11 million children will enter our public school system, the largest number in our history, and, for the first time, all public high schools will be free.

Last Friday, I signed into law the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. Now the stage is set for a revolution in agricultural productivity and greater social justice for our people in the countryside. More wealth and a fairer distribution of that wealth are the twin goals of the Program.

Today I am announcing the reduction of interest rates for housing loans of P60,000 and below. Interest rates are reduced from 9% to 6%; for new loans of P90,000 and below, from 12% to 9%. One Billion Pesos has been allocated for this program.

As we begin our 10 year march to full nationhood, let our steps be guided by the fixed star of nationalism, and our bodies and souls be emboldened by the spirit that moved our forebears in their noble sacrifices.

We cannot pause to rest; we cannot flag in our efforts. The goal is distant and recedes with every lessening of our resolve and our exertions. There are forces at home and abroad that seek to keep us weak, poor and subservient. If they succeed, the fault will not be theirs but ours. *Nasa atin ang katuparan ng tunay na kalayaan.*

Ang dekada na ating hinaharap ay masasabi nating pinakamakasaysayan sa ating bansa. Tayo ay nahaharap sa maraming pagsubok at tayo rin ang kakatawan at gagawa ng susunod pang kasaysayan. Kayo ay aking hinahamon na makibahagi sa natatanging kasaysayan na magaganap.

Noong Hunyo ng taong 1898, ay nagsimula ang paglalakbay nating mga Filipino tungo sa isang-daang taon ng kalayaan at pagkakaisa. At ang pagtatapos ng mahabang paglalakbay ay nalalapit na. Ito ay ating sasalubungin ng taas noo upang ang pinaglaban ng ating mga bayani at ninuno ay hindi masayang. Ngunit ang kalayaan na kanilang inasam at atin ngayong tinatamasa ay kailangan nating pangalagaan.

Mayroon na lamang tayong isang dekada upang tapusin, ipagpatuloy at alagaan ang mga simulain ng ating mga dakila, at maging ang ating mga di-kilalang bayani. Kailangan nating magpatuloy. Hindi natin matatanggap ang pagkatalo. Magsimula tayo sa huling yugto, na ang hangganan ay ang tunay na kasarinlan na ating mithiin.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Revised Speech of President Corazon Aquino on ILO Revised Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On ILO**

[Held at Geneva, June 14, 1988]

LIBERTY IS NON-NEGOTIABLE

The conference themes on human rights, labor relations and debt make this an appropriate forum to convey the message of the Filipino people. The Philippine revolution reaffirmed the principle that the protection of human rights is the first duty of government Liberty cannot be traded for progress and social justice.

C'est avec grande satisfaction que J'ai reçu l'invitation qui m'a été faite de prendre la parole devant la conférence annuelle de L'Organisation Internationale du Travail.

En premier lieu parce qu'elle porte sur les droits de l'homme. Mais également en raison de l'attitude généreuse qui a été celle de L'Europe lors de la lutte historique pour les droits de l'homme que présente la Révolution de Février aux Philippines.

Les ambassadeurs Européens ont été les premiers à reconnaître, d'abord tacitement, puis ouvertement mon droit à assumer la Présidence, après que le peuple Philippin fut abusé sur ma victoire électorale.

D'autres gouvernements ont, eux attendus de savoir si le droit allait l'emporter sur les forces du mal et n'ont modifié leur attitude qu'après qu'il fut clair qu'aucun gouvernement autre que le mien ne serait autorisé par les masses Philippines en ébullition à assumer la direction du pays.

Les Européens ont tranché avec leur conscience. Sans doute deux millénaires d'après conflits autour de visées égoïstes avaient quelque peu émoussé les aspirations idéalistes de l'Europe. Mais il en a été différemment avec le combat de libération des Philippines. La Vieille Europe, qui en avait tant vu, retrouvant alors son idéalisme, a prêté son concours à la renaissance de la liberté aux Philippines.

I want to thank Director Blanchard for inviting me to address the 75th sitting of the International Labor Conference here in Geneva, and for the opportunity to express my people's appreciation of the support that Europe gave to their struggle.

The various themes of the Conference: human rights, labor relations, and debt: make this a very appropriate forum to convey their message. After all, our nonviolent Revolution was one of the most celebrated victories of human rights in one country and a triumph for its cause throughout the world. While the burden of debt weighs so heavily on the developing nations that it threatens to end all prospect of their recovery and growth, and equally threatens to create the anarchy and despotism where human rights are the first victims.

The Revolution reaffirmed the principle that the protection of human rights is the first duty of government, and that the deliberate and systematic violation of those rights by their governments imposes on the people the sacred obligation to overthrow them. Equally, the Revolution revealed new depths of faith and courage, and a new strategy and hope for democratic victories.

It is that hope for oppressed peoples everywhere that I must defend against the criticism that the heroism of the people came to nothing in the Philippines.

The Revolution was the work of people of the ordinary men and women of the working classes: priests and nuns who work with their hands to care for the poor, clerks, factory workers, school teachers, secretaries, managers, professionals, and their families. The involvement of the rich in the Revolution was widely noted, not because they were many but because it was unexpected that many would appear.

The Revolution offers hope, the national experience that provoked it taught a bitter lesson: liberty is non-negotiable, it cannot be traded for progress or social justice.

This truth is self-evident to men and women who respect themselves as persons. Yet many still ignored it only to learn too late that foregoing freedom for progress or social justice merely added torture and indignities to worsening poverty and underdevelopment.

It is a strange but incontestable fact that countries regarded as too poor to afford the luxury of democracy are precisely the countries that cannot do without it. The reason is this: nothing can resist the greed of the few except the power of the people freely exercising their rights and liberties. "Poverty increases insofar as freedom retreats throughout the world," Camus observed. "If this cruel century has taught us anything at all, it has taught that the economic revolution must be free just as liberation must include the economic."

As the Revolution was their work, it was only right that the order it established should express, in its laws, institutions, policies and leadership, a preferential option for the people — a bias towards their immediate relief and economic improvement, without exacting the price of their virtual slavery in the workplace.

The policies of the government which the Revolution brought to power have consistently expressed that option and bias.

Thus, immediately after the flight of the dictator, we moved to heal the divisions of our society and establish the framework, institutions and laws essential to the security of their rights, the permanence of their freedoms, and aimed at the improvement of their material well-being and national recovery and progress.

We released all political prisoners, giving special attention to the immediate release of the chief Communist Party ideologue, Jose Maria Sison, against the strong objections of the military faction that had helped in the ouster of the dictatorship.

Again, against the strong objections of that faction, we signalled the insurgency that we were prepared to negotiate a peace. That effort ultimately failed, yet, in retrospect, it had to be made to establish a moral basis for the resumption of war. Equally, the failure of our peace initiative definitively fixed the predominantly military character of the insurgent challenge, and the military necessity of the appropriate response.

Yet again, we made sure that the renewed hostilities would be conducted, at least by our side, in a manner consistent with the values we are defending against the insurgency. I therefore signed Protocol Two, which accords to the enemy in civil conflicts the protection of the Geneva Conventions.

We drafted a Constitution that would provide a pro-people framework for the policies we were preparing: policies that would upset established patterns of property relations and expectations, and therefore required a mandate across the spectrum of economic classes. That Constitution, which was ratified by a near unanimity of the voting population, provides in its Declaration of Principles and State Policies:

"The State shall promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all."

Further:

“The State shall promote social justice in all phrases of national development.”

“The State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights.

“The State affirms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare.”

In this declaration are summed up the primary concerns which the Revolution sought to address, and the lesson which dictatorship had seared in our minds: that we will not accept progress at the expense of the workers or by exacting the price of their liberty.

So that these promises will not remain words on paper, the Constitution empowers the Supreme Court to promulgate rules for the protection and enforcement of constitutional rights.

I shall forthwith take the necessary steps to secure the approval by the Court of the rules for a new Philippine writ of *amparo*, a special constitutional remedy to enforce human social, and economic rights through a speedy and inexpensive procedure.

To the security given by the Constitution, we have added the protection of international conventions.

I have directed the dissemination of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights throughout the Philippines, translated into the national language and the major dialects.

I have ratified the ILO Convention on Tripartism and the ILO Convention on the Rehabilitation of the Disabled, and have submitted them to our Senate for concurrence, along with the Amendments to the ILO Constitution which will widen Third World representation in your governing council.

As mandated by the Constitution, human rights have been included in the curricula of all schools.

To answer fears that democracy has proved inadequate in protecting human rights in the Philippines, I have strengthened the Philippine Commission on Human Rights by providing for the permanence of the tenure of its members and by giving them sufficient powers to bring violators to justice. The Commission recently issued guidelines to the military to safeguard the rights of arrested persons, including the right of visitation.

We have appointed to the Congress men and women from the underprivileged sectors: labor, farmers, the poor, the disabled, women, and youth, selecting those who have distinguished themselves despite great disadvantages.

We launched an emergency employment program to alleviate the unemployment problem, especially in the countryside. Admittedly, the program was modest given the size of the unemployed force.

A few days ago, after over a year of bitter debates, I signed into law a Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program that will redistribute agricultural land to the landless tillers, and, more importantly, give them the support services that will make Philippine agriculture productive again. Agrarian reform is not justice, if all it achieves is the subdivision of the present miseries on the land. What the Program aims for is the liberation of the economic potential of the countryside, the increase in its standard of living and the creation of the market that will support the industrial progress we likewise seek.

This is only the start. More good might have been accomplished, if so much evil did not have to be undone. And we shall go on.

Violations of human rights still happen even in democratic states most determined to protect them. The attraction of democracy is also its weakness, for it must accord the same constitutional safeguards to the perpetrators as to the

victims of human rights abuse. And in the free spaces created by democracy, evil goes about its work, sometimes more efficiently than good.

It behooves us then to narrow the scope of evil. This must be done by more democracy, not less. As much by removing the present restraints on human freedom imposed by poverty and underdevelopment, as by wider grants of rights and liberties. The next liberation must be economic. This includes a fair resolution of the Debt problem. For the tightening grip of its austerities threatens to strangle the life out of the new democracies of the Third World, even as it threatens to upset the stability of the international economic order. The linkage of debt, development and democracy is undeniable and is the most pressing issue this body must address.

The first duty of democratic institutions, like the ILO, is the protection of human rights. Chronic underdevelopment is the most systematic abuse of human rights. I put before the ILO the challenge of finding a resolution to this threefold issue in the just, sober, and democratic fashion that alone can win the consensus and cooperation of everyone involved. A resolution reflecting the spirit of the ancient lawgiver:

“I establish this law in the language of the land . . . for the welfare of the people . . . to cause justice to prevail and to destroy the wicked and the evil. . . that the strong might not oppress the weak . . . to rise like the sun over the people and to light up the land.”

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

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Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Swiss-Filipino community

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Swiss-Filipino community**

[Delivered in Geneva, June 14, 1988]

ASSISTING THE OVERSEAS WORKERS

The President addresses some 2,000 Filipinos working in this distinguished international community. She expresses pride in the contributions her people has extended to the international community and pledges that the Philippine government will do all it can to help them. This includes protective mechanisms in host countries like a renegotiation for better employment benefits.

It is a pleasure to meet with you today. I was pleasantly surprised to find out that the number of Filipinos in this beautiful city runs to almost 2,000, including family and friends.

I am proud to address this corps of able Filipino minds and hands working in this distinguished international community.

Far from home, you are however situated in an amiable country busy promoting international understanding.

I trust that you enjoy your work and have been assets to your employers. I have heard with pride of your contributions to the United Nations and other international organizations, to permanent missions, and other Swiss organizations.

In a sense, you are more fortunate than most of our countrymen in other parts of the world. There are hundreds of thousands of Filipinos in the Middle East, Asia and the Americas working under far more difficult conditions. Like you, they have chosen to work abroad, to improve their lot, to save or to send back earnings to their families. Unlike you, they are exposed to a host of more complicated problems in camps and worksites where competition is stiffer and work conditions more harsh.

All these, however, are sacrifices we take upon ourselves as part of that often lonely decision to work abroad. Recognizing these difficulties, your government has tried to smooth some of them away.

The volume of emigration from the Philippines has indeed been phenomenal. While we should like to keep such a flood of talent and industry within our shores, we have faced the fact that overseas employment provides temporary relief to our country's unemployment problems.

This recognition has provided a major aspect of our national employment strategy. It is our intention to project the Filipino worker's skill and expertise as his main selling point, rather than the cheapness of his labor at home. The exemplary work you have been doing abroad has testified to these work virtues more eloquently than all our messages to the world. At the same time, we have adopted measures to ensure that your work is justly recognized and compensated, and that you are treated with the respect and dignity you deserve.

Filipino labor overseas has contributed significantly to the progress of the host countries. The fair treatment we expect from these hosts is therefore a matter of justice and mutual respect.

Your country must, of course, accord the same justice, respect, and concern. After all, it is your earnings that account for much of the foreign exchange we use to pay for our foreign debt, that debt which the past government and its friends stole or wasted. This recognition of your essential contribution to our economy and financial stability, has prompted us to initiate several programs to assist you abroad. I am especially concerned with the treatment of our women workers abroad. That is why we handed down the ban on domestic helpers. We were addressing the realities of our women accepting employment under depressed contract terms and conditions. Protective mechanisms must first be sought out in host countries. Our intention is to re negotiate for better employment benefits.

We are looking into bilateral labor agreements with host country governments. We are assessing labor markets abroad and working on improvements to manpower agreements. In Manila, we are curbing illegal recruitment practices.

Foreign demand for Filipino labor continues strong for its performance has been its best credential. I salute you for the honor that your industry and skill have brought to our name and pledge that we shall do all we can to help you.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Swiss Red Cross

Message of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines To the Swiss Red Cross

[Delivered in Geneva, June 14, 1988]

A DIMENSION OF NEUTRALITY

The President thanks the Swiss Red Cross for its many good works in the country which include timely assistance to the victims of natural calamities to the comfort and rescue of victims of human rights abuse by their unnatural governments.

There are two kinds of neutrality.

There is the kind that does not care whether there is pain and hurt in the world, provided only that it is safe from them. It feels that, having achieved well-being and progress, it is enough to be able to keep these things for itself. This kind of neutrality has no sense that such blessings establish an obligation to attenuate the sufferings of those who have been less fortunate – taking its inspiration from the insolence of Cain: “Am I my brother’s keeper?”

And there is the neutrality that answers. “Yes, I am my brother’s keeper; and while I have not the power to stop oppression and calamity, I need only courage to help its victims.”

Like the first kind of neutrality, it wisely avoids entangling alliances or conflicts with the rest of the world, but only so it can move freely in the world to help their victims. Such is the neutrality of the Swiss and their Red Cross – an organization separate from the world the better to do good in the world. It celebrates this year its 125th anniversary.

I am honored to be a part of this celebration and grateful for the opportunity to thank the Red Cross for its many good works in my country – good works that range from timely assistance to the victims of natural calamities to the comfort and – occasionally – the rescue of victims of human rights abuse by their unnatural governments.

Last year alone, the Red Cross gave assistance to thousands of victims of natural calamities in the Philippines. It donated 100,000 metric tons of rice just for the island of Mindanao. It was instrumental in the release and repatriation of some one hundred Filipino workers in Angola.

But its most notable work in the Philippines was in recording the acts and, occasionally rescuing the victims, of human rights abuse in my country.

There is little even a universally respected body like the Red Cross can do to stop a government determined to abuse its people, except to bear witness. Yet, bearing witness is often enough to ennoble their sufferings in the eyes of the victims themselves. The democratic restoration in the Philippines ended the systematic and deliberate abuse of human rights as an instrument of policy, yet we welcome the continued vigilance of the Red Cross in the preservation of human rights. While the path of good is clear, straight, and singular, the devious ways of evil are many.

Dictatorship encourages the abuse of human rights as the foundation of its authority to govern, yet often democracy can only hold such abuses to account. It cannot always prevent them. Yet ironically, it is more important to protect human rights in a democracy than in a dictatorship. For a dictatorship, as I said, thrives on abuse; while a democracy is sustained only by the people’s continuing faith in its ability to deliver on the promise of a good life, enduring liberty, and the pursuit and protection of individual happiness and dignity.

Take away that faith, mock the democratic promise by the abuse of human rights in the very citadel of right and law, and you undermine the foundation of democracy where it stands strongest – in the commitment of the people.

In the noble record of the Swiss and their Red Cross, one finds the noble dimension of neutrality: not a casual and indifferent attitude to the woes of the world, but a resolute and successful attempt to stand clear of entanglements and compromise the better to stand unambiguously for those absolute principles that protect the dignity and foster the well-being of man. I thank you again for this honor and wish you every success.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the World Economic Forum

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the World Economic Forum**

[Delivered in Geneva, June 14, 1988]

STARTLING POSITIVE GAINS

Twenty eight months after the Revolution, the economy bounced back to health and started its trek to recovery. The President is optimistic that we can surpass this progress if all effective challenges to democracy will be eliminated. She said that foreign investments and foreign technology must complement our efforts to achieve prosperity.

I would like to thank the World Economic Forum for organizing this conference on the Philippines. I would like to thank the participants most of all as your presence attests to the world's continued interest in my country. I hope the afternoon session with the Philippine ministers has given you a more accurate picture of the real conditions in a country whose portrayal abroad has made Filipinos at home think it is a foreign country that is being talked about.

28 months after the Revolution sent the dictator packing out of the country he had abused and plundered, the Philippines, reports and rumors to the contrary notwithstanding, is alive and well, democracy is there to stay, and I will be there to make sure of it.

In that brief span, we restored honor to the Philippine justice system by reforming the courts, we adopted a new democratic constitution and ratified it. We elected a Congress and a Senate, and the nationwide system of local governments. In all three electoral exercises, the voter turnout was unprecedented anywhere in the world, at any time in history. And yet the country had just emerged from 15 years of corrupt and incompetent dictatorship: half the population was too young to have known any form of government other than that by fiat and terror. The turnout and the result proved the deep roots of democracy in the racial memory, and the complete ignorance of foreign analysts about the prospects of political stability in the Philippines. I am not surprised.

In the same period, the Rightwing made repeated attempts to destabilize the government by alienating the military from it and picturing the government as one of appeasement and naivete. These efforts succeeded only in frightening away foreign investments, which is a shame, but had no other effect but to convince me finally that the Rightwing had no place in our country. It is now in flight and hiding after my forces crushed their most determined and ruthless attempt to seize power last year.

Yet in this period of unwanted foreign publicity, our economy bounced back to health and started on the road to recovery. From negative economic indicators, including rate of investments, the economy made startling positive gains. Not much, of course, if you make comparisons with countries that haven't been robbed by their governments, but in the light of our experience, the growth was a respectable one.

After all, we had inherited only devastation from Marcos: pillaged industries, bankrupt banks, a rifled treasury, and a shockingly large foreign debt with nothing productive to show for it, until we uncover and recover the man's hidden wealth from where he has hidden it. The Philippines, which had been Asia's second strongest economy 20 years ago, had become the Southeast Asian basketcase after 15 years of dictatorship. The economic wreckage spawned a widespread insurgency which we have finally begun to turn. In two years we have recovered much lost ground.

This afternoon's presentations explained the progress we have achieved. That progress is by no means the best we can do. We can surpass it, and we shall, given the elimination of all effective challenge to Philippine democracy from the Right, and the significant reverses suffered by the Left.

Early this year, the top leadership of the Communist insurgency was captured. Documents captured from recent urban raids have revealed a much diminished insurgent army. Credit for this goes, ironically, to our failed attempt to negotiate a peace with the insurgents. The truce I called had allowed many rebels to revisit their families and see for themselves the earnest efforts we were making, and convinced many of them to give peace another chance.

Our offer to negotiate was interpreted as surrender by the insurgent leadership until the offensives we launched corrected all misconception about our determination to achieve civil peace only on our terms, the terms of democracy.

Am I saying that the Right will not try again, or that the Left has finally laid down its arms? Certainly not. The Right will keep on threatening as its impotence increases, because threats are all that are left to it. And the left must fight because that is its militant faith, but the fighting will progressively be marginalized in the hinterlands and mountains, far from the areas of commerce, industry and agriculture.

Preparing the framework for recovery and progress was itself a very difficult task. Striking a balance between the priority of immediate relief to the people, injecting life into a listless economy, and satisfying the insistent demands of our creditors, which at times were inconsistent with each other, was an especially arduous task.

The Medium Term Philippine Development Plan has sought to address these and other problems, and has set as our primary objective, a sustained growth based on balanced agro-industrial activities. The creation of new jobs and the attraction of foreign investments became the principal elements of our strategy.

On debt repayment, we have sought and obtained the agreement of our creditors to a short breathing spell via the restructuring of a significant portion of our outstanding debts so that we can allocate more resources to poverty alleviation, and other urgent needs of our people. Yet we continue to search for fresh options that will lighten the debt burden during this critical period, and help us achieve the progress that will, in the end, better assure the fulfillment of our obligations. I hope that the explanations I have made will inspire the international financial system, represented here, to cooperate with us even more closely in finding these fresh options, and, of course, in helping us recover what we lost.

A key element of the Program is job creation on a massive scale to absorb the 750,000 new entrants to the labor force every year, not to mention the large number of the already unemployed.

This brings us to the question of labor. Here let me digress for a moment. The restoration of full, genuine democracy tempted the extremists in the labor movement to test the limits of their new rights and liberties. 1986 saw a distressing increase in strikes. Our careful handling of labor unrest in the spirit of the new tolerance was taken as a sign of meekness and surrender. Our appeals for sobriety and reason were ignored. Last year, I lowered the boom on this exuberance and ordered the strict enforcement of the labor laws in the spirit of their true intent: as affording protection equally to labor and management. The number of strikes dropped by 70 percent. But there still are strikes, businesses still have labor problems, but that is only because ours will not be a slave economy, and our people shall enjoy many of the same rights, even if not yet the same prosperity, as labor in your own countries.

We shall not achieve progress by the exploitation of a labor force whose skill, industry and commitment to work, given decent treatment, are the match of any in the world. But we shall insist that once the terms of employment are accepted, they will be upheld and enforced. Industrial peace means agreement and cooperation, not the subjection of the worker or the intimidation of management. Although these are not hardnosed business concepts, we aim for progress and justice for all in a climate of freedom.

Thus, last Friday, I signed the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program the effect of which will be the progressive redistribution of land on a more equitable basis. Its higher aim, however, is greater productivity in agriculture and higher incomes for the farmers to create the markets for the industries we want to see rise up in our country.

But there are more markets within reach than the domestic in the Philippines. We are in the most promising part of the world, in the Pacific whose century is coming. Not surprisingly therefore export is a prominent component of our strategy. We have started to recover many of the markets we had lost. Still, our 18 percent growth in exports is not enough to meet the foreign exchange requirements we have projected. We have set ourselves higher targets in the expectation of making exports the source of sustained growth in the long term.

The flow of investments has increased. We are heartened to note that most of it is Filipino. This is a confident sign: those who know the country best have regained faith in its future.

We have tried to create an attractive investment climate by offering incentives, and, more effectively, by removing disincentives such as the elimination of monopolies and the withdrawal of the public sector from the economy. We have reduced red tape and other causes of delay, and adopted an import liberalization program that will enhance the efficiency of Filipino industry by exposing it to the challenge of fair foreign competition.

The construction of roads, bridges, communications is opening up more of the country for private enterprise.

The nation has put its shoulder to the wheel. The serious work has started and we invite you to join in the effort, and pitch in with the capital, and know how we need. Foreign investments and foreign technology must complement our efforts to achieve the prosperity that we can all enjoy in the country that you too will come to love.

Thank you and good evening.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Response of President Corazon Aquino to the toast of Mr. Blanchard of Geneva
Response
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the toast of Mr. Blanchard of Geneva

[Delivered on June 14, 1988]

A TOAST TO FRIENDSHIP

It was a great honor and pleasure to address the ILO. The occasion allowed me to share with you the experiences of a country which, in the words of some of you, is emerging like a phoenix from its ashes.

We have drawn much strength and encouragement from international support, such as you and the ILO have shown to us.

Mr. Director-General and friends who are here with us, what we have done in our country merely prepares the way for the great tasks ahead, tasks whose difficulty may show that man to have been right who said, "Winning freedom was the easy part. The hard part is knowing what to do with it." In our case, it is making freedom meaningful to the vast number of our poor. Still, our experiences give humanity reason always to hope and to believe that we have not seen the last of human courage and creativity.

The ILO faces equally formidable tasks of translating the formal victory of human rights, through their embodiment in its conventions, into a better life for the working people of the world. In return for your hospitality, I offer only that hope which our Revolution symbolizes: the inexhaustibility of human courage, creativity, and commitment to good.

Again, my sincere thanks.

May I now invite everyone to join me in wishing Mr. Blanchard continued success in his work and good health.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Filipino community in Italy

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Filipino community in Italy**

[Delivered in Rome, June 16, 1988]

PROTECTING THE DIGNITY OF FILIPINO LABOR

The President acknowledges the hardwork and remittances of the expatriate Filipino worker, the largest amount of foreign exchange compared to any other sector. She announces some necessary initiatives taken with the host government to protect the migrant workers. Among these is a bilateral agreement for social security coverage for non-Italian employees.

Mga minamahal kong kababayan. Isang kasiyahan para sa akin ang makapiling kayo sa araw na ito.

I had heard about the large Filipino community in Italy and have long wanted to visit with you. It was one of the strongest reasons for the serious thought I gave to coming over for the canonization of Lorenzo Ruiz and for my deep disappointment when I had to postpone our meeting. As you know, some people back home had other ideas about who should be running our country and how it should be run. They thought the February Revolution meant only a change of dictatorships, from the rule of one man in a barong to the rule of a junta in fatigues. So I stayed behind to set them right.

Still, better late than never. I am very happy to be here with you. I understand that this is the largest Filipino community in Europe, numbering some 70,000. But it is not just your far-flung reputation for hard work, skill and probity that has called attention to yourselves and imposed upon your government back home the obligation to see to it that you are accorded the rights and privileges you deserve in a foreign land.

When I spoke to the Filipino workers in Hong Kong, I called them the unsung heroes of the country. For the hardwork and remittances of the expatriate Filipino worker have brought in, compared to any other sector, the largest amount of foreign exchange, which is so essential to the servicing of our foreign debt. That debt which our unlamented past rulers stole.

This was not the first tribute I paid to your sacrifices, for when I posed the question to the U.S. Congress, "Must we pay for the debt with the sweat of our men's faces?" I had you in mind, for your labors are made heavier by being away from home. I know what it is like to have to live away from one's country.

The whole world saw how Filipinos won back freedom, and wondered at their courage and faith. That unprecedented and still unmatched event conferred upon the Filipino everywhere a dignity that all must recognize. I know that that achievement was a spiritual and political one, and that world consists even more importantly, in its eyes, of harsh economic realities.

We are still poor and our people must still go where they can to provide themselves with the material means to live decently. Many of us have had to seek those means abroad, far from the protection of our laws and the care and concern of family and friends. I have been very concerned that this lack of protection has in many cases stripped Filipinos of their dignity.

They have been abused with regard to wages, conditions of work, and even with regard to the integrity and honor of their persons. Every abuse of Filipinos' rights, I feel, erodes the foundation of the Filipinos' new dignity. I have

therefore taken the necessary initiatives with host governments to protect that dignity. The government of the Republic of Italy has been most cooperative. I understand that there are already improvements, among them an amnesty law. The Welfare Fund has established a Filipino Workers Social Center in Rome to attend to your problems. We continue to work for better terms of employment for you in Italy. And we are working towards a bilateral agreement for social security coverage for non-Italian workers. Of course, we are guests here and there is only so much your government can do. This is not our country. But precisely because we are guests, we are assured of the protection, help and friendship of our Italian hosts, for there are few peoples so warm and caring and generous, and who truly understand, because of their own experiences, what we are going through as a young nation and a new democracy.

We have so much in common with our Italian brothers and sisters: the same saga of liberation from foreign enemies, the same faltering attempts to achieve national unity, the same tragic experience of local tyranny, the same epic of mass emigration to preserve, in times of trouble, the best of the Italian spirit: hardwork, ingenuity, skill, and adaptability to all circumstances anywhere in the world. As they once prayed and worked for the decent treatment of their sons abroad, so do we now invoke that memory in asking them to help the Filipinos in Italy.

I am proud to join you in thanking the Italian government and people for their warm and generous welcome and hospitality. I wish you, my brothers and sisters, every success. I pray for you, and hope that you will do the same for me.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Confindustria, June 17, 1988

Confindustria

Rome

June 17, 1988

IDEAL CLIMATE FOR INVESTMENTS

With a reinvigorated economy and its relative immunity from any political turbulence in the region, the Philippines deserves serious consideration as a most promising country to invest in. The President tells her audience that the Italian industry will find ideal conditions for setting up plants in the Philippines.

Two years after the Revolution which many of you followed on television and on the front pages of the newspapers, another, quieter revolution has been taking place in the Philippines. A revolution in the political attitudes of the vast majority of Filipinos and in the remarkable exertions they are making to achieve economic recovery quickly.

Quite as remarkable as stopping tanks with prayers, is the picture of virtually a whole population taking democratic elections seriously and jealously defending their new democracy – thereby providing the surest basis for enduring social stability and order.

Western analysts had predicted that the peaceful February Revolution was a flash in the pan, that the Filipino people would sink back into lethargy and indifference to the fate of their new democracy and their country. In the past two years, as essential democratic institutions were firmly implanted in swift succession, that prediction has turned out to be totally false.

In less than two years, we had a new Constitution and had had it ratified in a referendum participated in by virtually the entire voting population. We elected a Congress with almost the same record turnout, and then all the local governments.

We did not neglect the economy. On the contrary, we knew that its plundered and devastated condition required immediate attention. Following a medium-term plan, whose preparation was in itself a very difficult task, we reversed the negative growth trend the economy had been posting for three years previous, and by 1987 achieved a growth rate of 5.6% in real terms. In the first quarter of this year, we posted a real growth rate of 7.5%.

This was done against the backdrop of persistent rightist attempts to seize the government and a continuing Communist insurgency. In August last year, the right made its strongest bid for power in a ruthless assault on the Presidential Palace. The attack was repulsed and the coup was crushed. Its instigators have been captured or are being hunted; at any rate, I can say without any reservation that they are finished as credible threats, not only of another coup but even of any measure of destabilization.

We tried to negotiate a peaceful settlement of the Communist insurgency and invited its representatives to talks. This was interpreted by the Right as naivete and by the Communists as surrender. The exercise failed to achieve a settlement, but turned out to be a success in other respects. The gesture convinced many in the countryside that the government was serious about wanting peace and addressing the issues that had fueled the rebellion. At any rate, the resumption and escalation of military offensives and urban raids should have convinced the insurgent leadership and the Right that I will take peace only on terms that respect our Constitution and our traditional values and way of life.

A few months ago, the military captured the top leadership of the insurgency. Documents seized in urban raids now show a much diminished insurgent force.

No one can dispute the facts now: there is order, predictability, and freedom in the Philippines, as well as a reinvigorated economy. Given its strategic location in Southeast Asia, its relative immunity from any political turbulence in the region, and the skill and industry of its labor force, the Philippines deserves serious consideration

as a most promising country to invest in. Perhaps the best indication of this is the rate at which Filipinos are investing in their own country, reversing a pattern of capital flight that antedated even the dictatorship and the instability it created.

Italian industry, with its wide range of manufactured products and technology, will find ideal conditions for setting up plants in the Philippines, which offers not only its rapidly expanding markets but also the equally promising and easily accessible markets of the region.

We have been studying with deep interest both the products and the methods of Italian industry, especially the important part played by small and medium enterprises in Italian progress. We have watched the growth of these sectors in the Italian economy with great interest and admiration, remarking both the excellent quality of their products and their efficient methods and resiliency.

The European business community is presently the third largest investor in the country. Italy, however, has been one of the smallest investors. We invite you to come to our country and study its prospects for yourselves. You will experience not only its traditional hospitality, but an environment in which you will find yourselves very much at home.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Message of President Corazon Aquino in Vatican, June 18, 1988

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
In Vatican**

[Released on June 18, 1988]

GOD WALKS WITH US

Thru the power of faith, the Filipinos won back their freedom. The President says it is this faith which also sustains her in all trials and continues to hold her up under the pressure of high office. She thanks the Holy Father for championing the cause of poor nations. She believes that in the midst of great difficulties there is that profound assurance that God walks with us.

I am specially happy on the occasion of this visit. For I stand here both as chief of state and as the leader of a people of faith, who won back their freedom through the power of that faith. It is the faith also that sustained me in all my trials, and which continues to hold me up under the pressures of high office and in the face of those who continue to oppose the humane, and essentially Christian, principles and democratic aspirations of my people.

I bring with me the love and gratitude of the Filipino people: for His Holiness' visit to the Philippines in 1981, for the canonization of St. Lorenzo Ruiz last year, and for his prayers during the February Revolution, when God's hand, working through the multitude of men, women and children, snatched my country from the edge of calamity and gently set it down in peace and freedom.

I thank the Church for sending so many missionaries over the centuries who labored to save souls, enrich our art and culture, foster learning among our young. And, with our Muslim brothers, they gave shape to the general character of the Filipino nation.

I also thank the Holy Father for championing the cause of poor nations. He has spoken eloquently of their plight and of the need for measures to lift their peoples to their proper dignity as God's children. He has shed the light of his wisdom equally on the great issues of the world today: on the international debt, on human rights, on the self-determination of peoples, on nuclear arms, on social justice and on economic development. We have listened to his words with great profit and he shall find them reflected in the policies of our government.

Thus, in reviewing our accomplishments since the Revolution, we have adhered to the following principles:

First, that development must enhance the well-being and dignity of Filipinos from every walk of life, so that the nation's material progress must be matched by the Filipino's spiritual development.

Second, development must promote the unity of the nation and solidarity among the people. We will not follow a developmental path that accepts exploitation and class hatred as a necessary price. It must be fair to all, yet lean in favor of the poor who need to be helped.

Third, development must restore and preserve the values that distinguish the Filipino nation: faith in God and in the power of prayer, industry and honesty, love of country, and respect for the unity of the family.

Fourth, development must increase our capability to stand on our own, to be self-reliant and autonomous in the world, so that we can be useful and helpful members of the community of nations.

Fifth, development must promote private enterprise and initiative, consistent with the common good and our democratic institutions. Government will play a complementary and supportive role to ensure that our development goals are met in accordance with these development principles.

In conclusion, I believe that peace will come only through authentic development that fosters justice and solidarity. Development by any other path will lead only to violence and tyranny, of the left or of the right.

In the midst of great difficulties, we tread our way to the future with a profound assurance drawn from our conviction that God walks with us, and guides us in the darkness with the teachings of His Church.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the UP Alumni Association Oblation Award Conferment Rites, June 24, 1988

**UP Alumni Association
Oblation Award
Conferment Rites
June 24, 1988**

NINYO AND THE OBLATION AWARD

Ninoy followed the longer, rougher road to heroism and martyrdom. The President in getting the Oblation Award for Ninoy, the highest accolade U.P. can possibly bestow on an alumnus, proudly asserts that knowing her husband, he's fully convinced he deserves this award.

It is certainly a distinct honor and pleasure to be with you today.

One thing you can certainly say about Ninoy. He always got more than he bargained for. While he was a law student at the University of the Philippines, Ninoy set about to accomplish a number of things. He became the star reporter of The Manila Times, one of the country's leading dailies; he became the youngest correspondent to cover the war in Korea; he even won the heart of another law student who eventually married him and got more out of her life with him than she bargained for. If there was one thing he did not manage to do at the University of the Philippines, it was to finish his studies and get his degree.

I can almost hear him saying now, and not without a hint of his usual braggadocio: "You see, I did one better. I got the Oblation Award, the highest accolade the University can possibly bestow on an alumnus."

I understand that the five previous recipients of the award have either been presidents of the university or Presidents of the Republic. Certainly all have had a direct hand in the shaping of the University and were intimately acquainted with its affairs. Ninoy was only 17 when he left for the war in Korea. In 1949, I understand, the U.P. Oblation statue made its famous journey from the old university grounds in Padre Faura to its permanent home in Diliman, Quezon City.

Ninoy may not have been there when the Oblation was set on its foundation to become the symbol of everything the University of the Philippines stands for. But the spirit and ideals that guided its sculptor, Guillermo Tolentino, were as firmly imbedded in Ninoy's heart as they are engraved in bronze at the base of the Oblation today.

That spirit is contained in the second stanza of Rizal's "Mi Ultimo Adios." As the martyr wrote: "On the fields of battle, in the fury of the fight, others give you their lives without pain or hesitancy. The place does not matter; cypress, laurel, lily white, scaffold, open field, conflict or martyrdom's site, it is the same if asked by the home and country."

And as I said, Ninoy got more than he bargained for. He had originally set his sights to lead his republic. Instead, he followed the longer, rougher road to heroism and martyrdom. Guillermo Tolentino's interpretation of Rizal's vision of martyrdom is that of a young man free of all encumbrances. He no longer looks behind or ahead, or at the conditions immediately surrounding him. Instead, his face is lifted to the sky, his arms outstretched as he gloriously offers himself for the loftier purposes of the Almighty. Those purposes went beyond the shattered dreams of Rizal's or Ninoy's time, and took shape in a surge towards freedom that remains the driving force of the University of the Philippines today.

There were, of course, times when the Oblation seemed less to look upwards and beyond than away from the confusion and rage that attended some of the more turbulent years of the University of the Philippines. On various occasions, the statue was blindfolded, draped with a skirt, or smeared with paint by campus activists protesting not only the policies of the university of the state, but the vision and direction of the state that sustained it.

Those years, I believe, are over. May the Oblation stand from hereon as it was meant to – naked and unfettered, solid as the foundations upon which the country and its foremost college, now stand.

Ninoy was very proud to have been a student of the University of the Philippines. In behalf of the Aquino family, let me express our heartfelt gratitude for the great honor you have bestowed on Ninoy. I am sure that Ninoy is not only flattered, but if I know him, he's also fully convinced he deserves this award.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 90th Philippine Navy Foundation Day, June 27, 1988

**90th Philippine Navy
Foundation Day
June 27, 1988**

**MULTIPLE ROLES OF THE
PHILIPPINE NAVY**

The President lauds the many roles played by the Philippine Navy in securing the nation from internal and external threats. She urges them to continue their innovative work in building a self-reliant navy and commends its institutional adaptability in the employment of indigenous watercraft.

As Commander-in-Chief of all Armed Forces of the Philippines, I am delighted to join you, the Philippine Navy, in celebrating the 90th anniversary of your foundation.

Anniversaries are milestones in one's life. They are occasions for festive affairs. They are also occasions for reflection: to take stock of the past, ponder on the present, and scan the future.

In my talks before the commands of our Armed Forces, I have stressed the constitutional principle that civilian authority is, at all times, supreme over the military.

I have emphasized that policy making is the province of the civilian government. Consequently, military policies should flow from the directions and priorities set by the civilian authorities. The defense institutions should pursue programs consistent with these national policies.

I have directed the various commands, in our collective task of removing the elements of insurgency from our midsts, to unleash the weapons of war. Force must be met by force.

On the other hand, I have asked them to receive, with temperance and compassion, those who wish to mend their ways and return to the fold of the law.

We are aware that insurgency, with its ideology of violence and anger, must be met by implacable force. At the same time, we must also win our people's support.

In this way, we will then be able to deprive the insurgents of the substance that sustains their mindless and destructive pursuit for power.

I am happy to note that Commodore Carlito Cunanan, has instilled these principles in the Philippine Navy.

We are all aware that, in view of our archipelagic geography, maritime affairs are of prime importance to our people. Through the highways of our seas, goods, ideas, and people sail from one island to another. Through these sea arteries are woven the threads that now bind us in our nationhood.

These sea routes and marine resources continue to serve our country's current efforts for progress and development. Our seas continue to produce bountiful yields to feed our people and earn precious foreign exchange.

But the expanse and bounty of our seas have attracted the unwanted attention of fleets from other countries. Meanwhile, our own fishing fleets have been endangered in our own waters by the activities of other nations.

I am aware that, in our pursuit for peace and a better life for our people, the Philippine Navy performs multiple roles. It assists in the tasks of national development. It helps in securing the nation from internal and external threats.

And, in the current insurgency problem, it carries its share in the twin-pronged effort of facing up to the forces that threaten national security and inculcating hope and confidence among our people.

The Philippine Navy has been performing a yeoman's job in these tasks. When one considers the constraints imposed by our country's limited resources, your performance is even more commendable.

The expansion of the Philippine Navy is not only desirable but also necessary. I wholeheartedly support this intent.

Our Navy has many needs. This situation is quite widespread among our government institutions. The fact is that we need much courage and more resources to address the many social and economic needs of our people. And as we are still in the process of recovery, we have to replenish our coffers.

Thus, the present circumstances of the economy exhort us to tighten our belts, and spend less today so we may have more tomorrow.

There are indeed many demands on our government's scarce resources. It is fortunate that some of our friends from across the seas have been generous in their concern for us.

For the present, therefore, I would urge you to continue in your creative optimization of available resources.

I urge you to continue in your innovative work. I certainly applaud and appreciate your efforts to do more with less.

I commend the present efforts to build a self-reliant Navy. As in many large endeavors, the initial steps must be taken. Our demonstrated capability to produce our own patrol craft should be further enhanced.

I commend your institutional adaptability in the employment of indigenous watercraft. This is a clear example of using innovation to enable us to face the enemies wherever they are.

We should have more of these innovations. These are proofs that we have not allowed ourselves to be imprisoned by the limits of the present.

Rather, the Filipino people has built on the strengths of the present to expand the horizons of the future.

Thus, through the exercise of our collective intellect, and a strong abiding faith in the Almighty, we have converted the difficulties of the present into opportunities to innovate, to seek new ways of doing things. We have surmounted the limits of physical resources to achieve not only higher levels of productivity and efficiency, but our ideals and aspirations as a people.

Accordingly, I am inspired to ask Commodore Cunanan, along with his gallant officers and men, to prepare plans for the Navy's future expansion.

It is an expansion that should be reflected not only in the size and variety of the vessels in its fleet. It should take into account the additional tasks the Navy has to perform, as required by the demands of national security and national development.

These plans should serve as the recommended blueprint for the growth and development in our Navy. They should be consistent with the anticipated growth and recovery of our economy. They should be suited to the particular and specific conditions of our country.

These plans should cover a number of years. The plans should indicate the gradual modernization of our fleet and the acquisition by our Navy of the technology required in shipbuilding, repair and maintenance.

The plans should indicate an optimum mix of the use of indigenous watercraft and technology, alongside with the technology to be transferred from other countries and their adaptation to our local and specific requirements.

It should, likewise, anticipate developments now brewing in the southwestern frontiers of our country.

The plans should also consider the need to protect our waters from poachers. It should include measures that will enable us to police our waters.

We must maintain our vigilance against the smugglers and other nefarious elements who seek to undermine our nation's political and economic stability.

I will look forward to these plans.

Meanwhile, I urge Commodore Cunanan to persevere in his programs to establish and maintain a professional, decentralized, streamlined and welfare-oriented Navy.

The way may be arduous. The needs are many. And the resources are few. But we, as a people, accomplished in the EDSA Revolution what was deemed impossible.

Through a deeply-rooted faith, unity of spirit, and dint of effort, we succeeded in restoring democracy in our country. It is a feat that continues to inspire the admiration of many peoples from other countries.

Let us tap into these veins of creativity and determination to produce a Navy that can, as an instrument of national policy, hasten the attainment of our national aspirations.

Such a Navy will help ensure that the democracy we restored with so much hardship and sacrifice will stay rooted in our land.

To all of you, officers and men of the Philippine Navy, my warmest greetings and best wishes on your 90th Anniversary.

Congratulations again and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino Addressing the Underdevelopment of Region 8 on her Samar Visit, July 8, 1988

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Addressing the Underdevelopment of Region 8 on her Samar Visit**

[July 8, 1988]

A number of essential infrastructure projects have been set in place including health and education services to insure the development of Region 8. The President cites all efforts to address the endemic underdevelopment of the region in her determined effort to lift the area to the prosperity envisioned for all the people.

Mga hinigugma-on kong mga tagabonto.

A-anhi ako ha iyo para ipagpadayon han mga consultasyon dinhi ha Region 8.

Nakahistorya ko na an iyo representante ha Congreso, pati an iyo mga local opisyaes. Pero maruyog ako na ako mismo ang makasabut it iyo mga problema, ngan kon ano na paagi it aton gobyerno makakabilig ha iyo nga tanan.

I am here to continue my consultations with Region 8. I have talked to your representatives in Congress and in local governments. Secretary Mita Pardo de Tavera, the CORD for Region 8, has kept me informed of developments here. But there is no substitute for first-hand knowledge from those who know. Being right here, you know better than anyone else what is happening and what is best for you.

Eastern Visayas is one of the least developed and poorest areas in the country. This is a tragic waste of the great potential the region represents.

To tap that potential, we have identified several areas where government should direct its resources and efforts. These areas are infrastructure building, health services, education, security, reforestation and stopping illegal logging, more electrification, more communication services, and more post-harvest facilities.

We have given great attention to these needs. Thus, the budget for public works for Region 8 was increased from P625 million in 1987 to P735 million in 1988. But the problem, I discovered, was not in the amount allocated but in the failure to spend the budget at all. Only P1 38 million of the 1987 budget was spent. So now we are set back two years in meeting the infrastructure requirements of the Region. Care in the selection of projects and in the expenditure of funds is commendable, but the country cannot wait until all the safeguards are in place. I have directed the Department of Public Works to hasten the implementation of projects, and ask the private sector to monitor their progress.

For 1988, we have programmed P566 million for roads and bridges, and P46 million for an improved rural water supply system. In this connection, I have been told that there is duplication of functions between the Catbalogan Water District and the provincial government. This controversy should have been resolved without my intervention, but I now direct Secretary Santos to ensure that the provincial government does not duplicate the work of the Water District.

To bring Free Secondary Education to the Region, we have allocated P42.5 million to take in 73,000 high school students. We have also increased the allocation for school houses and other facilities by 50 percent. The ESF-financed construction of 22 municipal, vocational, and technical high school buildings costing P25 million will start by October this year.

The total budget for the improvement of seven airports in the Region will cost P15.9 million over a 3-year period starting in 1987. P4.3 million will be spent this year. The program covers the improvement and extension of runways, terminals and control towers of the Catarman, Calbayog, Catbalogan, Borongan, Maasim, Ormoc and Hilongos airports.

On the other hand, Public Works will be spending P24 million for the improvement of eight seaports and lighthouses in Tacloban, Ormoc, Calbayog, San Jose Caragian, Catbalogan, Palompon, Maasim, and Borongan.

The Department of Health has completed 24 projects involving the improvement of provincial and district hospitals at the cost of P6.25 million. Nine more hospitals will be upgraded. P3.2 million has been procured out of savings for medicines. The PAGCOR has donated P1 million to the Department of Health Region 8 for the purchase of generic medicines and equipment for public hospitals. There is also the Italian Government's generous TB Assistance Grant in the form of medicines, equipment and funds for medical personnel training.

Government has found the assistance of the private sector indispensable in the reforestation program. Thus, I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the Rotary Club of Tacloban which has agreed with the Department of Natural Resources to help in the reforestation of 100 hectares of denuded upland areas. I would also like to cite the Knights of Columbus of Tanauan, Leyte, which has committed to help in the seedling propagation program of the DENR.

The private sector has been most helpful in the catching of illegal loggers by informing on them to the authorities. Through their vigilance, we confiscated 5,600 cubic meters of illegally logged wood products or the equivalent of 450 ten-wheeler truckloads. I would like to announce that by virtue of EO 277, we shall award as much as 20 percent of sales proceeds of contraband to anyone who helps in the apprehension of illegal loggers and timber smugglers.

We have started monitoring gold panning operations in the area to avoid some of the tragic accidents in other regions. An educational drive will be conducted to assist the gold panners.

There has been some improvement in the peace and order situation, which is so essential a component of progress. We have appointed Governor Oscar Tan as Chairman of the Regional Peace and Order Council to act as coordinator for all agencies and the private sector in further improving the security condition of the Region. I ask the people to support them, to lend their eyes and ears to this effort to bring order and progress to their communities.

On rural electrifications shall reduce power rates in all electric cooperatives in Samar from the present high of P4.35 per kilowatt hour to not more than P2.50 kilowatt hour. Last May, the installation of 81 kilometers of transmission lines crossing Ormoc-Baybay, Lemon-Biliran, and the San Juanico Strait was completed. The NEA has programmed the P20 million Amanjuray Mini-Hydro project in Eastern Samar for immediate implementation. As of last month, Leyte 2 and Southern Leyte Electric cooperatives became NPC direct customers which will result in a significant reduction of power rates. 2,000 families will benefit from the operation of generation sets donated by the Australian Government covering three municipalities in Northern Samar. By the end of this year, 10,000 more households will be extended electric power services. The costs of these programs are tremendous and again we shall need the cooperation of the people to help us keep down costs by informing on electricity thieves.

On communications, as of May this year, 95 percent of the five provinces have telegraph facilities. We are finalizing plans for 1,800 digital telephone lines for Ormoc, Borongan, Catarman, and Catbalogan to be operational in three years.

The National Food Authority is operating 17 warehouses in the Region with a total capacity of 50,000 metric tons. Another 1,500 metric tons will be added when we complete the warehouse in Catubig. Two small grain centers in Las Navas and Hilongos will soon be completed and will be turned over to farmers' cooperatives.

From 1986 to June 1988, NFA bought 35,163 metric tons of palay valued at P123 million, an increase of 54 percent from the 1983-1985 level. The NFA has allotted P40 million for palay procurement this year. In addition, the

Department of Agriculture is undertaking several programs to increase productivity, such as the Rice Production Enhancement Program which has increased average production by 45 percent per hectare.

This report on our efforts to address the endemic underdevelopment of Region 8 underscores our determination to lift this Region to the prosperity we envision for all our people. It does not sum up by any means the measures needed to achieve that goal. We barely scratch the surface of the problems. But we want our people to know that the commitment is there, and action has started. What better way to do this than by the concrete measures and tangible results thus far achieved.

Gin hahangyo ko ha iyo nga tanan na ipagpadayun an iyo suporta og bulig na gin hahapag ha akon nga hit aton gobyerno. Salamat at mauupay na adlaw ha iyo nga tanan.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Environmentalists, July 11, 1988

**Environmentalists
Malacañang
July 11, 1988**

THE OTHER FILIPINO

According to the President, the environmentalists are the other kind of Filipino, those whose love of country grows with the sacrifices and contributions they make to its strength and progress and to the preservation of its beauty.

One of the most encouraging signs of the times is the near universal concern for the environment, and the growing number of Filipinos who have committed themselves to its protection. I regard this as a flowering of patriotism. For the object of environmental concern, which is the very land itself, makes it the most fundamental form of patriotism. Indeed, no Filipino should hold back from a total commitment to save the beauty of his country, the richness of its earth, and the purity of its waters for himself and his posterity.

Yet there are those among us who lack this patriotism. They are the ones who have been stripping our country of its natural wealth, leaving nothing for the future but the destitution and ruin that we are already experiencing.

These are the main culprits, yet the focus is always on the poor *kaingero*. But the random destruction of the *kaingin* system is merely the revenge of those who have been neglected by their country, even as the floods that sweep away our harvests are the last link in the chain of corruption that has characterized the management of our forest resources. So it is with the drought that inevitably follows. The *kaingero* will learn civic responsibility only after we show that the big-time ravishers of the environment have been duly punished and their activities curtailed.

I am pleased and honored to have you here because you are the other kind of Filipino. The kind whose love of country grows with the sacrifices and contributions they make to its strength and progress, and to the preservation of its beauty and potentially inexhaustible productivity. The government's environmental program has benefitted greatly from your insights on how we can use our natural resources without destroying the environment, on how we can meet the needs of the present without surrendering the future. For the program derives its strength from people like yourselves.

I thank you for your presence here and commend you again for the noble work you have been doing to keep our country whole. Good day and God bless you!

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the oath-taking of the Cordillera Regional Assembly, July 11, 1988

**Cordillera
Assembly
Malacañang
July 11, 1988**

Regional

**Oath-taking:
Regional Assembly**

Cordillera

BE YOURSELF

The President clarifies the role expected of the Assembly members: to react to the professionally prepared plans and projects as ordinary private persons practicing their ordinary professions of lawyer or teacher or farmer. In essence, they are ordinary people speaking directly to a government which is now making a special effort to listen.

Now that you have been sworn into office, I am sure the first question you will be asking yourselves is:

As members of the Cordillera Regional Assembly, what are we expected to do?

We cannot be expected to get involved in the administration of our region, because that is the job of the mayors and governors.

We cannot be expected to draw up and evaluate development projects and programs for the region, because that is the job of the line agencies and the Cordillera executive board.

We cannot be expected to pass laws for the region because that is the job of our six congressmen; and furthermore, we are not elected representatives of the people, as they are.

Finally, we are only given five days to do our work! What can we do in five days except act as a ceremonial rubber stamp on the work done by others? If that is all, why are we wasting the government's money?

II

My dear members of the Cordillera Regional Assembly, I would like to assure you that no one is more conscious than I am of the need to conserve our scarce resources. If we use some of these to support you, it is because you have a very important role in the political development of your region and your country; and you have a central place in my personal political philosophy.

Perhaps the most important thing our recent history teaches us is that politics has become a very specialized profession – so specialized that it is difficult for ordinary people to get into or sometimes even to understand. So specialized that those who have made it their life's work, if they are unscrupulous as well as clever, can use it to manipulate the people rather than to express the people's will.

But our recent history also teaches a more hopeful lesson. The unscrupulous and clever specialists do not always prevail. The people can act together to express their will outside the professional political process, and can defeat the unscrupulous few, no matter how well entrenched.

I have never forgotten that I owe my position to the direct expression of the people's will; and I have constantly sought to incorporate it into our political decision-making process. The basic principle of my administration is that

the people have a right to express their will directly to those in power; and they should be able to do this easily and regularly without having to endure hardship and face frightful risk as they once did.

That is why we have regular regional consultations, where all sectors may come forward and face the president directly – and incidentally, I intend to have one in your region as soon as you are organized well enough to make the consultation productive.

That is why we have strengthened the system of regional development councils to give a greater voice to the non-government representatives. In your region's counterpart of these councils, namely the Cordillera Executive Board, you will note that only six out of the twenty-nine members are elected public officials.

That is why we have many other initiatives, such as the people's economic councils and the four pilot provinces where we are trying out more autonomy, all with the objective of decentralizing decision making and going more directly to the people at the grass roots.

III

In this thrust of decentralization, the two autonomous regions are in the forefront; and within the autonomous regions there is a very special role for the Cordillera Regional Assembly.

This role arises precisely because you are not mayors or governors or congressmen or any sort of professional politician.

As I have said, politics is now a very specialized profession, and one who has made it his career has somehow separated himself from the ranks of ordinary people. So much so that on important issues he usually needs to consult the ordinary people and who are his constituents.

The Cordillera Regional Assembly is very different. You represent the people not because they have elected you, but in a simpler and more direct way, because you *are* the people. Your role is to be not representatives of the people. You do not consult; you are the one who are consulted.

So you can now answer the question, what are you expected to do? The answer is very simple: be yourself.

You are not expected to make laws, because you are not congressmen, and the people have not authorized you to make laws for them.

You are not expected to formulate plans and projects because you are not civil servants or professional public executives.

And when the professional public executives present their plans and projects for your evaluation, you are not expected to return home and consult your constituents because you are not mayors or governors and you have no constituents.

You are expected to be yourself.

This means that you should react to the professionally-prepared plans and projects as ordinary private persons practicing your ordinary professions of lawyer or teacher or farmer or whatever your occupation is. And because there are so many of you in relation to the population of your region, we can be reasonably sure that your reactions will be truly representative.

You should now also be able to understand why the time allotted for your work is so short: five days, or less than one and one-half percent of the year.

This is to better enable you to be yourself. You should regard your service in the Cordillera Regional Assembly as a brief interlude in your ordinary life, which will still take up ninety-eight and a half percent of your time.

That is your special value and your special role: you are ordinary people speaking directly to your government, which is now making a special effort to listen.

In doing this, you will not only be serving your region but also providing a model for the rest of the country. And together we will be showing the world that in our country people power continues to prevail.

Thank you and good morning.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Science and Technology, July 13, 1988

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Science and Technology**

[Delivered on July 13, 1988]

ENCOURAGING TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS

The President exhorts the scientists to recapture some measure of our former eminence in science and technology in Asia. In this respect, government's role is to encourage technological innovations by the private sector through the provision of incentives.

Science and technology in our country is in the same state of neglect as in all developing countries, with this dubious distinction: the neglect is greater here than anywhere else. Yet, 20 years ago, we were second only to Japan in scientific and technological know-how in Asia. The challenge is clear: we must recapture some measure of our former eminence in these fields, if never our former ranking.

The key to progress is science and its technological applications. The history of the developed economies of the world prove this; and the lesson is underscored by the story of the emergence of the Newly Industrialized Countries.

In the highly developed countries, 50 to 70 percent of economic growth is attributable to Science and Technology, while in newly industrializing countries, it is 45 to 55 percent.

We have made it our goal to achieve the status of a newly industrialized country by the year 2000. This will require a consistent minimum 10 percent growth rate in GNP until that year. Only science and technology can help us achieve that.

The economist Robert Solow has shown that 70 percent of the U.S. economic growth from 1940 to 1950 was brought about by technological innovations in industry, encouraged of course by two wars. Certainly, a more modest growth through science and technology is open to us without war.

The role of the government is to encourage technological innovations in areas that the private sector finds too risky and to encourage such innovations by the private sector through the provision of incentives. The private sector today accounts for only 10 to 15 percent of total research and development. This is not enough. We must forge a closer bond between public research and private industry to make up for the slack. I have asked the Science Secretary to give me a report on the situation of Philippine R&D with his recommendations on how government can help.

Meanwhile, we commend the members of the science and technology community for their help in spreading awareness of their critical role in development. Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Film Academy of the Philippines, July 14, 1988

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Film Academy of the Philippines**

[Delivered at Malacañang on July 14, 1988]

**PROTECTING THE INDUSTRY'S
PROPERTY RIGHTS**

The President considers the film industry as industry and art. She points out that as art, there should be the most minimal influence exerted by the State. She affirms that the era of favoritism has vanished and no favors will be accorded to a favored group. The best option is for government to protect the industry's property rights.

I am deeply honored to be here among you, to receive the Film Academy award. I know that this award has been given for the great improvement in the economic situation of the movie industry as a result of our determined efforts to root out film piracy. The instrument of that protective policy, Mr. Ed Carrascoso, the head of the Videogram Board, is here with us and I would like him to stand up and share the credit of the success of our anti-piracy campaign.

That policy has its roots in our basic philosophy of justice, that people are entitled to the full compensation for their labors, and that it is the duty of the State to make sure that they get it. The anti-film piracy campaign was started in the past administration, yet at no time has its success been so great as now. We should not be surprised, for at the root of the problem then was the favoritism of government for certain individuals and groups engaged in film piracy and sharing the loot with government officials. The new government has tried and succeeded in ending all that in line with my pledge that under my government there will be no fear of undue influence on government by a favored few, and no favors to a favored few either. I would like to regard this award as recognition of our success in keeping that pledge, at least in the film industry.

I am wary of suggesting what role the film industry can play in national development. While films are an industry, they are essentially an art. And in matters of art, there should be only the most minimal conscious influence exerted by the State. I would hesitate to outline how you can contribute to national development, and leave it entirely to you to decide what those contributions can be. I trust in your innate patriotism and know that the mass appeal of Filipino films would not be possible if the industry, especially its actors and actresses, were not motivated by the highest respect and the deepest care for their audience and following. Your fans know you care for them because you give them the best you can.

Except for the role of movie review and censorship which cannot be avoided because the community must insist upon certain moral standards being upheld, I feel that the best thing government can do for the film industry is to protect its property rights and leave it alone to develop its full potential.

I shall study with much sympathy the measures being proposed by Senator Estrada, Congressman Perez and others to help the movie industry. These measures have just been filed I am told. I would like the honorable gentlemen to furnish me with copies of them immediately so they can be studied by the relevant government agencies.

For the rest, as I said, I leave to the industry the configuration of its own future, trusting the good men and women of Filipino films to do what is best for their sector and for the country. I know that some coordination of the industry's efforts are necessary in this regard, and that the Film Academy of the Philippines was established with that end in view. To fully operationalize the Academy, I hereby appoint Atty. Espiridion Laxa as Director-General of the Film Academy of the Philippines and wish you and the Academy, and the film industry in general even greater success. I

had better, or I will hear it from Kris. Let me assure you all, you will never lack for an eloquent spokesperson in my government, and in my very home. Good day and God bless you all.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Sugar Industry, July 21, 1988

**Sugar Industry
July 21, 1988**

A PARTNERSHIP FOR COMMON ADVANCEMENT

The President admonishes the country's sugar planters to study market developments abroad as a reaction to their thinking about a production quota. Government feels that a rational credit policy is probably the best way to rationalize production.

Only four months ago, I appeared before a smaller convention of sugar planters. But this I understand is a bigger affair, in fact the first Joint National Convention of Planters and Millers in many years. I am pleased to note the large attendance and the buoyant mood of the assembly. This is of course what pleases me most, that the occasion is a celebration of great and wholly unexpected achievements.

In October 1986, I expressed before a gathering in Bacolod the government's profound skepticism about the future of the industry. Not only our own economic and agricultural experts, but officials from abroad had grimly assured us that "sugar is finished!"

A look at the sugar industry then confirmed the prognosis. Sugar fetched low prices both here and abroad; access to the U.S. market was severely limited; there was little financing available, and Nasutra back accounts with the industry remained outstanding.

Domestic prices were at less than P200 per picul; world market prices at about 6 cents per pound. Our U.S. quota was down to 150,000 metric tons. Sugar production, from a high of 2.4 million metric tons had dropped to 1.3 million in 1986-87. Areas planted to sugar cane fell from 460,000 hectares to 269,000 hectares, and this was pure abandonment, not planned diversification. Hunger stalked these abandoned lands, in which insurgency quite naturally began to grow.

We were told that no help should be extended to the sugar industry because it would create false hopes and therefore cause delay in the diversification to other crops which was insistently demanded by these experts and officials.

I felt however that government had to offer some help and so I pledged to get government off the back of the sugar industry and return the initiative in sugar back to the people who are in sugar. Nasutra was dismantled. I then issued directions for the organization of a task force to oversee the restructuring of the industry.

After many consultations, I issued Executive Order No. 18. This is the law which struck down Philsucom and erected in its place the leaner and more effective Sugar Regulatory Administration, and two private foundations for research and socio-economic programs.

But the essence of my approach was to leave the industry to take care of itself, sink or swim; prove its mettle or its critics correct. I am proud to say that sugar came through with flying colors.

To a great extent, of course, the recovery of sugar was a consequence of the general improvement of the economy. The expanding purchasing power in the countryside revived a corresponding demand for sugar. From 800,000 metric tons for domestic consumption, we are now approaching 1.4 million metric tons. This was not only an injection of life but a reorientation of the industry away from over-dependence on the U.S. market. Domestic demand took virtually the entire production of sugar, compelling us to import for our commitments. The importation also eased the upward pressure on domestic prices that might have forced industrial users to switch to substitutes as they have done abroad.

It was a wise move, events have shown. Had we not closed the import contract with Thailand early enough, we might have been caught in the rising spiral of world sugar prices that came soon after. I understand that the price is now 14 cents a pound.

I know that this was an unpopular measure among you. But I think we must agree in retrospect it was a wise move.

Now I am told that you are worried about a production surplus and are thinking of a production quota "to rationalize the industry." I put that in quotes because it reminds me of past "rationalizations" of agricultural crops.

I suggest you give this proposal a long, hard look. Think of the timing. Study market developments abroad, and of a domestic economy that is definitely on the upswing. Consider your own experiences with "rationalizations," and of moves abroad away from market interventions.

Government feels that a rational credit policy is probably the best way to rationalize production. We have done away with the politically motivated liberal credit policies of the state banks in the past and have prescribed normal credit standards in the approval of your loans. Market forces throughout economy will dictate more wisely than anything else in the directions sugar should take.

The problem of insurgency in the sugar areas, and in other parts of our country is of course ever present in our deliberations. New military initiatives are planned, of which I shall speak on other occasions. For now let me say that the best cure for the insurgency is development and justice, a better life for the great body of our people.

With special regard to sugar, let me say that your best security lies in the care you take of the people who work for you. Give them a decent and livable wage; go among them and learn their needs and problems. Transform the sugar industry in a general partnership of worker, planter and miller working for their common advancement.

In the larger context, I ask you to take a sober view of the present "boom" as part of a cycle of ups and downs, and to prepare for both a further improvement in the industry and a downswing that seems built into it. Do not be complacent. Learn from the past.

The introduction of high yielding varieties and the wider adoption of more rational practices in the field can no longer be postponed. The milling sector must also respond by upgrading their plants so that the sugar in the fields is not lost in the mill before it ends up in your coffee.

Per capita domestic consumption of sugar can be raised through more efficient distribution. The elimination of occasional shortages in certain areas in the country will result in a steadier expansion of the market.

Now is probably the time to consider establishing a buffer stock to take advantage of market developments abroad and ensure the sufficiency of local supply. The venture will of course be funded by you. Yet, let me emphasize again that government stands ready to help.

I created an Inter-Agency Committee on Sugar to provide a mechanism for the identification and resolution of problems in the industry. This agency is meant to represent you in the councils of government. Use it to your fullest advantage.

The ownership of the Republic Planters Bank has been resolved. It will be rehabilitated and its expertise in sugar financing will be tapped to assist you. In time it will be privatized consonant with standing policy.

CARP is now in place. I know that many of you are not happy with it even as a concept, let alone with the details of the new law. I don't think my talking to you now will make you change your minds but I do ask you to keep an open mind about it. It is a reality that cannot be escaped, but more fruitfully, I ask you to consider it as a challenge you are willing to take up: a challenge to make all the people of the sugar areas partners in the general progress of the industry. It cannot go on as it has done for centuries. The world is swiftly changing, and so must we. The new spirit

in the land demands a more meaningful sharing in the good things of life. Let us not begrudge that. The age of masters and men is over. A sense of brotherhood with our fellow Filipinos from all walks of life is more in keeping with the time. More and more planters are acquiring this sense of fraternity, this willingness to share as shown by the improved standard of living in the countryside, the increase in the purchasing power of rural folk.

I thank you for inviting me to address you. Good day and God bless you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Agrarian Reform, July 22, 1988

Agrarian Reform July 22, 1988

LAND OF ALL OUR PEOPLE

Agrarian reform hopefully will raise up the seven million families below the poverty line. The President intimates her ambition to increase agricultural productivity, improve rural incomes and make agriculture the spearhead of economic development.

Today marks the passage of one year since I promulgated the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program setting the aim of liberating the tremendous potential wealth of Philippine agriculture by giving the vast body of our people a real and rightful stake in the land. One year is not a long time when one is talking about the fundamental restructuring of a country's economic system. But it must seem an eternity to those who have waited for decades, to a class that has suffered for centuries, for the promise of the soil to come true.

The process of change in a democracy is not an easy one. The move has been slow and difficult from aspiration to articulation in the Constitution, to the enabling act in my executive order and in a law in Congress. After that comes the even more grinding process of implementation in the context of a country strapped for resources, short of efficiency in the various departments of government, and riven still by competing interests on the land.

The reform laws now on the books were a significant and essential step, but the journey is only the beginning. And the way will continue to be hard. But the aim makes it all worthwhile: making this democratic country of ours truly the land of all our people, of the few who are rich and of the multitudes who remain poor.

We must raise up the seven million families below the poverty line so they can see the future we want for us all. We look to agrarian reform to bring this about.

We shall need to acquire and redistribute for Phase One some one million four hundred fifty-four thousand hectares from now until 1992 among nearly eight hundred thousand beneficiaries. With Phase 2, we shall need to redistribute to some 3.7 million beneficiaries about 169,000 hectares in 1988, and over 2.5 million a year from 1989 to 1992.

In the matter of redistributing the land, we have done more than all previous administrations, but it was never my aim to just redistribute poverty. My ambition for our country is to increase agricultural productivity, improve rural incomes, and make agriculture the spearhead of economic development.

So, indeed, much remains to be done. The effort comprehends not only initiatives in agriculture but in every other field as well, of which I shall speak when I deliver the State of the Nation next week.

For today, let me congratulate the Department of Agrarian Reform for the work it has done so far. I commend the dedication of its workers and look forward to even greater success in the years to come. Good day and God bless you all.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Manggahan Floodway Project, July 22, 1988 Manggahan Floodway Project
Pasig, Metro Manila
July 22, 1988**

MAKING MANILA A FAIR CITY

The Manggahan Floodway alone cannot solve the recurring flood problem of Manila. The most important part of the solution belongs to the local governments of Metro Manila and to the people.

This project is truly godsent. Floods have been the bane of Manila since population and waste increased beyond its inherent capability to handle them. Each year, almost a billion pesos are lost as a result of floods. The Manggahan Floodway goes a long way towards the final elimination of this endemic problem. We have much to thank the Japanese Government through Ambassador Tsuneo Tanaka for its critical and invaluable contribution in making it happen.

Yet this imposing project will not solve the problem. The most important part of the solution is the hardest, yet it costs next to nothing. That part is the part that belongs to the local governments of Metro Manila and to the people of this great city. Studies show that 2,034 cubic meters of garbage are shamelessly thrown by the inhabitants of Manila into the drainage network. To this glaring example of lack of self-respect, we must add the selfish and narrow perspective of urban developers who fail to provide adequate drainage facilities in their projects.

Let's stop blaming Public Works for the annual calamities that visit this city during the wet season. Let's look to ourselves and to our local government for the solution. That solution is cheap. Let us respect our own surroundings by keeping them clean, by disposing of our garbage properly, and by demanding of our local governments the attention they owe their people.

The national government will continue to do its part. We are studying a program to improve the natural drainage capacity of our rivers, esteros and creeks which drain 80 percent of Metro Manila.

I urge all our people here in the city to do their part in making Manila the fair city and capital it once was.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the BIR Anniversary, August 1, 1988

**BIR Anniversary
August 1, 1988**

NOT A POPULARITY CONTEST

President Aquino recognizes the tough job the BIR handles. She states that popularity is not that important so long that the job is done, in the right perspective. According to her, doing good work in government is the opposite of a popularity contest.

Most of my time in government is spent with people who spend money. Cabinet secretaries of the line and staff departments spend their time drawing up programs for the public improvement that cost hundreds of millions, if not billions, of pesos. When things don't improve, they blame the lack of money for it and cast a sour eye on the Bureau of Internal Revenue. Today, for a change, I'm pleased to meet with the people whose job it is to raise this money.

The people of the BIR hold perhaps one of the toughest and most critical jobs in the government. Without them, all the best-laid plans would come to nothing.

The rest of government look to the BIR to give them the fuel that will make programs move. This puts a great deal of pressure on the Bureau to perform.

But pressure on the Bureau comes not only from on top, but equally and perhaps worse from below, from the public. I say yours is a tough job because the public from whom you must collect the revenues of government are far from being cooperative and happy. As the saying goes, there are two things people dread and feel they cannot escape: death and the tax collector.

I am here today to change that saying into "death and the payment of taxes." That is how it is in the advanced countries of the world: the payment of taxes is unavoidable, like the day of reckoning. If we want to become a modern country with all the amenities, we must advance that day to now.

This goal will not make you popular. But you should be used to it.

Since Biblical times, the tax collector was intensely disliked. The only modern parallel I can think of is the dentist. And the analogy is striking: the task of pulling out for their own good something to which people are intensely attached, their teeth and their money.

Unlike in other posts in government, doing your duty well will not earn you plaudits, but brickbats. Not surprisingly, one is tempted to compromise, to relax, to make friends instead of enemies among the public because life can be lonely. I speak from experience when I say, doing good work in government is the opposite of a popularity contest.

But never mind. For no less than Christ chose among his first followers a tax-collector. Of course, he had him stop collecting taxes, but nevertheless it still means that however unpopular tax-collecting may be, it does not, contrary to common belief, condemn your soul.

I too am calling you to follow a path: the path of diligent work in the task to which you are called: not to give, but to take. Not for yourselves, but for the country. And no more, and no less, than what the law says you should.

You have been doing good work. Do more. We need it. It will be unpopular, and it will be lonely going. But that is the price of honesty in public service. The opposite is worse. Because I may find out. And then, it will really be much lonelier and harder for you.

I am particularly demanding because of one added pressure in your job. The public gauges the honesty of government by the conduct of this Bureau. You are the barometer of integrity. It is just like the Bureau of Customs, whose job is the same as yours.

I want this government to be remembered as the most honest in our history. That achievement must be recorded first and foremost in this Bureau. And so I and our people look to you for this historic first. That will be your burden, but I think also, for most of you, it will be your greatest honor and challenge. I congratulate you on your anniversary and wish you continued success.

God bless you all.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Martha's Vineyard, August 3, 1988

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Martha's Vineyard**

[Released on August 3, 1988]

LIGHTENING POVERTY

The President is happy to see the Marthas still hard at work; that their ranks have even swelled with new members. She reminds them of the real reason why we work: the aim of a Christian is Christ himself, that whatever we do to the least of our brethren we do unto Him.

I am happy to see you all again. When I last addressed the workers of Martha's Vineyard two years ago, we were just enjoying the fruits of our peaceful revolution and were planting the seeds of a new harvest. One that might yield us unity and peace, and a better life for the millions of our impoverished countrymen.

I'm glad that the Marthas I met then are still hard at work, and that your ranks have even swelled with new members. I hope that in the months and years to come, more and more will hear your call to serve, and give more generously, not only of their material resources but of their time, energy and prayers. As the scriptures tell us the work is so much, but the workers are so few.

As an honorary member of your group, and as one called to tend a larger vineyard, I know how hard the work of a Martha can be. As we all have learned since we started afresh in Eighty-six, the time of planting and nurturing is the longest and most difficult period of all. First we must break new ground, and work new life into hard and tired soil, choked with weeds that we must uproot. These weeds are the old habits of corruption that cannot seem to die. I spoke of this in my State of the Nation with much regret.

Meanwhile, we must also cope with those who stand on the sidelines and tell us of the hundred and one ways we could have done things better.

Finally, we must be prepared for every wind and weather: the sudden storms that can come up in the night and destroy all our labors, or the long dry spells when our resources run low and there is very little to nurture what we have planted.

There are times when we find the work of a Martha just too tiring, as I am sure you occasionally do. The fields we must tend seem endless, the work is never done, the difficulties never cease. At such times, I remind myself of what Christ said when he called us to the vineyard, "Take my yoke for it is light." And that is true, for he carries half the load. And when I am tempted to complain of the lack of understanding and appreciation, I remember that we are entitled to no more than just wage of the worker in the vineyard.

At the same time, we find fresh zeal and perspective by reminding yourselves of the reason why we work. As Christ admonished the original Martha, who was so caught up in her work, the aim of Christian is Christ himself. He did say that whatever we do unto the least of our brethren, we do unto him. And occasionally, perhaps, the best thing to do is just to sit at his feet and listen, and somehow things take care of themselves.

At this time, we in government continue to plant and sow, just as you do in your own portions of the field. The first fruits have come in of our earlier toils, but the larger harvests, those that can be shared by the greater number of our countrymen, have yet to come. I hope in the meantime that the Marthas here and the many more that I hope will join you will continue and increase their efforts to lighten the crushing poverty of our people.

I have been told of your recent work in military hospitals, and of your efforts to give material and spiritual help to wounded soldiers and their dependents. I am glad to know that your efforts have extended beyond charity to livelihood programs. I am also happy to see the new Marthas among us. As an honorary member, I would like to personally welcome the wives of our military officers to our ranks. The wives of those who defend our fields from marauders and poachers have come to join in the work of making them productive.

If only there were more Marthas in our society; more women willing to help solve our problems rather than talk about them, women who show their status by being servants first, then our country would yield larger harvests much sooner. I hope your numbers go on increasing and that you never tire of your work, which is one of the things that inspire me to go on. Thank you, and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Philippine Free Press, August 8, 1988

**Philippine Free Press
August 8, 1988**

LET THY SPEAR KNOW NO BROTHER

The Free Press has long been missed. Now, in its aim to revive the lost era of free journalism, its motto is again thriving: Let thy spear know no brother. Objective journalism, and uncompromising morality. The President looks to the journalism of the Free Press for the unvarnished truth and moral insight that guided the champions of Philippine democracy.

The Free Press as it was before Martial Law has been too long missed. I am very happy to see it back in its old fighting form. The balanced and comprehensive news and the fearless views of its editors and writers, for which the magazine was shut down and sequestered by the dictatorship, were of course back with us when it resumed publication in a small format during the SNAP election campaign. But I share everyone's pleasure in seeing the old format back again. May I say it was also Ninoy's favorite magazine, principally because he was often on the cover.

Since it resumed publication, the Free Press has steadily built up its circulation in the only way it knows how: honestly and exclusively by hard work. After the Revolution, it never asked any favors of this government, nor any restitution for what it lost as a result of its seizure by the dictatorship.

Chipping in its share of patriotism, rather than encashing patriotism, has always been the way of its editor. He will no more change than I will. I guess we are just too stubborn.

The motto of the Free Press has been: "Let thy spear know no brother." It adhered to that motto throughout its 80 years of existence, minus the martial law years when it disdained to publish despite generous offers from the dictatorship. We look to the journalism of the Free Press to give us again the unvarnished truth and the moral insight that guided the champions of Philippine democracy in the past.

"Let thy spear know no brother." Objective journalism and uncompromising morality. The answer to blackmail journalism.

The public has reason to welcome this event.

I just want to ask one question of Teddy, Sr., "Will that spear recognize a sister?"

I am only joking. Thank you for inviting me and God bless you all.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on a Family Farm School project, August 8, 1988 Family Farm School August 8, 1988

NEW APPROACH TO FARM EDUCATION

President Aquino feels honored to participate in the launching of a family farm school project which is the first of its kind in Asia. She congratulates the pioneers of this family farm school and expresses the hope that more of this kind can be established in the near future.

I am happy to be here to participate in the launching of a family farm school project which is the first of its kind in Asia. It happens to be an innovative approach to farm education that is fully consistent with the spirit of our Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. I take note of the support given to this project by landowners who are being asked to sell a significant portion of their landholdings by CARP.

It is our commitment to the common good of our people that unites us. All of us are being asked to sacrifice for the greater welfare of the society we are trying to rebuild and strengthen. We have to put in a lot of our time, talent and resources particularly during the decade of nationalism ahead of us. We can make our economy develop and our nation recover if we think less of our own narrow interests and do more for others, especially the underprivileged and the disadvantaged.

Each one of us must try and reach out to those of our fellow citizens in dire need of opportunities to be opened up to them. Each individual, each institution can find the most appropriate and effective way to help as many of our people to realize their dream: for acquiring skills and knowledge; for getting access to the chance of earning a decent living; for having many pathways opened for their self-expression and self-fulfillment.

The private citizens behind this family farm school have to be commended for their initiative and their contribution. I also wish to commend the local authorities — particularly the government of the province of Batangas and of Lipa City for their support to this private initiative. I would also like to cite the Development Bank of the Philippines for its outreach programs which enable it to work for development in close collaboration with cooperatives, family farm schools, institutes for small entrepreneurs as well as with local officials in all regions of the country.

The road to development is a long one. History tells us that it is often not smooth. We therefore have to join hands and work together as a team, with that spirit of unity born out of genuine concern and service for our communities. Private volunteer organizations must take many initiatives such as this family farm school in Lipa City. Non-government organizations must strike a meaningful relationship with government institutions and with local governments to undertake projects that truly promote area and regional development following a cohesive and consistent framework.

Finally, the partnership between local and foreign private volunteer organizations is welcome for as long as the projects they jointly promote have true and lasting developmental impact in many of our local communities.

Congratulations to all those who helped to pioneer this family farm school. May you have more of these projects in the months and years ahead in many other communities in the Philippines.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the PC-INP Day, August 8, 1988

PC-INP
August 8, 1988

Day

A LOOK AT TWO MAJOR FORCES

The President is not about to overlook the achievements of these two major forces. On their anniversaries, she discourses on problems in the areas of carnapping, gambling and drug addiction among the youths. What is more important to her is putting a complete stop to the participation of military and police personnel in these criminal activities.

The PC and the PC-INP celebrate today their 87th and 13th anniversaries with good reason to be proud. All the carping critics who never risked their lives in combat cannot diminish one bit what you have achieved this year, which I have called a turning point in the Republic's war against the insurgency. There is no need to list your achievements, and that of the Armed Forces as a whole, in order to answer these critics. It is enough to recall that the Communist threat became a military giant when they were in charge – a giant this Administration has cut off at the knees. It is not now – but in their time – that the AFP had years of defeats and retreats as never before in our military annals. We had been written off by the rest of the world as the next Vietnam.

No, we do not have to remind anyone that it was under this Administration that the leadership of the new Khmer Rouge was captured.

It is not in the tradition of the Philippine military and police to celebrate their great occasions with self-praise but rather with the acceptance of new challenges. There are many new and grave challenges before us.

Our military achievements can, in no way, make up for our comparatively poor performance in bringing to our people the most basic security against criminality and anarchy; against threats to their families and properties; and against the near-total breakdown of traffic control that has all but paralyzed the center of the Philippine economy.

Carnapping continues to be a major syndicated crime that blackens even the record of our military and police. In the first quarter of this year, carnapping hit a high of 6.6 vehicles per day. The average has dropped to 3.3. I do not know if that is due to our renewed vigilance or a slackening in the market demand for stolen vehicles. It is bad enough that this is happening because of our apparent inability to arrest the criminal elements responsible. But it is absolutely intolerable that certain elements in the military and police have been implicated.

Another area is illegal gambling. Again, I must congratulate the PC and the INP for the increased number of arrests in gambling raids. Yet again, we must acknowledge the general impression that this criminal activity enjoys the patronage and protection of military scalawags and especially public officials. I have received a report that an anti-gambling raiding party was actually arrested and jailed for carrying out their duties.

Drugs are another problem. Here I must commend the PC and the INP for the great number of arrests effected, even as I deplore the justice system which has allowed the cases to drag on endlessly without resolution. The almost complete ineffectiveness of the judicial and prosecutorial arms of government in drug enforcement is matched by its near total paralysis in all other cases, so much so that billions of pesos of assets have been tied up in litigation for decades.

Failure to give justice to the victims is as much a denial of due process, as punishing the innocent by haste.

More important to me than bringing down the average of stolen vehicles, curbing illegal gambling, getting drugs off the streets and the mouths of our children, is putting a complete stop to the participation of military and police personnel in these criminal activities. Because what is at stake here is the very bond of our people's allegiance to the idea of government and democracy.

I will make no more promises to our people. But I hope I will be able to report to them very soon that this has ended, or that those who have failed the people have been separated from the service.

An important element in the drive against crime is gun control. I won't bother to describe the obvious: more and more guns are being seen in public; more and more powerful weapons are being used in crimes.

The laws against illegal possession are among the most stringent in our arsenal of legal remedies. I want to emphasize again that no one, but no one, is authorized to carry firearms unless he has a license and permit-to-carry issued only by the Chief of Constabulary. I hereby instruct the Chief of Constabulary to supply me with an updated list of all such licenses and permits, however long it may be. This is necessary so that anyone apprehended with an unlicensed firearm will not suddenly be able to produce a license and permit. Mission orders can be issued only by the Chief of Staff and by those specifically authorized by him, and by the Office of the President. A similar list of mission order holders must be submitted by the Chief of Staff.

I will not have this government and this army authorizing crime.

The war against the insurgents must now be pursued with greater vigor and vigilance. A desperate enemy is the most dangerous and brutal. As it loses all hope of victory, the insurgency will opt for chaos and violent anarchy regardless of the outcome. In short, the Communists intends to punish the people for their failure and to bury this nation in the graveyard of their failed ambition. This will not happen, whatever it takes.

In the less dramatic but equally important area of traffic control, several schemes will be tried. I have cut through the tangle of bureaucracy and proposed 18 pilot traffic centers to be operated with private sector assistance in order to decongest major traffic bottlenecks in the city. Let us wait for the results and be prepared to take even more sweeping measures to halt the chaos in our streets.

These are the challenges to mark this joint celebration; challenges that I know you will meet with the same distinction as your unappreciated successes. I will be with you all the way, supporting you every way I can.

This will be one of the few joint celebrations of the PC-INP left. Soon, depending on the Congress, a national police force will stand here before me to face the challenges of the future. Many of you will be among them. Our confidence in the ability of the Philippine National Police to fulfill its obligations rests on the performance that you, the PC and the INP, have shown and will continue to show until the day of its creation.

A measure of the confidence that I feel is our promotion of a total of 1,330 AFP and 751 INP officers to the next higher rank since January, 1988.

Congratulations. I wish you all the best.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the Marian Closing Rites

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines During the Marian Closing Rites

[Delivered on August 14, 1988]

A MARIAN PRAYER

The following is the full text of prayer delivered by President Aquino during the Marian Year closing rites on August 14, 1988, at the University of Santo Tomas.

For many years, Filipinos have held to the dream of total and lasting peace. At the start of the Marian Year, we resolved to recollect how that dream began. It was a hope first conceived in Mary's womb, in the Person of Jesus Christ, God's only Son and His Prince of Peace. As the vessel for that Infant Christ, Mary carried in her womb the original message of peace: God's offer of love, reconciliation and the salvation of all men. That gospel has overflowed the vessel of its birth and reached, through Christ and His Spirit, all men of every race and generation.

Today the Marian Year ends, but the message of peace remains with all Filipinos. May we take to heart the first commandments embodied in that message. The first is that we love our God with all our hearts, and with all our souls and with all our minds just as Filipinos loved, believed and turned to Him in our years of greatest fear and helplessness. Second, may each and every Filipino love his brother Filipino as he loves himself, and as Christ loved us all.

Those, as Christ said, are His first requirements if we are to follow and please Him. And as the angel sang as Mary cradled the Savior in her arms: "... on earth, peace to men on whom His favor rests."

With one heart and mind with Mary, may we lift our petitions as a people to her son Jesus Christ:

May all Filipinos indeed love one another, forgive each other and give to each other as Christ loved, forgave and gave Himself for us.

May all Filipinos remember that our land, our resources, our opportunities and our very lives are not our own, but are given to us as stewardship to fulfill, protect and nurture and not to corrupt or destroy, to share with the many and not to withhold for the few, and to be offered back to Him who in turn promises to bless us abundantly.

May we offer up into His care, the plight of our powerless, poor and suffering. As Mary sang with conviction in her Magnificat, He lifts up the humble and fills the hungry with good things.

From the end of the Marian year onward, may Mary's Son, Jesus Christ, dwell also within us and work powerfully through us to bring widespread peace and prosperity to our land.

With Mary, and in Jesus' name, we pray, amen.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Samahang Balagtas-Balagtas Bicentennial Commission

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Samahang Balagtas-Balagtas Bicentennial Commission**

[Delivered on August 19, 1988]

TUNAY NA WIKANG FILIPINO

Sinabi ng Pangulo na ihiwalay na natin ang dating hindi pagkakaunawaan tungkol sa kung ano ang nararapat na salitang pangkalahatan at pumunta na tayo sa tunay na pagbuo at paglilinang ng tunay na wikang Filipino.

Una sa lahat ay ipinaaabot ko ang isang taos sa pusong pagtanggap sa lahat at bawat isa sa inyo.

Binabati ko kayo sa inyong pagpapakita ng kahanga-hangang kasiglahan sa pakikiisa sa pagdiriwang ng Linggo ng Wikang Pambansa.

Napakagandang pangyayari itong pagsasama-sama ng ating mga lider sa Kongreso — mga Kinatawan at mga Senador — sa isang samahan na pangkultura at pangwika. At ito nga ang Samahang Balagtas.

Para sa akin, ito’y isa ng ganap na pagkakaisa ng lahat ng mga Pilipino, ano man ang katutubong wika sa ngalan ng “Filipino” na ating wikang pambansa.

Ihiniwalay na natin ang dating hindi pagkakaunawaan tungkol sa kung ano ang nararapat na salitang pangkalahatan, at papunta na tayo sa tunay na pagbuo at paglilinang ng tunay na wikang “Filipino” kung saan pagsasama-samahin ang lahat ng ating mga wika. Marahil ay sa pamamagitan nito maaring matupad na rin ang lubos na tagumpay ng mga gawaing ukol sa pagsulong na pang-ekonomiya, panlipunan, pang-edukasyon at pangkultura.

Dahil dito’y hinihiling at iminumungkahi ko sa inyo na magpatibay na tayo ng batas na nagpapatupad sa iniaatas ng Saligang Batas tungkol sa wikang Filipino. Ang tinutukoy ko ay ang pagtatatag ng Komisyon ng Wikang Pambansa o National Language Commission ayon sa sinasabi at ipinag-uutos ng Artikulo XIV Seksiyon 9, ng Konstitusyon. Maka-kaasa kayo sa aking walang sawa na pagtangkilik sa lahat ng inyong pagsisikap hinggil sa mahalagang bagay na ito.

Ang aksiyon sa bagay na ito’y matagal nang panahon na hinihintay ng ating mga kababayan.

Ituring natin na sa pagkakataong ito’y gumawa na tayo ng isang pagpapasiya at isabay na natin hindi lamang sa pagdiriwang ng Linggo ng Wika kung hindi gayon na rin sa selebrasyon ng Balagtas Bicentennial Year at sa pagsisimula ng Decade of the Centennials of Filipino Nationalism, Nationhood and The Philippine Revolutionary Movement.

Sa ganyang hakbang, makasaysayan at dakila ang mga sandaling ito.

Malaki ang aking pag-asa na hindi na matatagalan ang ganap na pamumulaklak ng ating wika.

Ito’y tanging karangalan ng inyong mga liderato na natitiyak ko na tutulungan ng walang pasubali ng ating mga kababayan sa lahat ng dako ng bansa.

Isa pang maliit na kahilingan: Kung maari ay simulan na natin ang pagbigkas ng sariling wika sa atin-ating larangan.

Nakamasid sa atin ang buong bayan, lalo na ang mga kabataan.

Kayat magsimula na tayo sa makasaysayang hakbanging ito. Maraming salamat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on remembering the death of Ninoy

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On remembering the death of Ninoy

[Delivered at Santo Domingo Church, August 21, 1988]

A PLEDGE TO NINOY

In remembering the death of Ninoy, President Aquino dwells on Ninoy's beloved "friend" who never left him, who showed him the way — a supreme sacrifice to free his people. She intones her covenant with the constitution, our contract with God and our pledge to Ninoy.

This is the first time that the anniversary of Ninoy's death is celebrated on the day of the week when it occurred: Sunday. A day of quiet when people stay home. Ninoy had made it easier for his executioners.

It is also a day of prayer, when people go out to Mass.

It is, of course, a special day of sacrifice, of the outpouring of blood for the liberation of men — from sin two thousand years ago, from tyranny just five years ago. The formula has not changed: blood for freedom.

On this day, I wish to honor not just my husband Ninoy but his beloved friend who showed him the way.

Like many other Filipinos, knew Him since childhood from the respectful distance of formal worship. That distance grew with every increase in Ninoy's fame, power and responsibilities, all of which ended abruptly with Martial Law. And that was when their friendship began to flower.

Ninoy had few visitors in prison. It was not only the fears of his friends but also the restrictions of his captors that kept Ninoy mostly alone in those years. I, the children, his mother, brothers and sisters, the handful of lawyers who remained faithful, gave him what comfort and companionship we could. There was, however, one regular visitor to Ninoy's cell, that neither guards nor high walls could keep out, once Ninoy had let him in. That friend came day after day, night after night, more faithful than any other.

In the solitude of his cell, Ninoy enjoyed His companionship most and made up for the time he had lost away from Him. But deeper friendship was still to come.

Ninoy's captors, seeking to break his defiance, threw him into what was virtually a box. But unknown to them, his friend had slipped in with him. And there, in the utmost solitude and utter darkness of despair, Ninoy saw more vividly than in the full light of his days of freedom the true face of his friend and savior.

"He stood me face to face with myself," Ninoy later wrote, "and forced me to look at my emptiness and nothingness, and then helped me to discover Him who has never really left my side: but because pride shielded my eyes, and lust for earthly and temporal power, honor and joys drugged my mind, I failed to notice Him."

In that moment of recognition, friendship turned to the love that never left Ninoy. Together they embarked upon that long journey which ended on this day of the week, five years ago. He would face even more dangers and difficulties, and suffering worse than any he had endured in Laur, but this time Ninoy had a strength beyond his own. He was not alone. Ninoy liked to quote St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians to describe his new self-assurance: "For the sake of Christ, I am content with weakness, insults, hardships, persecutions and calamities, for when I am weak, then I am strong."

Yet Ninoy thought he saw a shortcoming in his friend, for Christ had not revealed to him despite his pleadings, the way by which he, Ninoy, could save his country. But there was still a lot of time for them to spend together, and know more about each other. In the seven more years of imprisonment, and the three of exile, the way was shown to Ninoy. Two thousand years ago, his friend had shown the way to bring peace, reconciliation and salvation for all men – through His death. For these things can only be had as gifts that all save the giver can enjoy. They had to be paid for in blood. As it is written, “. . . without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.”

Five years ago today, Ninoy arrived in Manila.

A shot rang out. A light went out in August, but a conflagration was lit.

According to the experts, when a bullet strikes you in the back of the head, the tendency is for the head to jerk back. So, the last thing that Ninoy saw, before his face slammed on the tarmac and the blood began to form in a pool around his head, was the sky, and the face of his friend who had come to take him home.

The slogan that came from that event was “Ninoy, *hindi ka nag-iisa*. ” The words were like a balm on a wound — for his family. But Ninoy was never alone.

Nor are we. Certainly not in the work Ninoy started, and which we must complete.

I know his friend watches now over every Filipino, awaiting the moment of recognition on his or her part of the larger duties to God, country and fellow man that will finally rescue us from the prison of greed and ambition.

I am certain He walks in our hills and hinterlands, offering love and faith to the rebels, so that one day the destructive courage of their wrong convictions may turn into the constructive energy and commitment without which we cannot restore this nation.

He walks with the poor and meek, seeking to comfort their spirits and give them the strength to stand for their rights and struggle on to the life of abundance on this earth that is meant to be their inheritance.

He marches with our soldiers, giving them courage in the fight and faith in their cause, assuring victory and protection to the righteous, merciful and just.

He walks with our wealthy and powerful, seeking to temper pride with humility, lest it presage their fall, and riches with generosity; and to instill a sense of responsibility for the country and people that create their wealth.

He walks with the corrupt, the libellers, the influence peddlers, the name-droppers, to temper their destructiveness and turn them again towards the exalted purposes for which God placed us on earth.

He walks even with those whose ambition has blinded them to the plight of their country, and its need for a measure of peace in which to heal and grow strong again.

He walks even with those who have destroyed the unity that was the flower that grew from Ninoy’s grave, and became the first casualty after his death.

The unity that poured millions into the streets for his funeral, and again to celebrate the first anniversary of his death, was broken by the second anniversary.

By a miracle, that unity was forged again and held up through the snap election and the EDSA Revolution so that we could say to Ninoy, on the third anniversary of his death, “Thus have we used your sacrifice: We have created a nation that is free again and proud as it has never been, the envy of all the world, and standing on the threshold of progress.”

Yet, exactly a week after the fourth anniversary, the unity that gave this nation the strength to recover its freedom had been lost forever in the brutal coup attempt of August 28. We had meant to celebrate that anniversary again with an offering to his memory of all that we had accomplished together: complete democracy, the restoration of the Congress in which he had taken the greatest pride, the first clear signs of a revived economy. We were reduced to singing instead the dirge of national unity.

Since then we have tried to build a less encompassing unity of those whose commitments have never wavered to God and country and democracy.

That unity is again being tested by those who seek to further reduce it. Who seek to undo the progress we have painfully made, and set this nation back again upon the downward course from which you and I had rescued it.

Every step we have taken towards progress has been challenged, particularly at this time of the year, by those determined to see this nation fail of its destiny. You and I shall not let it.

We will take this nation as far towards recovery and progress as God, duty, and the people's support will let me.

I shall not relent, I shall not rest, for there are too many miles to go to even think of sleeping. Nothing and no one will deflect me from this task. For my mandate is with this nation; not with its enemies. My covenant is with the Constitution. Our contract is with God, Our pledge was to Ninoy.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the LAWASIA Human Rights Seminar

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the LAWASIA Human Rights Seminar**

[Released on August 25, 1988]

BEYOND COMPROMISE

The President congratulates the LAWASIA Human Rights Standing Committee for organizing a seminar on a vital subject that confronts many governments today – human rights. The President deeply shares the cause for which LAWASIA stands and the ideals that continue to be its spiritual inspiration.

At the outset, let me congratulate the LAWASIA Human Rights Standing Committee for organizing a seminar on a vital subject that confronts many governments today.

Human rights advocacy, particularly in Asia and the Pacific now stands at a most challenging threshold – the threshold of decisive influence over the human rights policies of governments in the Asian region.

The challenge is, indeed, awesome. But history leaves us no choice but to respond with our deeply held ideals, our firmest commitment and with our noblest efforts. Because our peoples will never abdicate their birthright to freedom and human dignity, nor their yearnings for just and human societies. And we owe it to our peoples as much as to ourselves to bring life to that birthright.

The memory of one of our most revered nationalists, the late Sen. Jose W. Diokno, inspires us all today. For it was he who hurled the challenge for the creation of a Standing Committee on Human Rights in LAWASIA. You have brought his challenge into the realm of dynamic reality.

The LAWASIA's Standing Committee on Human Rights is now the heart of your movement's unrelenting struggle to exact full reverence to human rights among the peoples of our region. It is our pride that our Chief Justice Marcelo B. Fernan was its Chairman for many years.

Building from that challenge, you are now close to realizing a greater goal — the establishment of an Asian Commission on Human Rights which promises to be a decisive force for positive change in the human rights policies of governments in Asia.

Needless to say, I deeply share the cause for which LAWASIA stands and the ideals that continue to be your spiritual inspiration. I say this not because my late husband Ninoy and I suffered greatly from a tyrant's arrogant disregard of human rights; but because of a firm conviction that no government and no man can ever deny from any human being the right to live a life of dignity, justice and freedom.

My administration's position for the promotion and protection of human rights is beyond compromise. Among my first acts upon my assumption to the Presidency was the creation of Presidential Committee on Human Rights.

This Presidential Committee has since been transformed into a constitutional body called the Commission on Human Rights by virtue of Art. XIII, Sec. 17 of the 1987 Constitution. Under this same constitutional provision, measures for the preservation, safeguarding, defense and advancement of human rights have been institutionalized.

I take pride in the inclusion of Art XIII in the 1987 Constitution, specifically in the arena of Social Justice and Human Rights. For it earned for the Philippines the singular distinction of being one of the few nations of the world

that enshrines in its fundamental law the supreme duty of the state to protect and advance the frontiers of human rights.

I wish you every success in your seminar. And may your stay in this country be exceedingly pleasant and immensely fruitful.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on National Heroes Day

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On National Heroes Day

[Released on August 28, 1988]

TWO KINDS OF HEROES

There are two kinds of heroes; soldiers and officers who fought and gave their lives to defend the State and its territory and those who live lives of quite honor and dedication to the country and State they love. As the President speaks at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, she pays tribute to these two kinds of heroes who both equally deserved the nation's undying gratitude and praise.

Today, I wish to pay tribute to two kinds of Filipino heroes. Both were born and bred in the most difficult phases of our struggle towards nationhood. Both displayed the same glowing attributes: bravery beyond the call of duty, honor beyond question, a readiness for sacrifice, including the last, and love of country and trust in God.

Both have marched side by side, each essential to the success of the other, in the trek towards freedom and progress. In the course of our history, both have equally deserved the nation's undying gratitude and praise.

Here, at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, we pay tribute to the first kind of hero. I refer to the soldiers and officers who fought and gave their lives to defend the State and its territory, and to uphold the democracy that is its soul. A few of them are buried here, that you and I know personally. They fell on this day last year in the greatest battle waged to defend our newly restored democracy. They are the heroes of the most crucial battle waged by our Armed Forces, for that battle separated the chaff from the grain, the traitors to — from the soldiers of — the Republic.

The other breed of heroes are not buried here nor in any other military graveyard in the country. They live — and live lives of quiet honor and dedication to the country and State they love with equal fervor and serve with equal skill. They bear no arms, yet just as faithfully man the ramparts of democracy, and the outcome of their struggles to be honest and to serve well are equally decisive of the fate of our country.

I speak here of the honest public servant — as poorly paid, yet as conscientious as the soldier who lays down his life for a country that too easily forgets him.

I speak here of the farmer, from whose sweat comes the food that keeps the race alive; whose diligence in his work, whose fidelity in paying his debts, are standing rebukes to some of the rich who complain incessantly, and whose legacy to this nation has been the bad debts in the billions and the non-performing assets beyond number that the common Filipino must shoulder in the end.

I speak of those businessmen who pay their taxes dutifully.

I speak of the upright judge, the honest policeman, the industrious overseas worker, and of the rebels in the hills who have chosen, at grave risk to their lives, to give democracy the second chance that I have asked.

I speak of the silent multitude of heroes, whose quiet labors and unyielding integrity make them “the fifty just men” that has kept the Lord from sweeping away the righteous with the wicked from this nation.

Every nation has its heroes. Usually a handful. Ours stand out for its multitude of heroes. None have monuments in their name, yet it is their work that has kept this nation going, and will keep this nation's appointment with its destiny. This day is our tribute to them all. God bless us all.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the National Chamber of Commerce Brunei

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the National Chamber of Commerce Brunei

[Released on August 30, 1988]

A NEWLY-FOUND PARTNERSHIP

The President expresses her deep appreciation to the National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Negara Brunei for making this meeting possible. She expresses confidence that Brunei and the Philippines will be good partners in business as she encourages investors to come to Manila not only for the conference but to see for themselves what the Philippines has to offer.

May I begin by expressing our deep appreciation to the National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Negara Brunei Darussalam; and to all of you here for making this meeting possible.

About eight months ago, His Majesty the Sultan was in Manila for the Asean Summit. The Asean heads of state approved in that meeting economic initiatives that are very relevant to your business activities.

For example, the member countries agreed to raise intra-Asean investments to at least 10 percent of total foreign investments by the turn of the century. They also hoped to increase manufacturing value-added by 8 percent annually.

In trade, the member countries agreed to increase substantially the number and value of traded items within Asean preferential trading arrangements.

To implement these initiatives, we are counting upon the entrepreneurial drive and spirit of the Asean private sector. Although these are formally goals of multilateral cooperation among the six ASEAN states, they translate in practical terms to bilateral trade. Expanding intra-Asean trade means expanding trade between pairs of member states. Likewise, raising the level of intra-Asean investments means increasing capital flows between any two ASEAN countries.

In short, what Brunei Darussalam and the Philippines can do together in terms of trade and investments would all be in the spirit of the regionwide objectives of the Summit last year and the spirit of ASEAN since its inception.

Over the past 2½ years, dramatic improvements in the political and economic situation in the Philippines have enhanced our capability to trade with and to provide a hospitable climate for investments for foreign investments, particularly from our immediate neighbors.

The GNP growth of 1.5 percent in 1986 almost quadrupled to 5.7 percent in 1987, and increased further to 7.6 percent in the first quarter of 1988. The industrial sector contributed significantly to this performance with its growth rates of 7.9 percent in 1987, and 9.67 percent in the first quarter of this year.

After two consecutive years of decline, investments last year reached \$420 million, the highest level registered by our Board of Investments in 20 years. At \$575 million, investments in the first semester alone have already surpassed the level for the whole of 1987.

We have also achieved substantial progress in international trade. From a 14.1 percent decline in 1985, our exports have grown by 4.6 percent in 1986, by 17.6 percent in 1987, and, in the first 6 months of 1988, by 25.4 percent.

We have also been able to stabilize our foreign exchange rate and hold back inflation to 3.8 percent last year.

As I said in my address for the opening session of our Congress last month, there's no denying that "the economy has taken off, it is on the move – not fitfully anymore but in firm strides on the path of sustainable growth".

And the key to this has been the free rein we have given to the private sector, and its involvement in the preparation of our policies for growth – both domestically and intertionally.

To widen the foundation of economic growth, we identified 13 regional agro-industrial centers to draw the forces of development to the countryside, and enlist the energies and creativity of the small and medium entrepreneurs who have sustained our economy thus far. This strategy calls for the pouring of substantial infrastructure in the regions outside Manila to make them hospitable to investments. We will see to it that these areas will have what they need in power, water supply, telecommunications, transportation network, security, and other government services.

One of the centers we have chosen is Zamboanga, which is quite near Brunei Darussalam. This will bring the two private sectors closer to each other and hopefully enhance trade between our countries.

It is heartening to note that trade between our two countries, which had steadily declined from 1981 to 1986, improved almost four times in 1987. However, because our imports from your country consist almost entirely of petroleum products, while our exports have not yet made significant inroads into your market, the balance of trade between our two countries has been heavily in your favor over the past decade. We hope that our private sector, which has been quite enthusiastic about doing business in Brunei Darussalam, can enter into more contracts with many of you so they can help reduce our trade deficit.

I know that one of the reasons for the low volume of trade between Brunei Darussalam and the Philippines is the lack of shipping services between our two countries. To address this problem, we are trying to secure commitments from shipping lines to introduce regular direct shipping services between our two countries. Whether these lines will be established or long survive will depend on the volume of trade.

A most encouraging framework for such trade was laid in the revised Basic Agreement on Asean Industrial Joint Ventures. Under the Agreement, products of any industrial project with equity participation from at least two member states like Brunei Darussalam and the Philippines, will be entitled to a 90 percent tariff cut when exported from the host country to other participating countries.

With the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement on Trade, Investment and Shipping between our two countries, we can now look forward to stronger business ties between the Bruneian and Filipino private sectors.

The accompanying Philippine delegation will answer your other questions about trade and investment opportunities between our countries. May I take this occasion to invite you to an investors conference scheduled for the first week of November in Manila. I hope to see many of you there.

Community of race, community of commercial interest, community of security concerns in the ASEAN region, and the particular proximity of our two countries – these factors argue most strongly for a special relationship between our two countries. I hope that this visit will mark its beginning. Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Filipinos in Brunei

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Filipinos in Brunei

[Released on August 30, 1988]

A TEST OF CHARACTER

The President speaks to the many Filipinos working in this foreign land to manifest her continuing interest in the expatriate life which she herself lived. She acknowledges the tremendous contribution of the overseas workers to the Philippine recovery effort.

Whenever I go on a foreign visit, I make it a point to talk with fellow Filipinos abroad. This is not just a ceremony expected of all Philippine presidents, but a manifestation of my continuing interest in the expatriate life which I myself lived with my husband and children.

Political persecution aside, just living abroad — away from the ways of life in which we grew up, away from the comforting and saving network of family and friends — is a trial in itself. It is a test of character on the part of the Filipino who uproots himself and starts again in a foreign land. May I say also, it is a test of the character of the people who welcome him in their fold.

Our presence abroad, particularly here in Brunei Darussalam shows the wealth of opportunity for livelihood and advancement and the generous welcome which foreign lands offer to Filipino industry, skill, and talent, even as the protection and hospitality you receive are a recognition of the contributions and a manifestation of the care and concern of your particular hosts, the people and government of Brunei Darussalam.

The mutual advantage which your stint here in Brunei Darussalam represents is matched by the equal advantage we derive at home from your employment abroad. The tremendous debt service burden and the other priorities of our economic recovery program are met in no small measure by your remittances to the home country. That fact has moved me to call communities like yours, the unsung heroes of the Revolution.

For the tremendous contribution you have made to the Philippine recovery effort, we offer you every assistance we can, especially here through our Embassy. Your government will exert every effort to meet your needs.

The Department of Labor, for instance, has already attended to your concern to see the period for issuing a travel exit pass shortened. The POEA has decentralized the *Balik Manggagawa* processing system to its regional offices in Cebu, Davao, Cagayan de Oro, La Union, and Baguio. This will soon extend to the 12 labor regional offices all over the country.

The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration is hereby directed to immediately send a welfare officer whose only function will be to attend to your needs here in Brunei Darussalam. By next month, a number of measures will be adopted to make it easier and faster for you to send money to your loved ones back home. I have also directed Secretary Drilon to study what incentives we can offer to our overseas workers who remit their earnings through our banking system.

We shall continue to explore ways to make your exemplary sacrifices abroad lighter and more rewarding. We would welcome suggestions from you.

The well-being of the Filipinos in Brunei Darussalam speaks highly of our hosts — of the liberality of the rulers of Brunei, and of the ever-deepening friendship between our two nations which are so near each other.

Even before we came over, your outstanding work here has been the best ambassador of goodwill which the Philippines could have. You make us all proud at home.

I wish you more success. God bless you all. Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Traffic Management

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On Traffic Management

[Released on September 1, 1988]

A CALL FOR CIVIC INVOLVEMENT

IN TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT

The traffic condition in our country has long been a problem. And TRIP seeks to improve traffic management within the metropolis by instituting short, medium and long term projects and activities. President Aquino congratulates the Presidential Task Force on Traffic Management for coming up with the TRIP.

Today, we shall put into effect the Metro Manila Traffic Improvement Plan, or TRIP. The TRIP seeks to improve traffic management within the metropolis by instituting short, medium and long term projects and activities.

I congratulate the Presidential Task Force on Traffic Management for coming up with the TRIP. I take pleasure in acknowledging the private corporations who are contributing their time and resources to the TRIP, particularly in the project under the Plan called POOK BATAYAN.

In each of the chosen Pook Batayan, traffic enforcement will be upgraded to eventually make Metro Manila a standard in terms of efficient and effective enforcement of traffic rules and regulations. Let us recognize, however, that this is a shared responsibility of the traffic enforcers and the motorists and commuters.

In the long run, the TRIP also seeks to develop a mass transit system and a road network responsive to the travel needs of Metro Manilans and necessary for an efficient traffic management

Let us collectively commit ourselves to help improve Metro Manila's traffic in more and better ways. Let us start the collective commitment to TRIP with our individual and personal action. Whatever gains we attain in Metro Manila will undoubtedly be replicated nationwide.

I believe that the success of the Metro Manila Traffic Improvement Plan will prove our readiness to meet even greater challenges of development that lie before us.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Commission on Immigration and Deportation

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Commission on Immigration and Deportation**

[Released on September 2, 1988]

A TRANSFORMED CID

President Aquino commends Commission on Immigration and Deportation Commissioner Miriam Santiago for the changes and reforms that have successfully taken place in the CID making it more honest and relevant to our times. She adds that the transformed CID has proved her thesis that it is possible to cleanse and energize the bureaucracy.

One of the decisions I am pleased to have made in office was to corner Miriam Santiago into accepting the position of Commissioner of Immigration and Deportation.

If I recall correctly, Miriam and I had the same reactions to the challenge thrown unexpectedly our way: reluctance and apprehension, less over the task than over the toll it would exact upon our private lives. But, fortunately or unfortunately for ourselves, we came to the same conclusion. It would be cowardly, not to say unpatriotic, and lastly un-Filipina to say no. For if there is anything which a Filipina woman who is also a wife and mother is raised to do, it is to trust that God will give her the strength and capability to protect her own. And to every Filipina, every one of her fellow countrymen is her own.

And so, for better or worse for our well-being, here I stand at the helm of the nation, and here is Miriam, in charge of CID.

Another thing that I think we have both discovered is the unusual and unpleasant diet that goes with our jobs.

Miriam says she eats death threats for breakfast.

I for my part have tasted coups, demonstrations, lies and insults. A man would say in our place that he would chew up this diet and spit it out.

But Miriam and I, being ladies, have learned to chew it all quite daintily, and, when we're through, go into the kitchen, reason with the cook or throw him out.

I am pleased that Miriam has not tired of this diet, and that many of her colleagues in the CID have learned to take it as well.

The public and I are well informed of the changes and reforms that have successfully taken place in the CID, making the Commission far more efficient, far better organized, more relevant to our times, and more honest in its dealings and operations than at any time in the last twenty years.

I credit this not only to the Commissioner's strong stomach and stronger words and actions, but to your responsiveness to the challenge she has laid: to let this, of all unlikely agencies, serve as the model of good government. It is of people such as yourselves that I spoke in glowing praise at National Heroes Day—the men and women of quiet determination and unhesitating self-sacrifice in the public service, who are greater heroes than the chest-thumping, sabre rattling men who brought this nation to the sad past from which you and I have tried very

hard to rescue it. More importantly, you have transformed the CID by your own inner strength. You have proved my thesis that it is possible to cleanse and energize the bureaucracy. You have shown the strength of your moral will.

Today, Miriam speaks with some experience when she says that “there is life after the bureaucracy.” I am sure she also means there is life and fulfillment even within it. For I see it in all of you who have worked so hard to clean up and present the image of government proper to the country of the Yellow Revolution.

I have spoken quite highly of your boss, but she and I are transients in our present positions. It is you who will abide here to make sure that what we have all tried to build will be completed and will endure. Keep up the good work and May God Bless you in your efforts.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 106th Anniversary of Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the 106th Anniversary of Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System**

[Released on September 8, 1988]

**106th Anniversary
MWSS
September 8, 1988**

WATER FOR ALL

The President greets the men and women behind the MWSS on their 106th anniversary and urges them to continue the commitment of giving the people clean, potable and safe water.

As you celebrate the 106th Anniversary of Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, it is good to bear in mind that it is given only to a few government agencies to observe over a century of service to the people.

If your corporate life has spanned the different political structures of our nation, it is because you deal with that precious commodity, water. Water that is vital to life and health. Vital to trees and crops. Vital to industry and development.

I take this opportunity to tell you that providing the people with clean, potable and safe water is a major thrust of my administration.

As you may know, as of the end of 1987, only about 63% of the total population of the country had access to water supply systems. The service area coverage included 86% in Metro Manila and its adjoining areas, 55% in other urban areas and 62% in the rural areas.

So the rest of the population, or approximately 37%, still depend on water from open dug wells, rainwater cisterns, lakes and streams, most of which are of doubtful quality.

It is for this sector that I launched the Tulungan sa Tubigan program. With the indispensable help of the private sector represented by the Philippine Business for Social Progress, we have put up 425 water projects in 15 provinces which will benefit 31,000 families.

Reflecting the high priority that my administration accords to the water sector, we have allocated the amount of P28.35 B to fund the water supply and sanitation program for the period 1987 to 1992. This is embodied in the Medium-Term Development Plan of the Philippines.

Likewise, Congress has responded to the constitutional mandate to provide basic social services, particularly safe and adequate water supply for all Filipinos.

Senate Bill No. 47 which was later converted to Senate Resolution No. 13 strongly urges the Department of Public Works and Highways to undertake a comprehensive feasibility study for the construction of water wells and the development of springs in all barangays. To the same effect is House Bill No. 3282.

As you are aware, the MWSS is now part of the Multi-agency Task Force created to implement this directive.

I am pleased to know that the Angat Water Supply Optimization Project, which we have just launched, will serve an additional four million people, while the Manila Water Supply Rehabilitation Project II will benefit about a million people. On the other hand, the Cubao Pumping Station, which we have just inaugurated, will increase the water pressure in 11 areas in Quezon City benefiting 350,000 people. Because these are costing the government several billion pesos, I am pleased to note that under the leadership of Administrator Luis V. Z. Sison, you have increased your water bill collection by 23% and your billing efficiency by 16%.

Binabati kong muli kayong lahat sa inyong anibersaryo. Ipagpatuloy natin ang atingpagtutulongan upang mapagkalooban ang ating mga kababayan ng tubig na malinis at walang hinto ng pagdaloy.

Maraming salamat sa inyong lahat.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Napolcom

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Napolcom**

[Released on September 8, 1988]

A NATIONAL POLICE FORCE

President Aquino impresses upon the members of the NAPOLCOM her determination to push through the unification of the constabulary and police into a national police force dedicated singlemindedly to bringing law, order, and security to our communities. She touches on a bill detailing the character of this national police force, the hierarchy of command, the scope of jurisdiction, the manner of interacting with local authorities.

I am told that this is only the second time a Chief Executive addresses the National Police Commission in its 22 years of existence. I am also told that very shortly after the last President was your guest speaker, Napolcom's first chairman lost his job. Let me assure you, nothing like that will happen. Yet, undoubtedly, important changes are in store for the Napolcom – for the forces of order throughout the country.

These changes cannot be resisted for they have the compelling force of the Constitution behind them. On the contrary, they should be welcomed, for they will address the shortcomings of the present national police system which keep it from meeting its great objectives.

The first duty of the State is law and order. This priority ranks higher than social amelioration, human development, cultural attainment, and whatever else one can think of. This may sound unduly harsh, but only the ignorant will deny it.

As the Constitution states in the Declaration of Principles, the “prime duty of Government is to serve and protect the people,” and the “maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty and property, and the promotion of the general welfare are essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy.”

Without law and order, our lives would be nasty, brutish and short; none of the things that make life worth living would be possible.

Economic progress beyond a hand-to-mouth existence would be impossible without a comprehensive order to assure everyone of at least his right, and that of his family, to life, followed immediately by his right to work undisturbed and keep the compensation of his labor – his right to the property he sweats to acquire. These are the most basic demands of human beings everywhere. They are so basic, hardly anyone thinks of them until they are lost or gravely threatened. The State itself hardly gives them any regard, concentrating instead on improving the lives it protects from harm. The only time the State remembers its minimal function – the protection of life and property – is when their violation reaches such proportions that the public puts on the pressure.

The pressure is on us.

No question about it. The demands I get are increasingly less for the good life, for social justice, and other important aspirations, as for the basic requirement that the State do to every man its basic duty: keep him and his family secure from physical harm, his property rights respected, and his community a safe and decent place to live and work in.

The tragedy in this country is that this very function is so divided and confused, that the State quite frequently fails to perform it.

In recognition of this terrible shortcoming, the Constitution has mandated the coming together and fusion of all the forces of order into one national police force. A unification to assure coordination; a clarification of hierarchy and duty to pinpoint responsibility.

The Constitution provides:

“The State shall establish and maintain one police force, which shall be national in scope and civilian in character; to be administered and controlled by a national police commission. The authority of local executives over the police units in their jurisdiction shall be provided by law.”

It was therefore with a great deal of surprise that I listened to complaints from both parties to the police function, the PC and the INP, about the implementation of this provision. Both sides had essentially one and only one complaint: who would run the show. Yet both sides agreed, that the show was being badly run; that the confusion of functions and roles had seriously hampered the State’s first duty of protection. The discussions between both essential partners – who should be working as one, with one and the same name and uniform – took on the accents of a labor-management dispute.

Well, let me make this clear. The task of policing the community, of securing lives and property, of laying down that modicum of order without which we cannot call our society civilized, is not a job: It is a duty and a calling.

It is all sacrifice, and its chief reward is only that which anyone who goes into public service should expect: the largely private satisfaction that one did his part for his country. No one cares what you gave up in private life to serve in public office. Public service, in addition to being a public trust, is its own and principal reward. There is always the private sector one can go back to.

It is therefore with great eagerness that I accepted this invitation to attend and to talk on your 22nd anniversary. I just had to layout before you my thoughts, my determination to push through the unification of the constabulary and police into one national police force dedicated singlemindedly to bringing law, order, and security to our communities.

A bill detailing the character of this national police force, the hierarchy of command, the scope of jurisdiction, the manner of interacting with local authorities has been introduced in Congress, with my certification. And only yesterday, I repeated my urging to Congress to pass that bill so we can get on with its much needed implementation.

I expect, and know I will get, from the police and its chiefs the cooperation and dedication needed to make the law succeed. I expect the same from the constabulary and its officers. Both organizations were in the forefront of the defense of government and democracy around this time last year, again at EDSA. A sense of embarrassment at how short the forces of order have fallen in the popular expectation, as well as a sense of patriotism on both your parts, assure me that that cooperation will be forthcoming. We shall soon cease to mark constabulary and police anniversaries separately and start proudly to celebrate the achievements of the National Police Force together. I would like to congratulate you on your 22nd and perhaps last anniversary as the National Police Commission, and wish the police and the constabulary every success on the coming rebirth of the national police. Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the signing of Generics Act of 1988

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the signing of Generics Act of 1988**

[Released on September 13, 1988]

TUNGO SA ISANG MALUSOG NA BANSÀ

The health of the people of a nation is one major commitment of government. The signing of Generics Act, is one step towards the realization of a dream — safe, potent and affordable drugs for all.

Nagtitipon tayong lahat dito upang saksihan ang paglagda sa Generics Act of 1988.

Lubhang mahabang panahon na ang pinagtiis nating lahat. Sa tuwi nang tayo ay nagkakasakit, napipilitan tayong kumagat sa presyo ng mamahalinggamot.

Sapagka't ang kalusugan ay kayamanan, kahit ang pinakamahirap sa atin ay hindi nag-aatubili ng paggastos kung ikagagaling rin lang ng karamdaman.

At ang kahalagahan ng paglagay sa abut-kaya ng kababayan natin ng presyo ng gamot ay kinikilala sa ating Saligang Batas.

Ayon sa Art. XIII, Sec. 11, "The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost."

Ako'y nagpapasalamat na sa kinatagal-tagal ng panahon, naabot na rin natin ang layunin na iyan. Ating maaalala ang simulang pag-aaral na ginawa ng U.P. Law Center. Ibinunyag ng kanilang batik ang mananaliksik na ang sanhi ng lubhang mataas na presyo ng gamot ay ang palasak na paggamit ng mga kilalang marka o "brand names."

Ang madla, dala marahil ng pagkahilig sa mgaangkat na produkto, ay gayon din ang hanap sa gamot.

Ilang taon ang lumipas bago nakapagpanukala ng batas sa Kongreso hinggil sa pagtangkilik ng tinatawag na "generic drugs." Hindi naman lubos na pinagbabawal ang pagreseta ng "brand names" na kasama ng "generic names" kung ito ang nais ng mga doktor sa pribadong sektor.

Ang lakas ng loob at pagpupunyagi ni Secretary of Health Alran Bengzon at ng mga tumaguyod sa kanya ang nakapagpasulong sa batas sa Kongreso.

Malaki rin ang tulong na ibinigay ng ilang makabayang media na naglunsad ng kampanya upang ipabatid sa ating kababayan ang malaking pakinabang sa "generics."

Higit sa lahat, nais kong kilalanin ang puspusang pag-tulong ng ating mga kinatawan sa Kongreso na siyang sumuporta at nagsabatas sa Generics Act. Totoong marami sila nguni't ang pangunahing mga sponsors at Chairmen ay si Sen. Mercado sa Senate at si Congressman Monfort sa House of Representatives.

Nguni't hindi pa tapos ang ating trabaho. Kailangan pang gumawa ng mga patakaran o "rules and regulations" sa tulong ng ating mga doktor sa pribadong sektor upang isakatuparan ang Generics Act.

Sa kabila ng matinding pagsalungat sa batas na ito, muli na namang pinamalas ng ating mamamayan ang diwa ng EDSA – ang ating pagkakaisa para sa ikabubuti ng bansang Pilipinas.

Tinatawagan ko kayong lahat, aking mga kababayan, upang tangkilikin ang “generic drugs” tungo sa isang malusog at maunlad na bansa.

Maraming salamat po.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the meeting with Regional Consultative Committee

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the meeting with Regional Consultative Committee**

[Released on September 16, 1988]

THE OPTION THAT BUILDS

The responsibility to preserve the unity and the integrity of the country rests on the President. She pledges to do everything in her power to arrest any drift towards fragmentation.

I am happy to be able to welcome you once again to Malacañang. It has been over five months now since I had a chance to meet with all of you as a group. This was during the first meeting of the RCC when you took your oath of office as commissioners at the Sharif Kabunsuan Hall in Cotabato City.

I know that during the intervening time, you have been busy conducting public consultations on the contentious issues of autonomy and in protracted discussions to reconcile the conflicting views on these issues within the Commission.

While I have not had the opportunity to meet with you these last five months, I would like to assure you that I have kept myself in touch with the activities of the RCC. I am grateful to learn from the reports I have been receiving that most of you have been working with great fervor and commitment to bring the autonomous region to reality.

I realize that you have not been given as much time and resources as the complexity of the work requires. But we have to live within given constraints. Congress has established a clear timeframe within which you have to deliver your results. You must realize that Congress must set firm deadlines because Congress itself is bound by the Constitution to draft an organic act within a fixed schedule.

I understand that the issue of what to call the autonomous region has provoked much disagreement and debate within the Commission. I hope that you will not allow yourselves to be paralyzed by the conflict over this issue. More important, certainly, than the name of the autonomous region is the nature of the powers and responsibilities that you vest in the autonomous regional government.

Let me share with you my perspective as the President of this country. My fundamental responsibility is to preserve the unity and the integrity of this country. I would be culpable if I did not do everything in my power to arrest any drift towards fragmentation. I would hope that in settling controversial issues, you would be guided by the same principle. Cast your support for the option that builds rather than encourages discord.

The Constitution has delineated the areas proposed for inclusion in the autonomous region subject to the consent of the residents as expressed in a plebiscite. Autonomy, if it is to be acceptable, must be for all of those citizens.

I have expressed to you before my great hopes for this experiment in participatory democracy in which you are engaged. You have perhaps discovered in the course of your work that you have accepted a large and heavy burden. Part of that burden must come in the form of a willingness to submit your personal preferences to the consensus of the group.

We expected, as I warned you in Cotabato, that you would need to reconcile many different perspectives. But we have not given up on the hope that you would join hands to achieve our common goal of progress and peace. And we continue to expect that the recommendations you will forward to Congress will reflect a common concern for the

protection of human rights, a commitment to the peaceful resolution of conflict and a compassion for the disadvantaged among our people.

Once again, my thanks for your contribution to nation-building and my best wishes for the successful completion of your work.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the LDP Convention

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the LDP Convention**

[Released on September 16, 1988]

REBIRTH OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties play an important role in the molding of a nation. These parties should serve as an organization of people with shared ideas and aspirations from where the people could get insights and enlightenment. In the LDP convention, President Aquino expresses her support for the rebirth of these parties and of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino. She stresses that LDP should not only be for the elections in 1992 but more especially for the people in these times of crisis.

The founding of this party inaugurates, I hope, the more efficient use of political power for national ends.

The past two years have been a time of building up democratic institutions, of shoring their defenses, and developing their capabilities to absorb the shocks of the free-wheeling politics of a full-fledged democracy. Now that the institutions are in place and the processes have been tested, it is time for the political forces to start aligning themselves on the basis of their respective beliefs and programs.

There can be no democracy without parties, for the various strands of opinion in the country cannot make their influence felt unless they are organized and able to pursue systematically their specific political agendas. Without the organization of political beliefs and programs into disciplined parties, we would have only a riot of conflicting opinions but no effective action. The people, who unavoidably speak in many voices, will be frustrated because none of these voices will be clearly heard.

Perhaps, it is time to have political parties. Perhaps, indeed, the time for realignments is now. Yet, I hope that these realignments do not portend the permanent and total division of the forces of democracy in our country. For should that happen, it will mean the end of all of us. The coming anniversary of Martial Law should be a tragic reminder of what happened the last time the friends of democracy fell out with each other. Democracy was left defenseless, and each of us was left friendless against the small but organized forces of dictatorship.

It is good for the country and for democracy if people with shared ideas and programs organize themselves into separate parties. But it would be disastrous if we divided ourselves again into permanently hostile camps, and thereby divided the attention and energies of the natural leadership of this nation into mutually destructive and frustrating factions.

It was like that in the past, it cannot be that way again in the future.

For we have stepped into a new age of politics, an age we ourselves invited when we fought and overturned the dictatorship in the only way possible, by calling out the people to do it. Now that the people have tasted what it is like to make history, they will not go back to being its victims.

The politics of the present and the future is a people politics, just like the character of the revolution that brought us all here, was people-powered. In the same manner, the full recovery of this country and the fulfillment of its potential must be an affair of the people, and for the people. There is no other way.

First, because the people will not allow themselves to be relegated to a minor role again. Second, because our problems are so great, the challenges before us are so daunting, the enemies of our freedom so many and persistent, that only with the active participation of the people can we prevail.

The breakup of the democratic coalition into parties, like the LDP, is, as I have said, an unavoidable, even a necessary feature of democracy. Yet, the popular unease over this development is understandable. For the general feeling is that every hand is needed to work in unison at the great tasks before us: giving justice and jobs to the people, strength to the economy, and security, both internal and external, to the nation.

The people are uneasy at the formation of parties because it has yet to be shown that parties will work for the people, and not against them.

The people must be convinced that this need not be the case.

But words will not sway them. They have heard too many already. Only actions will move them to give the next stage of democracy, which is the full-flowering of the multiparty system, their respect, support, and defense in the time of crisis.

You and I went through the Revolution. We have seen the power of the people; we know the price that leaders pay for the people's disenchantment; and the great power for transformation that the people represent.

That power is not a mindless thing that politicians can do with as they please, as they did in the past.

That power has a mind and purpose of its own.

It has goals to which the destiny of this country is tied.

It has a leader, who stands ready to protect it. And I am sworn to pursue its goals with every breath and ounce of strength in me.

Naliligayahan ako sa muling pag-usbong ng mga lapian o partido. Kailangan ito upang ang ating demokrasya ay umunlad. Naniniwala ako na ang Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino na nagtataglay ng maraming kaanib at pamunuan na kilala sa kanilang katalinuhan at pagkamakabayan ay magiging katuwang sa mga gawaing ating sinimulan. Gayon din ang sambayanan ay umaasa sa tulong at payo ng LDP sa mga mahirap na suliraning ating hinaharap.

Inaasahan ko na ang LDP ay itinatag hindi lamang para sa halalan sa 1992 kundi upang tumulong sa bayang na harapin at pangibabawan ang ating mga pasanin.

Sa ganyang paniwala, ating ipagdiwang ang pagsilang ng LDP

Mabuhay ang Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino!

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

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**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Civil Service Week

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Civil Service Week**

[Released on September 19, 1988]

SERVING THE PEOPLE

Civil Service Week was proclaimed to correct the injustice done to the men and women in the civil service and to call everyone's attention to their role which is no less than that of maintaining our society. She cites the many outstanding achievements of those in the service of the people.

On the day we honored the fallen heroes of our race, the men and women who fell in battle to make us free and keep us free, I gave equal honor to the silent but living heroes among us: the men and women of quiet dedication throughout the civil service who keep this country and its government functioning.

Public opinion overlooks them, except when one or two of the thousands of these heroes falter in their essential integrity and commitment to duty and country. And then they hit the headlines, blackening the shining record of the civil service.

Civil Service Week was proclaimed to rectify that injustice, to call everyone's attention to your role, which is no less than that of maintaining our society. The week was set aside also to enable you to re-examine your record in the light of the great tasks you are called to perform. It has been a time also of re-examining that very role itself in the light of our new thrust to bring government closer to the people.

The record speaks for itself. Time constraints prevent me from mentioning more than a few of many outstanding achievements:

Department of Health personnel serviced 19,121,075 patients in 1987 – the precision of the count is another manifestation of the efficiency and drive of that agency. 1,061,435 children were also immunized in 1988 nationwide – concrete proof that even as we recover from the past, we have made wise and caring provisions for the future.

The 544th Engineer Construction Battalion of the 52nd Engineer Brigade of the Philippine Army is commended for completing the concreting of the Tugaya-Bacolod Section Project (the Marawi-Malaband Road), one month and three days ahead of schedule. Proof positive of the potential efficiency of the entire civil service, given the right motivation and leadership. Colonel Leonito E. Lambino, commander of the battalion, must take a bow for this one.

The work of social workers in the rebel returnee program, in caring for the children of the streets, the rehabilitation and protection of abused women and children, and in countless other areas where we have fallen short of even our people's modest demands, defy enumeration and our ability to express our admiration and respect for the work they have done. The same admiration and respect on our part goes out to our public school teachers, who willingly added,

to the burden of educating our youth, the dangerous and difficult task of assuring the integrity of the democratic process in various elections.

New dimensions will be added to the work of the civil service. The constitutional direction of decentralized government will come increasingly into play. We must bring government closer to the ordinary people it is meant to serve first and foremost.

We have strengthened the Regional Development Councils to identify and prioritize projects within their respective areas. Agency regional offices are now mandated to inform, consult and seek the approval of the RDCs for projects the agency proposes to undertake in the region.

We have established the Cabinet Action Committee on Implementation Assistance or CACIA as a support mechanism to the CORD and the RDCs.

CACIA regional consultations are taking place at this very moment. The aims are to identify and address quickly project-related problems, and to institutionalize, within the RDCs, the process of problem-identification and problem-solving.

At last September 7's meeting, the Cabinet endorsed the CACIA's recommendations on this and related issues. Among the significant recommendations are:

The delegation to regional directors and district engineers the work of implementing and supervising foreign-assisted projects on an area-jurisdiction basis.

And the early finalization (by November 1988) of the 1989 Infrastructure Program.

Yet even as we mark the achievements of the civil service, refine its concepts, and improve its role, we note with sadness that the epithet "heroic" was not casually applied to the civil service:

Asst. District Engineer Floriano Sarmiento was ambushed last 8 July 1988 in Camarines Sur while investigating several graft and corruption cases – underscoring the fact that our cruelest enemies are not only the rebels but also the crooks who undermine more effectively the people's faith in democracy and good government.

Dr. Pedro Vilela, Medical Specialist TB Control Program, died of a heart attack in the course of field work in Palawan last November.

Atty. Esteban Calalang, a Department of Labor and Employment legal officer, was gunned down while leaving his office last February.

Each name underscores the self-sacrifice that is the essence of public service. Each name should stir us all to a greater resolve to match their courage and their dedication to duty.

Mga kapwa ko manggagawa sa gobyerno, ang nangyari sa atin sa EDSA ay hindi ala-ala lamang ngpakikibaka. Ito'y patuloy na nagpapahiwatig na kung hindi natin iingatan ang ating mga kalayaan, maaari itong nakawin ng mga ilan na nagpapanggap na makapagbibigay sila ng higit na kasaganaan, kaunlaran at kapayapaan.

Kaya't pag-ibayuhin natin, tayong nasa pamahalaan, ang ating pagsisikap, paglilingkod at pagmamalasakit para sa bayan. Maraming salamat po.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino in tribute to Don Chino Roces

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines In tribute to Don Chino Roces

[Delivered at the Mount Carmel Church, October 5, 1988]

HE SHOWED THE WAY

President Aquino pays tribute to Don Chino Roces and his selfless, courageous, and unceasing service to his country and his people. She acknowledges his invaluable contributions to the struggle to achieve democracy in the Philippines. Don Chino's legacy is leadership by example which he attested by the values and goals he exemplified.

With your kind permission, may I speak of Don Chino not only in my capacity as President but as one of those whose lives he specially touched and transformed. May I speak also for Ninoy, whom he treated like a son. For Chino's relationship with me started with my husband.

As you know, it was Chino who introduced Ninoy to the political life – something Ninoy's father might have done for him had he lived longer. Chino took him into the *Manila Times* as a reporter and put him immediately in harm's way, to cover the Korean war. You might say, "Some 'father' Chino was to Ninoy." But that was Chino's way. He measured out his love and respect by the height of his expectations of you.

He knew that Ninoy was aching to serve where his talents would bring most honor quickly to himself, to his family, and to his country. And so Chino sent him to war.

The reputation he made in Korea launched Ninoy's political career. It made him a national figure and smoothed his political ascent. Ninoy would always be conscious of Chino's help throughout his career, yet not as a debt to be repaid but as a great expectation on the old man's part that he could not disappoint.

I do not think Ninoy disappointed Chino, not in the time of his meteoric rise in politics, nor in the time of his descent to the greatest misfortunes that could befall any person. Always, Ninoy was conscious of being watched and judged by Chino and the grand old men of the Republic who refused to collaborate with, and who carried on the struggle against the dictatorship.

After Ninoy's untimely death, but timely sacrifice, Chino turned his attention to me. As Ninoy's widow, I did not need anyone to tell me that I must do honor to that sacrifice by adding my voice to the general clamor for justice and freedom that the assassination had unleashed. But Chino had decided that doing honor was not enough; that a dignified witness was insufficient; that, in fact the time would come when it would be necessary for me to lead the movement in order to unify the forces of the opposition.

That is essentially what he said to me, in the midst of others more eloquent, more experienced in politics, and therefore more capable of presenting a credible challenge to an entrenched dictatorship.

Eloquence, he believed, would be supplied by the simple truth that I must always tell. And experience, by the courage to persevere until the goal was achieved. As for presenting a credible challenge, Chino would have none of it. He wasn't interested in a credible challenge; he wanted a victory. As a downpayment on his promise, he gave me the million signatures that finally convinced me he knew what he was talking about.

Chino was the man of few words in the opposition, comparatively speaking. Yet, he was one of its most effective members. I think his effectiveness lay in the simplicity of his goals and the simplicity of his method. His goal was the liberation of his country. And his method was simply this: he gave himself entirely to the task.

He himself went around gathering those million signatures, directly or through the hundreds of volunteers he had recruited. To raise money for the cause, he went around himself with a grocery cart or with a bag into which people, more embarrassed than he, put their money. Their embarrassment was not for this old man doing such an undignified thing, but for themselves that they were not doing it instead. For they would certainly enjoy, far longer than he, the freedom for which this old man struggled.

That was Chino's method: to attest by your personal example, the values and goals that you proclaim. It was the method and the single biggest issue of the campaign. Leadership by personal example, we said, would pull this country back from the brink and set it on the right path again. We showed, in our lives then, the kind of leadership that would do it. And not just me, but all of you who were with me in the campaign. Your selflessness, your courage and unstinting service without expectation of reward, spoke more convincingly to the masses than any speeches of the Tightness of our cause.

Chino showed the way and it worked.

Two years after the victory, Chino came back to remind us, especially me, that the work was not finished. If we thought it was, then he was sorely disappointed. That was his testy response to the Legion of Honor that was conferred on him. The response gave more significance to the award than the award gave him, for it unleashed a wave of recriminations and, more profitably, of self-examination on the part of many. It hurt when he said it. But it had to be said, and he was one with the moral authority to say it.

In this tranquil and grieving moment I see now that it was his legacy to me and to us all. He has warned us that we, the friends of democracy, shall have a worse time of it than the clear enemies of the people — if we fail the people. For the great expectations we raised in them will be the measure of their scorn and retribution.

Everyone whom the Revolution has put in a position of power and influence, whether in the public or private sector, should heed his warning. For Chino was seldom wrong. More importantly, let us heed it given the affection and the enormous debt we owe the old man for our freedom and for that piece of wisdom that he left us.

To Chino, now, I say: You disappeared from the public scene so quickly after the victory, you gave us no chance to thank you properly. We thought it was your modesty that made you shy away. Now we understand your reticence. You wanted us to realize that the gratitude was owed not to you, but to the people whom you had merely helped to call out. It was their power in the end that made us free. Your modesty reveals to us the more onerous obligation to satisfy our people commensurately with the great hopes we have raised and the great sacrifices they have made.

Chino was that way with those from whom he expected much in the way of patriotism: there shall be no rest except that to which he has now gone. He was that way with us, with you and me — the generation that struggled for freedom. Let us not disappoint him.

With Don Chino's death, another great tree that sheltered us from the winds of adversity comes down. I hope we have learned, while we were protected, to stand upright against them. We are increasingly on our own.

Goodbye, my friend —

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on World Food Day Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On World Food Day**

[Released on October 16, 1988]

PROGRAMS FOR THE RURAL YOUTH

President Aquino assures the youth that the government considers the promotion of their welfare and development as one of its priorities. There are several programs that have been laid out by the different government agencies. Among these are: the Integrated Human Resources Development Program (DSWD), Non-Formal Education Program and Study Now, Pay Later Plan (DECS), and Rural Manpower Development (DOLE).

Mga minamahal kong kabataang nayon, mga kapwa tagapaglingkod sa pamahalaan, mga magsasaka at mga kinatawan ng mga *Agricultural and Fishery Councils* ng iba't ibang bayan at lalawigan:

Napakaangkop ang paksang "Rural Youth" bilang tema ng World Food Day sa taong ito.

Sa kabuuang limampu't walong milyong populasyon ng bayan ngayon, higit sa animnapung porsyento ay mga bata na may gulang na isa hanggang dalawampu't apat (1-24) na taon. Ang labindalawang milyon nito ay kabataang nayon na may labinlima hanggang dalawampu't apat (15-24) na taong gulang.

Bilang mga taganayon, higit na alam ninyo ang tindi ng pagdarahop sa kanayunan. Bilang isang ina naman, labis akong nababahala dahil alam kong sa kalagayan ng paghihirap, ang pangunahing biktima ay ang mga bata at kabataan. Nariyan ang malaganap na malnutrisyon, maagang pagkamatay, at kakulangan ng mga serbisyong pangkalusugan. Nariyang hindi sila makatapos ng pag-aaral dahil sa pangangailangang makapaghanapbuhay na sila. Nariyang dahil sa kakulangan ng sapat na kabuhayan sa kanayunan ay napipiltan silang makipagsapalaran sa mga lungsod at sa ibang bansa.

Bilang Pangulo, nararamdaman ko ang bigat ng mga suliraning ito. Sa tingin ko'y walang sinumang makapagbibigay ng dagliang solusyon. Kaya natutuwa ako sa ginagawang pagpupulong ngayon ng mga kabataang nayon para pagusapan ang mga suliraning bumabagabag sa kanilang sektor. At binabati ko kayong lahat, mga kabataan, sa inyong sipag at pagpupunyagi.

Sa panig naman ng pamahalaan, tinitiyak ko sa inyo na patuloy na bibigyang halaga ang pagpapaunlad sa kabataan. Ito'y malinaw na ipinahahayag ng ating Saligang-Batas na nagtataguyod ng kagalingan ng kabataan, at kumikilala sa mahalagang papel nila sa pagtatatag ng bansa.

Kaya't patuloy na ipinatutupad ng iba't ibang ahensiya ng pamahalaan ang mga programa nila para sa mga kabataang nayon. Ang *Department of Social Welfare and Development* ay may *Integrated Human Resources Development Program for Youth*. Ang *Department of Education, Culture and Sports*, bukod sa pagsagot sa kabuuang pangangailangan ng kabataan sa edukasyon, ay may espesyal na "*Non-Formal Education Program*" at ng "*Study Now, Pay Later Plan*". Ang *Department of Labor and Employment* ay may *Rural Manpower Development Program*.

Naipahayag sa akin ni Kalihim Carlos G. Dominguez na ang Kagawaran ng Pagsasaka naman ay naglunsad ng isang *Farm Youth Development Program*. Sa programang ito, ang bawat teknisyang pang-agrikultura ay magtuturo sa isa o mas marami pang lider-kabataan sa pamamagitan ng aktuwal na paggawa sa bukid.

Sa pamamagitan ng programang ito, pinapangarap ko na ang mga kabataan ay lubos na makalalahok sa demokratikong pagpapatakbo sa pulitika at ekonomiya ng bansa.

Ako'y lubos na natutuwa na sa okasyong ito ng *World Food Day* ay magkakasama kayong mga kabataan at dina-gaanong kabataang magbubukid. Ipinapakita ninyo na ang mga problema, pangarap at pagsisikap ng mga kabataang magbubukid ay hindi hiwalay sa mga suliranin, adhikain, at pagpupunyagi ng iba pang sektor sa kanayunan.

Laban sa kahirapan, gutom at malnutnsyon, ang pangunahing sagot natin ay ang pagpapaunlad ng agrikultura. Ang produksiyon ng pagkain ay kakambal ng pagpapaunlad ng ating kabataan. Kung masagana tayo sa pagkain, higit na malusog ang ating kabataan. Mas malaki rin ang kitang maipantutustos sa kanilang mga pangangailangan.

Sa mahabang kasaysayan natin bilang isang lahi, ilang ulit nang pinatunayan ng mga kabataan na sila ang tagapag-pabilis ng pagbabago at pag-unlad. Kung paano isinulong ng mga kabataan ang pakikibaka ng sambayanan sa mga nakaraang panahon, ganoon din ang sigasig na ipinamalas nila sa mahabang pakikibaka natin laban sa diktadura, hanggang magtagumpay tayo sa EDSA.

Ako'y umaasa na patuloy kayong makikipagkapit-bisig sa kapwa ninyo kabataan, sa mga kapwa ninyo magbubukid, at sa pamahalaan. Gamitin ninyo ang lahat ng inyong dunong at sigla sa ikauunlad ng ating kanayunan para sa maaliwalas, mapayapa at masaganang bukas.

Maraming salamat sa inyong lahat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

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**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 19th International Association of Financial Executive Institutes
World Congress**

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the 19th International Association of Financial Executive Institutes World Congress**

[Delivered at the Manila Hotel, October 17, 1988]

A GOOD NEWS ECONOMY

The restoration of democratic institutions has paved the way for economic recovery and growth. President Aquino discusses the government's accomplishments in the business and finance sectors — strong GNP growth, single-digit inflation; higher income levels; increased employment and increased investments.

At the outset, let me congratulate the Financial Executive Institute of the Philippines (FINEX) for hosting this very important conference of the world's chief financial officers and executives.

I also wish to greet the various member institutes of the International Association of Financial Executives (IAFEI).

This 19th World Congress is most timely and you earn global attention as you take center stage in addressing the subject "Emerging Issues in the Financial World". The theme becomes even more relevant in the light of such major global problems as the huge Third World Debt, the volatile foreign exchange markets and the "Black Monday" effect on the world's major stock exchanges.

Since those fateful days in February 1986 when we succeeded in toppling a 14-year dictatorship through a bloodless coup, the road to political and economic recovery has been far from easy. But we have taken giant steps to restore our democratic institutions. Under a New Constitution, we have established again a bicameral Congress, conducted relatively free and honest national and local elections, set up an independent judiciary and given back to the citizens their long-lost rights. To improve the quality of life of our people, our Congress has passed a Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Act, and a law giving free secondary education in public schools and regional autonomy to cultural minorities, among others.

These political infrastructures have paved the way for economic growth. The government has instituted pump priming activities and stimulated private sector participation as mandated in our Constitution.

To date, domestic investments have far outpaced foreign investments in the Philippines. We have, in short, put in place the magnet for investments and created the circumstances, that should encourage the entry of more capital into the national economy.

Hence, from a negative GNP growth in 1984 and 1985, our economy turned around in 1986; displayed a strong GNP growth of 5.7 per cent in 1987; and sustained a 6.8 per cent growth in GNP for the first eight months of 1988. Consumer spending remains strong due to higher income levels induced by increased employment and wages, which in turn are the result of increases in investments.

Prices have been stable owing to both a prudent economic policy and to drops in the prices of essential imports. For the past two years, the inflation rate has been single-digit; prime lending rates have hovered at around 15 to 16 per cent; while the peso-dollar exchange rate has been fairly stable.

And now that income levels are growing, so is per capita income. In terms of 1972 constant prices, the level of per capita savings in 1988 is almost 10 per cent higher compared with that of 1985.

On investments, the net profits after tax of the top 1000 corporations rose by 651 per cent in 1986. The net earnings of publicly-listed companies grew by 100 per cent in 1986 and by 30-40 per cent in 1987. They are expected to grow by at least 30 per cent this year. Successful business ventures with foreign participation enjoyed a return on investment almost 22 per cent higher here than in other ASEAN countries.

The market is booming so fast that producers periodically even run out of raw materials and components. Some makers of consumer products cannot even begin to export because local demand still has potential, so some manufacturing plants have to operate day and night on three full shifts! Production is, in fact, pushing the energy-generating sector to the limits of its capacity.

The labor situation has significantly improved. There has been a 43 per cent decrease in work stoppages compared to the figures last year and a speedier settlement of labor disputes. Meanwhile, the domestic market is expanding even as the export markets are opening up to Filipino producers trying to tap a bigger share of the US market that the newly-industrialized countries are expected to lose because of higher tariffs applicable to them.

In terms of government support systems, the government is continuing to develop the infrastructure necessary to encourage investments and industrialization, such as: the setting up of regional industrial centers, the establishment and improvement of viable export processing zones, and the modernization of our communications and transportation systems. In addition, our new Omnibus Investments Code offers tax and other incentives to foreign investors in priority areas even as we cut down on the regulations imposed by laws and administrative regulations.

In another sense, the investment climate has never been better. The general peace and order situation has significantly improved and can be expected to improve further.

The recent capture of some of the top leaders of both the Communist Party of the Philippines New People's Army (CPP-NPA) and the ex-military and right-wing elements is proof of the effectiveness of our military surveillance and operations.

To further ensure that peace prevails, I have likewise directed our police forces to effectively clamp down on ordinary criminals and lawless elements, and to uncompromisingly enforce discipline in the streets towards the protection of our citizens and guests.

I have been asked about the debt-equity swap program which the Central Bank initiated about two years ago to encourage foreign investments and at the same time reduce somewhat our foreign debt.

While this program has elicited considerable interest, the Central Bank has had to proceed cautiously because of its concern that the program could have inflationary effects on the economy. Hence, the Monetary Board of the Central Bank is currently evaluating the program to determine appropriate modifications which will, hopefully, enable us to achieve the objective without endangering the financial stability of the economy.

Let me also address the issue of graft and corruption which has contributed to the heavy drain of the country's economic resources in the past regime and whose adverse effects are being painfully felt by us now. I have said before and am saying again that we rose to power on the crest of hope for a new moral order in government. That hope shall not diminish and I shall see to it that it is realized.

I have already directed all agency heads, all department secretaries and all in government to take steps to minimize, if not to completely eradicate, graft and corruption in the bureaucracy. I have charged all government officials with the responsibility and the task of seeing to it that the commission of graft is made more risky and less rewarding for those to whom the inclination and the temptation come. Already we observe that the vigorous campaign to ensure integrity and enhance productivity and efficiency in sensitive frontline services is producing gratifying results.

We hope you will be our partners in our valiant effort to sustain the progress of our reborn democracy.

Be our guests and accept our hands in friendship and in partnership.

Thank you and please accept my good wishes for the success of this conference.

*International Association of Financial Executives Institutes (pronounced ee-ya-fey)

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Convention Integrated Midwives Association of the Philippines
Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Convention Integrated Midwives Association of the Philippines

[Delivered on October 21, 1988]

THE MIDWIFE AS INFORMATION OFFICER

Aside from maternal and child care, the midwife's responsibilities include seeing to it that primary health care services are delivered to the community. In the annual celebration of Midwifery Week, the President reminds the members of the Integrated Midwives Association to continue collaborating and linking with their organizations in the field of health care so that they can serve a greater number of people.

I thank the officers of the Integrated Midwives Association of the Philippines for giving me the opportunity to meet with midwives from across the nation.

To the public mind, midwives are generally seen as assuming two major roles: helping deliver babies and being surrogate mothers. In a sense, I too, have had to play the role of midwife, but in the areas of statecraft and governance.

Your job has certainly expanded beyond that of maternal and child care. The professional midwife is now tasked with the immunization of our children against polio, measles and diphtheria. You are also responsible for delivering micro-nutrients like iron and foodstuffs for our malnourished children. You advise couples on family planning methods which is a take-off from your traditional roles. These services are more often than not delivered twenty-four hours a day to communities that are largely inaccessible, remote and even dangerous.

In a recent survey in Cebu on the control of diarrhea, it was disclosed that the incidence of diarrhea in a barangay or town went up or down depending on the capability of the midwife assigned there.

With the recent passage of the Generics Act, I urge you to add to your public relations work that of disseminating information on the benefits to the people of this law. How can you do this? Everytime people consult you on their medical needs, turn this into a forum for explaining the use of generically named drugs. When dispensing drugs and medicine, refer to their generic names. During immunization sessions, devote a portion of the session to enlighten mothers on the use of generics. In effect, you turn your barangay health station into an information center on the use of generics. In time, your efforts shall equip people with the needed information to make right decisions on the use and cost of medicine.

Aware of the many roles of a midwife, the Department of Health has thus recognized the need for your professional growth. It is now in the process of formulating guidelines for the position of supervising midwife at the provincial level. Being a supervising midwife, however, entails more responsibilities. For those of you who are willing and capable of supervising health service delivery in a larger area, this is an opportunity to prove your mettle and serve a greater number of our people. Ability, intelligence and integrity are virtues which field personnel, no less than professionals, should be gifted with.

As you close your annual celebration of Midwifery Week, let me remind you that the role of the Integrated Midwives Association will be made more meaningful if it could collaborate more closely and link up with other organizations in the field of health care.

Thank you, and I wish you success as you go forth to implement decisions made in this Convention.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

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NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the participants of the 3rd ASEAN Journalists' Exchange Program

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the participants of the 3rd ASEAN Journalists' Exchange Program**

[Delivered on October 21, 1988]

THE GIFT OF COMMUNICATION

In welcoming the participants of the 3rd ASEAN Journalists' Exchange Program, the President reminds them that despite differences in ethnic origins and culture, it is still possible for journalists to work together, to communicate with one another and to form friendship based on understanding and a common commitment to peace.

I am happy and gratified to welcome you, the participants of the Third ASEAN Journalists' Exchange Program, to Malacañang and the Philippines.

I am happy because I am given the opportunity to meet you and to share my thoughts with you, the men and women whom I recognize as among the leading information specialists and opinion makers from our part of the world. And I am gratified because I see in you, and in the Journalists' Exchange Program, the workings of a wonderful idea whose time has come, an idea that should bring about greater understanding, friendship and peace among the peoples of ASEAN.

The beauty of the exchange program is that, in bringing all thirty of you together, you are given the chance to know each other. To interact with one another. To discover for yourselves that, despite the differences in your ethnic origins and your culture, it is still possible for you to work together, to communicate with one another, and to form friendships based on understanding and a common commitment to peace.

As you gain a better understanding of the ASEAN nations and peoples in the course of your tour, you should be able to deal more effectively with news originating from ASEAN countries when you report back to work. While others may tend to sensationalize or exaggerate our problems, I hope you will treat them with insightful objectivity as you become conscious of our shared problems and developmental needs.

Just as important, if not more so, is your capability to influence public opinion and policy makers on political matters. I have talked with your heads of government during the ASEAN Summit held in Manila last year as well as during my state visits. But I must count on your support to make sure that your people cooperate with us, especially during critical times.

I am happy to note that, included in this tour are some of my countrymen. They can apprise you of the background and present status of some of the problems we are confronted with here in the Philippines, including developments in the South arising from our proximity with some of your countries.

After your swing through the countries of the ASEAN region, you can all go back to your respective homes with a valuable lesson, and that lesson is this: given some amount of goodwill, it is possible for all of the peoples of

ASEAN to live together in peace and harmony – if only they are given the opportunity to know and understand each other.

As journalists, you have the gift of communication. I urge you to use that gift so that, before long, you can bring ASEAN countries even closer together. And you can make them one in their desire to forge a region-wide commitment to progress, prosperity and peace.

Thank you very much.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the creation People's Economic Councils

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the creation People's Economic Councils**

[Delivered on October 29, 1988]

**A
WORKERS**

POOL

OF

SKILLED

Small enterprises compose the backbone of our economy. President Aquino endorses the creation of People's Economic Councils which will help develop small businesses and enhance productivity and generate jobs for the unemployed. She considers this as one way of fulfilling her promise to provide incentives to the sectors that have powered our economic recovery, particularly the small and medium industries.

I am happiest when I can dialog with people and people-based organizations like yours. For as you all know, mine is an administration that was swept into power on the crest of a People's Revolution. The second Revolution is now upon us. And you are helping provide the people component of the ongoing Economic Revolution.

This is why I heartily endorsed the plan of Secretary Jose Concepcion to form People's Economic Councils (PECs) all over the country when he first suggested it. Through you, I have a chance to tap the private sector, not the elitist leaders, but those who rely on their home-grown resources and initiative to enhance productivity and generate jobs for the unemployed.

Government, with all its good intentions, organization and materials cannot accomplish everything to propel economic growth in the country. It needs the private sector-orientation and collective participation of the small entrepreneurs like you. And so I am immensely gratified to learn that in Abra, the PECs have developed the bamboocraft industry. In Alfonso, Cavite, they have established a Garments Center. In my own province in Tarlac, a financial assistance program that is the lifeblood of any business enterprise.

In General Santos, your timely intervention helped settle the problem at the port of Nakar.

In Cebu, I understand the PECs helped our government save some PI million with its suggestion that the city government purchase the more practical "Macho" jeeps instead of the more expensive Lancer cars.

In a very real sense, therefore, your small enterprises comprise the backbone of our economy. At a time when large businesses were hesitant about investing their capital in new ventures or were salting away their precious dollars, you were already providing livelihood to our people through cottage industries. Thereby you were helping create a pool of skilled workers for future industrial expansion as well as for the creation of forward and backward linkages, such as through subcontracting arrangements.

Now perhaps you could turn your efforts to assisting the government in meeting the challenge of insurgency. As you are aware, we have been implementing a National Reconciliation and Development Program to help our misguided citizens return to the fold of the law. Within their limited capabilities and resources, our Department of Social Welfare and Development and the Department of National Defense have exerted their best efforts to help the rebel returnees adjust to the challenges of a normal life.

This is where your 1300 organizations can contribute in a substantial way. By providing employment to these brothers and sisters of ours. Give them the opportunities to become productive citizens once again. As they rejoin their families, absorb them into the mainstream of the community's social economic and political life.

I understand that you have passed in your First National Convention a resolution urging the decentralization of certain functions of government. I could not agree more with you that this measure will ensure the faster delivery of government services to the people. That it will, in turn, encourage private businesses to establish their bases of operations in regions where their raw material supply and manpower are abundant is evident.

Let me inform you that as early as April 25, 1988, I issued Administrative Order No. 71 creating a joint Legislative Executive Committee on Decentralization and Local Autonomy in compliance with the Constitutional mandate to decentralize administrative functions. Then I issued Memorandum Circular No. 63 on May 30, 1988 that launched four pilot decentralization projects, namely, Davao del Norte, Laguna, Negros Occidental and Tarlac. A Cabinet Action Committee on Decentralization (CACD) was created to formulate plans and guidelines to implement this policy.

Last Monday, I issued Memorandum Circular No. 82 calling attention to the general provisions of the Administrative Code of 1987 which shall take effect on November 24. These pertain to the strengthening of regional operations through the delegation of more authority on administrative and substantive functions by Department Heads to their regional offices – exactly as you suggest in your Resolution.

Let me add that the New Disbursement Scheme now in full operation is making it possible to make budgetary releases directly to the regional offices concerned. Thus many an irritant that has slowed down the swift delivery of funds where they are needed has been removed.

Your second resolution endorses the “Omnibus Code to Rationalize and Promote Small Enterprises, Establish a Credit and Insurance Corporation, Provide Funds Therefore and For Other Purposes.” In my State of the Nation address delivered on July 25, this year, I promised: “On the economic front, we must provide long delayed incentives to the sectors that have powered our recovery, particularly the small and medium enterprises.”

Now, two bills with the same thrust have been filed in Congress — Senator Leticia Shahani’s bill in the Senate and Congressman Oscar Orbos’ bill in the Lower House. Their provisions are now being harmonized so that I can certify the final product as an Administrative bill.

Ito ang bunga ng pangako ko sa inyong mga munting mangangalakal. Maliit man ang inyong negosyo sapagka’t marahil kapos kayo sa puhunan, mayroon naman kayong mahalagang papel na ginagampanan sa ating lipunan.

Sa pamamagitan ninyo ay napahahatid sa amin ang mga hinaing at mga ninanais ng mga negosyanteng taga-lalawigan. Kung bagama’t mayroong mga matutunog ng mga Chambers of Commerce sa mga lunsod, nariyan naman ang mga mapagsikap at masigasig na People’s Economic Councils.

Kaya’t pag-ibayuhin ninyo ang inyong sipag upang higit na maging matatag ang sinasaligan ng ating ekonomiya.

Maraming salamat sa inyong tulong at Mabuliyay kayong lahat!

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the Catholic Asian Bishops

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the Catholic Asian Bishops**

[Delivered at Club Filipino, November 3, 1988]

**FAITH
FIRM FOUNDATION**

ANCHORED

ON

A

Asia is the cradle of the great religions of the world. President Aquino welcomes the participants of the Asian Bishop's Institute on the Theology of Dialogue. She acknowledges the importance of dialogue among the different religious leaders in order to generate joy, foster liberation, spawn dignity and peace, and bring about equality and hope among the people.

Allow me to extend to you a very warm and cordial welcome.

I understand that you are here to attend the Seventh Asian Bishop's Institute on the Theology of Dialogue under the sponsorship of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences. And I am told that the theme you chose for your recently-concluded workshop was "Living and Working Together with Neighbors of Other Religions."

It makes me very happy that you chose this theme, for I see the wisdom in it. There is wisdom because it recognizes that the greatest service that Asian religious leaders can give Asia is dialogue. I say this because I know that dialogue can generate joy, foster liberation, spawn dignity and peace, and bring about equality and hope. Above all, it can create the sense of community which is still sorely lacking among the peoples in this part of our world.

This is sad, for Asia is the cradle of the great religions of the world. And all these religions have a vision of community. Of peoples coming together in peace and harmony despite their disparate cultures.

In my case I have opened avenues of communication with church leaders and organizations. A few months ago I had a dialog with representatives of the Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines. Acting promptly on their recommendation, I appointed Atty. Narciso Monteiro as Commissioner of the Commission on Human Rights. I have directed Defense Secretary Fidel Ramos and Chief Staff Gen. Renato de Villa to hold continuing dialogs with such Church leaders as Archbishop Leonardo Legaspi and Bishop Bacani.

Aware that the church leaders have direct access to the people in the countryside, I have tapped some of them to help in our economic development efforts. Monsignor Pastor Cotiangco, whom I have appointed Chairman of the Regional Development Council in Region VIII, has earned the respect and high regard of his lay colleagues for his many insightful contributions.

In my unceasing quest for pipelines to both church leaders and the laity, I have agreed to meet next week with the members of the Public Affairs Committee of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

I have not, however, confined my relationship with the Catholic Church alone. To ensure inputs from all religious denominations, I have set up the National Ecumenical Consultative Committee (NECCOM).

Under the leadership of Bishop Deogracias S. Iniguez who is here with us, officials from the Protestant, Muslim, and other minority sects keep me attuned to the feelings and aspirations of people of different faiths all over the country.

All these religions, as you very well know, have gifted us, not with just great leaders, but with thoughts and attitudes of surpassing wisdom and beauty. We can benefit from all these. From the leaders whose sterling example and exemplary way of life are an inspiration to all of us. From their teachings which, if followed conscientiously, can provide the answer to all the conflicts and dissensions that plague the world. These spiritual leaders and their wisdom can provide the right answer, in a prayerful way, to the questions that unsettle us and disturb our serenity.

The mystery of all religions flows through the mystery of faith. Then, through the mystery of a person who lives the religion into the mystery of man.

Each individual chooses his own path. We who are Christians chose the path of Jesus Christ. As we strive to walk in His footsteps, we become more and more sure that we have anchored our faith on a firm foundation. A foundation based on love which impels us to stretch our arms towards our brothers in peace and reconciliation.

Once again, I extend to you my sincere welcome. Thank you for listening and may the good Lord bless us all!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Conference of ASEAN Business Leaders

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the Conference of ASEAN Business Leaders

[Delivered at the Fiesta Pavilion, Manila Hotel, November 7, 1988]

REACHING FOR NEW HEIGHTS

The President paints a more conducive business climate for the ASEAN business leaders who came to look more closely at trade and investment opportunities in the Philippines. She enjoins them to make the balance of her stewardship as meaningful and as significant as the past 2-1/2 years in the life of the Filipino nation.

At the outset, let me congratulate the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FFCCI) for its initiative in sponsoring this Conference of ASEAN Business Leaders.

I believe it is the sum of many efforts such as this, coming from different sectors but all pushing in one direction that eventually brings a nation to its fulfillment

Let me also extend a warm welcome to our guests from ASEAN who have heeded the call of their counterparts here to look more closely at trade and investment opportunities in the Philippines.

I know that you will not be disappointed with what our country has to offer. For today, perhaps more than at any other time in the past 20 years; the Philippines is on the rise. The momentum of recovery is building up. It may well overtake other countries that did not have to go through the pain and trials my country has.

Let me present you with unassailable facts.

Less than three years ago, the Philippines was known for its one-man rule. The man who had been elected President in 1965 was still in power 20 years after. He acted like he was preparing to stay on for some time more.

The Filipino people broke that line. They showed to the world in 4 historic days in February 1986 how democracy defends itself. Since then, we have lost no time in restoring our democratic institutions.

The people have ratified a New Constitution. They have elected their representatives to both Houses of Congress as well as their governors, mayors, and other local officials. We have given back to them their civil and political rights. Our independent judiciary has regained its pride and confidence. Peace and order have returned to many communities.

Less than three years ago, the Philippines was also known as the sick man of Asia. Its economy which had led the way for other Asian economies in the early '60s was in a dangerous tailspin. Real GNP was continuously contracting. International reserves were hemorrhaging even as a selected few enriching themselves at the expense of legitimate businessmen and entrepreneurs.

Today, we can proudly say that we have pulled off one of the most phenomenal rescue operations in economic history.

We arrested the nosedive of the GNP in 1986 and propelled it to a growth of 5.7 per cent last year, second only to Thailand in the ASEAN region. We have not stopped as we even exceeded this with a 6.8 per cent growth as of the first semester of 1988.

From a consumption-led growth in 1987, we have made the difficult transition to an investment-led growth. Capital formation radically increased its growth rate from 4.8 per cent in the first semester of 1987 to 22.5 per cent in the first semester of 1988, while personal consumption maintained its more moderate increase of 5 to 6 per cent.

This only means that expenditures are now flowing into the construction of plants and factories and into purchases of durable equipment, all of which directly expand our country's productive capabilities.

Having done away with the stranglehold of crony capitalism and government-run business, we have seen the private sector unleash its long pent-up energies. Industry has been showing the way for the rest of the sectors of the economy, with growth rates of 8 to 9 percent over the last two years.

Even with a burgeoning economy, we have managed to keep inflation below double digits. Prime rates remain at 16-17 per cent; while the peso-dollar exchange rate has been relatively stable.

The labor situation has already normalized. Businessmen are reporting marked increases across the board in gross revenues, net income, employee workforces, capacity utilization and capital expenditures. In fact, in a recent independent Business Confidence Survey (Makati Business Club), an overwhelming majority of the people actually doing business in the country are saying they expect things to get even better in the days to come.

When this government started out less than three years ago, they gave it about six months to survive. Well, this month I will reach my 1,000th day in office — more or less the midpoint of my Administration. I will celebrate it with the full intention of seeing through the balance of my stay as meaningful and as significant as the past 2-1/2 years have been in the life of the Filipino nation.

We still have many more challenges to meet and obstacles to hurdle in our way. The Filipino people are only now beginning to feel the first few gusts of the winds of change that have reached their lives. We must sustain our progress.

That is why we are putting in place the business infrastructure that will encourage many of you to take part in our efforts.

Last year, we passed a New Omnibus Investments Code that provides investment incentives at least equal to what are available in this part of the world. We are now looking at the further reduction of red tape and the simplification of the rules and regulations that affect the doing of business in the Philippines.

We are setting up regional industrial centers throughout the country that will offer the complete range of infrastructure necessary for business to operate competitively in world markets: power, communications, transportation systems and the like.

At the same time, we are pushing through Congress an Omnibus Code for Small Enterprises that will respond to the unique needs of the small business entrepreneur in terms of financing, marketing and raw materials procurement support

We are not wanting in specific viable opportunities for exports and investments. Not far from here, at the Philippine Trade Training Center, the Philippine government and the UN have just opened the Philippine Investors Forum which aims to promote close to 180 identified industrial projects for joint-venture partnerships through equity investments, market access, technology transfer or equipment supply. You may wish to visit and explore the possibilities there.

Let me therefore close with this message.

With the unique combination of its experience, resources and potentials, the Philippines today is unlike any other country in the world. We have emerged from the darkest days of our history into the bright sunlight of a promising future. And we are determined never to look back.

We realize that the journey ahead will be far from easy. Please help us along the way, as our neighbors, our friends, and most of all, as our brothers in our common search for a better quality of life.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino at the inauguration of the tower transmitter of GMA 7

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the inauguration of the tower transmitter of GMA 7**

[Delivered in Tandang Sora, Channel 7, November 7, 1988]

A TOWER OF POWER

GMA 7 not only survived the siege of the historic event but now makes a historic event of its own – the inauguration of its tower which multiplies its reach and influence to make it a truly outstanding television station.

This is a momentous occasion. The power of the television image is, this day, multiplied enormously by the power of this tower.

I need not remind anyone about the influence of television in shaping perceptions and actions in the world. The Revolution that restored democracy and gave us back the direction of our lives was essentially a revolution of images: the image of cowardice transformed before the eyes of millions of television viewers into images of courage, selflessness and patriotism such as the world had never seen. I speak not only of EDSA, but of the tremendous outpouring of popular support throughout the campaign, all over this land, that the whole world witnessed and which spelled in everyone's mind the certain doom of the dictatorship.

We did not see those images, so they are not a part of the national consciousness. We had it better: we were those images; we lived that courage – once upon a time.

The courage continued even after EDSA, most notably at GMA-7 where my dual and difficult commitment to keep democracy at any price, and yet to resolve conflicts by peaceful methods, was most severely tested.

On the spot, where GMA-7 stands, there would now be a bomb crater if I had wavered in my unpopular decision to settle the GMA-7 affair peacefully, against all "expert" advice. Several tanks were on their way to iron out and flatten out, so to speak, our differences with the loyalist rebels.

Perhaps that was the way to do it, but I had a commitment to keep power as I had gotten it: by peace without dishonor, by reason without compromise.

Those who were at GMA-7 at the time know that we kept the peace, we held on to honor, and the rebels saw the light of the reason.

I am happy to be here, and most pleased to address you on this occasion. GMA-7 not only survived that historic event, but has made a historic event of its own – the inauguration of this tower which multiplies its reach and influence, and makes it a truly outstanding television station.

I am especially pleased to be here because I have heard a great deal about the success of this station, which has become the sterling and enviable example of the spirit of private enterprise and initiative in communications. I see here also the same refusal to compromise principle – in your case, the principle of quality so evident in GMA-7's programming – that saved this station.

For what it is worth, let me say that you have, definitely, this President's constant eyes and ears.

Congratulations on your new tower and your new reach. I have the greatest confidence that an unwavering sense of public responsibility and civic duty on your part will always match and guide the enhanced power that is now in your hands. May others follow your lead and make us all equally proud of what Filipinos can do in communications.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Philippine Business Conference

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Philippine Business Conference**

[Delivered at the Philippine Plaza Hotel, November 11, 1988]

FOR GREATER DECENTRALIZATION

The President is gratified to know that the thrust of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry is the countryside because this is also the special concern of her government. This is indicated by the CORD program where each region has a cabinet member assigned to see to its specific needs. She assures the group that their recommendations for greater doses of decentralization will be seriously considered particularly on minimum wages, administrative regulations and law enforcements.

The participants of this conference conclude today a year's work on the challenge of rural development and progress. I congratulate you on the recommendations you have made and on the democratic methods by which you arrived at them. I can appreciate your satisfaction with the work you have done, for it was no easy task culling the concerns and refining the recommendations of the business conferences you held in all the regions.

When the Board of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry paid me a visit last February, they advised me that the thrust of the Chamber would be in the countryside. This was gratifying for the government's first priority had become, after the restoration of democratic rights, the equally democratic enjoyment of material progress by the people — most of whom are in the countryside.

That the countryside is our special concern is shown by the organization of our government. Your regional business conferences have become familiar with the CORD program, where each region has a Cabinet member assigned to track and see to its specific needs. Mr. Victor Lim tells me that this arrangement has made a major difference in the productivity of the regions. Rural projects and programs given high priority by the Regional Development Councils are seen to get the fullest support from the government. So far as I can tell, the CORD program has achieved what was intended: to open a two-way channel of communication between the seat of power and the people, whose welfare and progress are its first responsibility.

Yet, I have been in power long enough to know that you can never relax your vigilance, we cannot take anything for granted. Checks and double-checks must constantly be made to keep everyone on their toes. Thus, in addition to CORD, I have placed the Cabinet Action Committee on Implementation Assistance or CACIA to audit the performance of government in the regions. The CACIA has made weekly visits to the provinces to evaluate the programs being implemented and correct their mistakes and shortcomings with the utmost speed.

So, whatever anyone says, we are confident that the system for effective government action is well in place, and it has been producing results on which I shall report more fully on the occasion of the One Thousand Days of the Aquino administration.

Let me turn now to some of your recommendations.

We see great merit in the fostership program whereby business corporations may adopt a province or municipality as the focus of its countryside investments. The incentive will be in the form of tax exemptions. I think this was inspired by the Pook Batayan concept of asking private sector help to alleviate traffic congestion in Manila. Let me say, however, that rural development will certainly be a more complex and expensive proposition than traffic decongestion. Let me also express the hope that this extension of the Pook Batayan concept will work even better than the original.

I shall give this proposal to the Cabinet Assistance System for study, after which they will submit their recommendations to me. In the meantime, you should convince your business colleagues to start the program even before the tax incentives are in place. For the best incentive is already there: progress and material well-being in the countryside are the best insurance against instability and revolution. Consider that carefully.

You recommend a further decentralization of government services. I could not agree with you more. Which is why as early as May 30, this year, I issued Memorandum Circular No. 63 launching four decentralization projects, namely Davao del Norte, Laguna, Negros Occidental and Tarlac. A Cabinet Action Committee on Decentralization was created to formulate plans and guidelines to implement this policy.

I must tell you, however, that, based on our experiences, administrative decentralization and even central government initiatives are not enough. We are doing our part. The DBP has launched its Proactive Development Fund, which opens loan windows to worthwhile but undercollateralized projects. The PNB has its Small Enterprises Loan Program. There are several more credit programs. Yet, all together, they barely scratch the surface of rural requirements.

We need you, the private sector, to start that engine of the economy that you got back together with your freedom. We need that engine running in such investment-starved areas like Regions I, II, V, VIII and XII. Without those economic commitments, decentralization will mean nothing more than the central government turning its back on the autonomous problems of the regions as no longer its concern.

I am pleased to note that you have made some investment, at least of your time and talents. I mention specially the contribution of managerial expertise in the Agricultural and Fishery Councils. Your participation in the People's Economic Councils has been equally useful and praised, particularly by the Department of Trade and Industry.

The general theme of your other recommendations may be summed up in the words: Red Tape. Not just less of it, but eliminate it altogether.

That is a dream. For as long as there is need for government, which means for as long as we live in an imperfect world, there will always be bureaucrats and regulations. At most, we can strive to make bureaucrats and regulations more useful and less frustrating in the daily activities of the people. The process of elimination will be gradual. Much ground that is gained will be lost again, because regulations that promote progress today, may retard it tomorrow. What is important is that we do not stop listening to the complaints, nor stop trying to improve.

The Board of Investments has streamlined procedures and reduced processing time from 44 to 24 days, and the number of forms to be filled out from seven to one.

Your suggestions of greater doses of decentralization will be seriously considered, particularly on such matters as minimum wages, administrative regulations, and law enforcement. The process of preparing budgets can only improve by closer contact with the economic and political leaderships of the communities those budgets are designed to serve, allowing these communities to define priorities.

Let me conclude by expressing again my appreciation for your efforts; for the great concern you have shown in the vital area of countryside development. With government and the private sector working hand in hand, I am sure that more successes will crown our joint efforts. Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on plant research in Mindanao

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On plant research in Mindanao**

[Delivered in Cotabato City, November 15, 1988]

TRIUMPH OF RESEARCH

Three significant events converged on the inauguration of a modest manufacturing plant to produce herbal medicines, namely: the plant is a triumph of Filipino research; it is also a continuing expression of our commitment to the National Drug Policy, and the plant is sited in Mindanao, a land that has symbolized the pioneering spirit of our people. The President adds that the event demonstrates our national will to grow and develop by our means.

In the past few weeks, I have been reviewing the devastation wrought by nature in some of the provinces affected by typhoons. While our government and people are responding well to relieve the pain and suffering of natural calamities, it pains me to see nature's damage added to our already enormous difficulties. It is therefore a source of great comfort for me to attend an occasion when our people has harnessed the bounty of nature for our benefit.

What we are inaugurating here is a modest manufacturing plant to produce herbal medicines. I understand that this plant has a capacity of two million tablets per month or 24 million tablets per year, enough medicines to relieve fever and pain of about one million Filipinos. Viewed from the magnitude of our needs, this plant is a small contribution to national welfare.

But why am I here, calling on our people to celebrate and congratulate its birth? I am here to call attention to three significant developments that converged on today's event.

This plant is, first of all, a product of Philippine research. Our nation's capability to discover and develop medicines from plants has a long history dating back to the Spanish era. But except for a few products like the vitamin B complex preparation, the Tiki-Tiki extract, and the anti-malarial drug from the bark of the chinchova tree, totaquiwa, our society has not benefitted greatly from these research activities. Well, this plant arose directly from the efforts of the National Integrated Research Program on medicinal plants, a program whose researchers were honored during the 88th anniversary of our Civil Service last September 19. This plant, therefore, is a symbol of our determination to generate national benefits from research and conversely to encourage science as an instrument of national welfare.

Apart from being a triumph of scientific research, this plant is also a continuing expression of our commitment to the National Drug Policy, a policy which I enunciated last year. Since then, we have been strengthening and upgrading the Bureau of Food and Drugs; we have caused the withdrawal of 120 drug preparations deemed of questionable safety and efficacy; we are currently conducting an intensified inspection program of drug establishment; we are revising drug registration policies and procedures; and above all, we have passed the Generics Act of 1988, a major step towards rational use of drugs. This plant is a clear step towards self-sufficiency in pharmaceutical production. This plant is one of four that we have established around the country. In addition to government's own production effort, we are looking forward to the finalization of plans to further develop the Philippine pharmaceutical industry, plans that we are formulating with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. Initial indications are that our country can viably move towards further development of capacity to

produce a broad range of antibiotics. This plant should thus be seen as a vanguard of our national effort towards self-sufficiency in pharmaceuticals via local production of key active ingredients.

Finally, this plant is in Mindanao, a fact that should not escape our people's notice. We are inaugurating a facility to produce medicines that we need, from plants that we cultivate, and in a land that has symbolized the pioneering spirit of our people. As we stand in the crossroads of national policy on development and autonomy, we shall always remember that in all our debates, the welfare of our people is a paramount goal, and our own capacity to work together to secure it is our major resource. This plant is yet another reminder that Mindanao can lead our national development in pharmaceuticals as well as in many other areas.

Let me pause a minute to contemplate the benefits of this plant's production. I am told that this will produce four medicinal preparations from herbs in tablet form, namely: *lagundi*, a broncho-dilator and analgesic-antipyretic; *sambong*, a diuretic; *tsaang gubat*, a product against intestinal hypermotility and *yerba buena*, an analgesic-antipyretic. All these are well known and well studied preparations coming from plants that are native to our country. Aside from being safe and effective, these drugs are also economical. *Lagundi* for example will be produced at a cost of P0.37 per tablet. The currently available commercial preparation that has the same effect as *lagundi* would cost about P1.94 or more than 80% more. From this plant, our people can obtain drugs from natural ingredients and locally produced that yield the same therapeutic benefit for a fraction of the cost of existing commercial products.

From these points of view, we mark an important event today, an event that demonstrates our national will to grow and develop by our own means, and an event that yields tangible, practical and welcome benefits for the ordinary citizen. That is why I am here today, to declare that "yes, we can!" And also to say, that our people will benefit in the process.

So congratulations on this achievement, and may this grow and flourish into a truly self-reliant national pharmaceutical industry.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on her 1,000 Days of Presidency

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On her 1,000 Days of Presidency**

[Delivered at the Ceremonial Hall of Malacañang, November 21, 1988]

SO MUCH TO BE PROUD OF

The President recounts the reforms and measures she has instituted to insure the country's return to full democracy and economic recovery. While there appears to be a boom in the economy, she admits that there are faults that cannot be covered like the shortfall in tax collection, the glaring garbage problem, the shortcomings in the infrastructure and housing programs and the disappointing anti-smuggling effort.

She nonetheless looks back on the past 1,000 days and see much that we Filipinos can be proud of.

Today completes 1,000 days of the Aquino administration and 1,000 days of our regained Philippine democracy. This day is set aside as a time for taking stock and making judgments on the performance of this government, and the experience of democracy.

Judgment will be rendered on me, and on how well or badly the government has done.

But, equally, judgment must be rendered on the rest of us who pledged with me to serve our country.

Finally, there must be judgment on whether – and to what extent – those who opposed me succeeded or failed in frustrating my plans for our people. Both sides should note their failures and celebrate their victories.

Everyone must submit to judgment or this effort at stock-taking will be useless. If this government were a dictatorship, if no one else had a say in how things are run in this country, then only the government should be judged.

Those who campaigned for democracy along with those who raised the banner of revolt must all face the judgment of the common people who never failed then-country.

For myself, I knew what I had to do. The pledges I made during the Campaign were not just a candidate's promises but the aspirations of a people. Not just a partisan platform, they were an integral part of my oath as the first President of the restored democracy.

The first of those aspirations was democracy. Not economic freedom and profits, but democracy – the Filipino's birthright and racial identity.

None of the poor and striving masses that rallied to my standard asked for investment opportunities or tax incentives – only that I lead them to freedom. This is something to be truly proud of. No other people has shown such total commitment to so pure an ideal.

I was offered the support of the Marcos parliament, if I would keep it alive. If I accepted its modest terms, there would be stability immediately.

I refused the offer. I refused in justice to our people to whom that parliament had lied. I abolished parliament. I became, to put it bluntly, the legislator under the Freedom Constitution. It was essential that no one be able to obstruct me, for I meant to give our people democracy swiftly and to weaken their enemies permanently. With God's help and the people's continuing support, I succeeded in doing both.

With the same powers, I also laid the framework for other reforms – constitutional, administrative, economic, and military.

In adopting a new constitution, I had two choices: an elected convention or an appointed commission. Some of my advisers urged an elected constitutional convention; but a swift transition to democracy dictated the appointment of a commission. An elected convention would have represented only the residual money and machinery of the Marcos dictatorship.

In four months, on October 15, 1986, we had a draft constitution. Over 90 percent of all registered voters turned out, and over 70 percent voted for the 1987 Constitution.

On May 11, 1987, elections for the Congress were held. Again the turnout was record-breaking for any democracy in the world. In the last American elections, only 50 percent of the electorate voted.

On July 27, 1987, I divested myself of legislative power and inaugurated the Philippine Congress. On January 18, 1988, local elections were held and full democracy was in place. We had achieved it faster than in Spain, than anywhere else in the world or at any time in the experience of modern democracy.

I promised the people justice for the crimes committed by the dictatorship.

The government filed 39 civil cases against Marcos and 314 other defendants to recover what they stole from our people. The filing of criminal cases will soon follow, as we relentlessly pursue our commitment to bring the guilty to justice.

I had campaigned for national peace and reconciliation.

Immediately after the Revolution, I ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. I waived court martial jurisdiction over cases of human rights abuse in favor of the civil courts. And I released all political prisoners, among them the founder of the New People's Army, Bernabe Buscayno and party ideologue, Jose Maria Sison. The military objected. But I had pledged a fresh start for all Filipinos who had fought the dictatorship. Some of them might give democracy another chance.

I called for a ceasefire and invited the rebel leadership to a dialogue for peace.

I was serious; the Communists were not.

They demanded a share of political power as the price of peace. I gave the order to resume offensive operations against the insurgents.

The dialogue had failed, but the short experience of peace sowed division in the ranks of the rebel leadership. Our policy of reconciliation first, and force when it fails, has brought down the strength of the insurgency considerably.

Only our enemies will not see that the ceasefire was a moral victory for democracy, and a political setback for the Communists. But that victory came with a price.

The rightwing fringe of the military denounced the ceasefire as a betrayal and launched a succession of destabilizing actions to topple me from power. The assassination of leftist leaders discredited my commitment to human rights. Throughout these challenges I held firmly on to power, but the nation lost its best chance of an early economic recovery. The military rebels succeeded in all but destroying the faith and confidence of the world in our country, and in undoing a great deal of what had been achieved from our early reforms.

Despite these discouraging developments, we continued to make progress, and largely through our own efforts. Foreign investments accounted for only 10% of private investments made in this country, although this is still an improvement over the 3.7% under the dictatorship. Our ability to meet the demands of our foreign creditors proves the strength of the economy. We paid our foreign creditors \$8.5 billion in interest and principal – \$4.3 billion straight out of our own foreign exchange earnings. We have complied with all the conditionalities and paid out vastly more than we have received. We expect to be treated better than those who have not.

Despite the uncertainty and unrelieved hardship, we pushed ahead with reforms.

We abolished the agricultural monopolies, lowered the prices of many factors of production, and restored initiative and profits to the producers on the land.

We instituted agrarian reform, one of the most important pledges of the campaign. We have given out 154,000 emancipation patents, benefitting 108,000 families. A system of rural credit and agricultural extension services, as well as a massive public works program have been prepared and are being implemented.

We have built 4,411 kilometers of roads; 443 bridges; 896 ports; and 35,028 wells. We irrigated 75,416 hectares of new agricultural lands, rehabilitated 533,473 hectares of existing irrigation systems, and laid out 15,352 kilometers of access roads leading to them. We reforested 18,785 hectares of watershed in, among other areas, Magat, Pantabangan, and Agno River in Luzon, and Alah Valley and Muleta in Mindanao.

We have implemented free secondary education and built 53,184 classrooms.

Congress passed the Generic Drugs law to bring medicines within reach of the common people. Nine million children below one-year of age have been immunized. Public health services have markedly improved, in quality and reach.

We have established better coordination now of government efforts, and more effective consultations with communities throughout the country. We have decentralized political authority and devolved the initial setting of priorities to the regions, their local governments, and their private sectors.

In the field of foreign affairs, we had very successful visits to Indonesia, Singapore, the United States, Japan, China, Switzerland, the Holy See, Italy and Brunei Darussalam. We hosted the ASEAN Summit and the Conference of Newly Restored Democracies.

We have imparted a deeper understanding of our people's democratic experience, and a deeper appreciation of our country's crucial role in maintaining stability in Asia. The recently concluded review substantially increased the compensation for the Bases and ended, on a high note of equal respect, a chapter in Philippine-US relations.

In 1,000 days, GNP grew from a negative 4% to a positive 2% in 1986; to 6.4% in 1987. It was 6.8% in the first half '88.

Three million one hundred seventy-five thousand new jobs were created in the past 1,000 days – more than enough to absorb the yearly fresh entrants to the labor force.

The average Filipino's income increased from P10,900 in 1985 to P13,700 this year – a 25 percent increase in the past 1,000 days during which we kept inflation down to single digit levels. We drove down inflation levels from a high 54% in 1984 to 8.7% this year. We are targeting a per capita income of P15,700 for 1989.

Some critics say these improvements were the result of pure luck. To a certain extent, that is true.

But it was democracy and this government that made sure the tremendous profits that were made went to the procedures, planters, and workers not to the pockets of a dictator and a few.

As the price of its support in the SNAP Election, business asked that it be made again the engine of the economy.

We not only gave the engine, we even reduced the fuel price. In its own 1,000-day report, business must show what it has done with the engine and with the fuel.

For all the talk of lack of confidence, there appears to be a boom in the economy. It may be consumer-led and therefore shortlived, but money is being made today. Yet the corresponding taxes are not being paid. There has been altogether too much crying all the way to the bank and not enough remittances to the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Some blame cannot be shared. There are faults that cannot be covered.

The most glaring is the garbage problem right here in the nation's capital. This is a reflection of the inhabitant's lack of self-respect and discipline, as it is of a government's competence. I have heard the arguments about the impossibility of cleaning up Manila given present capabilities. I do not accept these arguments. I demand results in the next few weeks.

The infrastructure program fell far short of targets by almost 25%. At this rate, we shall never reach our targets.

The shortcomings in the infrastructure program were already evident last June. I therefore organized a Cabinet Action Committee on Implementation Assistance or CACIA to investigate the delay in specific projects, encourage the solution of problems in the Regional Development Councils, facilitate the release of funds, and recommend the removal of obstructing officials.

Some progress has been made in housing, such as the Kalayaan project for police and teachers housing, but it is far short of the target. NHA's capacity will be expanded. The Community Mortgage Program has been launched to enable residents of blighted or depressed areas to organize themselves and own the lots that they occupy and eventually build a decent house thereon, within the concept of low-cost house financing.

The tax collection has been disappointing. Instead of achieving a tax effort ratio of 12.4%, BIR and Customs reached only 11.1%. In money terms, almost P10.7 billion was not collected or 8% of the current budget. The tax collection efficiency of local government units is only 59%.

There is an economic boom out there. Whether it is consumer-led and shortlived or not, the taxes are due. The Bureau of Internal Revenue shall prepare a list of outstanding tax-evaders which I shall forward to the Department of Justice for prosecution. All tax-evaders must be on that list. Tax-evasion is non-partisan; it cuts across political sympathies and will be equally prosecuted wherever it is found.

Just as disappointing has been the anti-smuggling effort. The smugglers are known; there is no excuse for not prosecuting them.

I do not buy the argument that this is a democracy and due process takes time. I am not asking for immediate convictions. Only that the appropriate charges be filed immediately. There is no violation of due process there.

The targets for the next thousand days have been specified in terms of:

A growth rate of 6.5% annually in real terms;
 At least one million new jobs a year;
 Single-digit inflation levels;
 Adequate international reserves;
 Reducing poverty incidence to 45% of Filipino families.

All these have been broken down into specific regional, sectoral and agency targets in the Philippine Medium-Term Development Plan, which is evaluated and assessed yearly.

I find that we cannot afford to wait for one year between reports. I have therefore ordered quarterly reports from the social and economic sectors, such as health, education, and environment, and monthly reports from the infrastructure agencies, such as public works and transportation.

All these will be made public and will permit us to take immediate action on the problems which arise. The more closely we monitor performance, the better our chance for success. We cannot afford to fail.

I look back on the past 1,000 days and see much that we Filipinos can be proud of. I see also, in hindsight, how much more might have been accomplished without the struggle for final mastery that followed the Revolution.

There is not much I regret, not even my failure to strike earlier at the rightwing threat. It was a matter of timing – theirs was wrong and mine was right. The price of delay was, of course, the deterioration of the Philippine image abroad. Yet it gave us the certain survival of democracy.

Aside from God, my greatest trust is in the people who never failed me and brought us through the many trials of the past 1,000 days.

God gave us the gift of freedom; the rest we must work for – keeping our freedom and making progress in the economy.

For myself, I acknowledge the obligation to show that democracy can work for our people in real terms of effective security for our communities and real progress in the economy, of the greater health and education of our children, and in a greener and richer land where we can fulfill the promises we have made to ourselves and our posterity. And always, in working towards these goals, to treat each other with the respect and compassion one owes to a fellow Filipino.

Matatag ang aking pananalig na nasa demokrasya ang ating pagtatagumpay. Na ang demokrasya ang magdudulot sa ating kapaligiran ng wastong katahimikan at tunay na kaunlaran sa ating kabuhayan; ng mas mahigit na kalusugan at karunungan para sa ating mga anak; ng mas luntian at masaganang lupain na kung saan natin matutupad ang mga pangako natin sa ating sarili at sa mga susunod sa atin.

Taas noo nating bigkasin na tayo ay Pilipino – isang lahing gumagalang at nagmamahal sa kapwa, isang lahing handang magtulungan upang makamtan ang ating inaasam na kinabukasan.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the First International Festival on Indigenous and Traditional Cultures

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the First International Festival on Indigenous and Traditional Cultures**

[Delivered at the PICC, November 23, 1988]

CULTURE AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

Culture forms the core of Philippine identity, it unifies a race, gives it a national identity and makes one proud to be a citizen of one's own country. The President calls on the Philippine artists to lend our people in forging unity and peace through culture. She hopes that the festival will usher in a decade of promotion of international cultural cooperation among the representatives of ethnic tribes all over the world.

I am deeply pleased to welcome all of you who represent ethnic tribes from all over the world to the Philippines. It is our singular honor to host this First International Festival on Indigenous and Traditional Cultures which ushers in the United Nations — proclaimed World Decade of Cultural Development for the period 1988-1997. Incidentally, this coincides with our own Philippine Decade of Nationalism.

The other day, I rendered a report to the Filipino people on my one thousand days in office. I stressed the fact that I considered the ratification of a new Constitution by over 70% of our people as pivotal to our efforts to restore the democratic institutions which were lost during the dictatorial regime.

Given importance in this Charter are the rights of some ten million Filipinos belonging to about 110 ethnic tribes.

Very explicitly, the State is mandated to “recognize, respect, and protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions, and institutions. It shall consider these rights in the formulation of national plans and policies.”

And because basic to their survival is their rights over their ancestral lands, the State is further bound to “protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to their ancestral lands to ensure their economic, social and cultural well-being.”

The government has created three offices to address the needs of the cultural minorities: the Office of the Northern Cultural Minorities, the Office of the Southern Cultural Minorities and the Office of Muslim Affairs.

Through these agencies, we seek to preserve the identities of the individual tribes and protect their rights. For as each nation progresses, there is a real danger of the cultural groups being swallowed up.

Let me cite to you a concrete illustration of how an ethnic tribe's identity was all but lost in the cross-currents of media hype and scholars' unscholarly posturings. First brought to modern men's awareness in the early '70s, the tiny Tasaday tribe of South Cotabato in Mindanao was given full exposure in the prestigious National Geographic Magazine. For apparently materialistic motives and to open the group's 19,000 hectares of rich agricultural and timber ancestral lands for exploitation, some scholars with media support denounced the existence of the tribe as a hoax. With the integrity of the discoverers and the concerned government agency at stake, Congress had to launch

its own investigation through its Committee on National Cultural Communities. Many extended hearings later, the Committee confirmed that the Tasaday tribe is indeed a genuine and separate tribal group.

If I have taken pains to narrate to you the story of a tribe that was almost wiped out of existence by the inroads of present-day manipulations, it is merely to underscore the need for vigilance on the part of governments to keep intact their traditional cultures.

The survival and preservation of the identities of ethnic minorities in any country can only enrich a country's culture. I am sure that, in your own countries, culture also brings you together, gives you a national identity, makes you proud to be a citizen of your own country. That is what culture does in my country. It forms the core of Philippine identity. It makes us one. It makes us what we are, as a people, as a nation.

That is why, more than a year ago, I personally asked Philippine artists to get involved in the project that has resulted in this international conference and festival, I said then, as I say again now, that artists must lead our people in forging unity and peace through culture.

I was sure then that, with the help of Philippine artists, particularly those from the private sector, the Philippine government would be able to fulfill its commitment to the International Theatre Institute and to the United Nations when we first invited you to come to Manila to have this conference and festival.

The United Nations and UNESCO launched this Decade for Cultural Development because they realized that culture and development are inseparable. A nation, all nations, for that matter, cannot develop if culture does not develop. A world without culture is a retarded, a stunted world. Culture is a key to development. The development of culture is itself a major step towards all other forms of development — political, social, economic, spiritual, intellectual.

We are aware of the delicate balance between national unity and cultural diversity. Sometimes, nations tend to encourage uniformity, rather than unity. This tendency is understandable, in the light of what are sometimes perceived as more immediate political or security problems. But we in the Philippines believe that cultural unity can be and should be achieved within the framework of cultural diversity. And with a healthy respect for each other's cultural traditions.

It is good to know that there are more things that unite us than there are things that separate us. We all seek answers to the same questions. We all share the same problems crucial to our cultural survival and integrity. We all know that we can achieve national peace, even international peace, only if we learn to live with each other. To respect each other. To understand and to love each other. This is what it means to live and operate in a global village.

Now this conference and festival will usher in a decade that will achieve many things. Among them, the acknowledgment and enhancement of the cultural dimensions of development, the affirmation of cultural identities, the broadening of public and private participation in cultural life and the promotion of international cultural cooperation.

You are familiar with these goals of the decade. And I have no doubt that you will make them more concrete as you address issues and concerns that affect cultural development around the world.

I am also elated that you are showcasing new kinds of artistic expression inspired by the wealth of our ancestral roots. Your creative interaction with each other and with each other's traditions, your explorations and discoveries in the workshops, exhibits, performances, and film showings during this event will surely reaffirm our common humanity. This is our investment in building one peaceful world.

I wish to commend the UN, the UNESCO, the organizers and the non-governmental organizations which made this first-of-a-kind event possible. Their efforts will go a long way in ensuring unity among and within nations even as the rich legacy of diverse indigenous cultures are preserved for the ages.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

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**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the ASEAN Accountants

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the ASEAN Accountants**

[Delivered at the PICC, November 29, 1988]

TO TELL THE TRUTH

The President exhorts her audience of ASEAN accountants to contribute their analytical skills in realizing the ASEAN dream. She says that they are the best placed of all sectors to advise the leaderships of the ASEAN states on the steps that should be taken to bring ASEAN nations faster and more safely to their dreams.

She advises them not to bend to tremendous pressure from their inflexible standards of truth. For theirs is the higher calling, to tell the truth.

It has been almost a year since the six leaders of ASEAN met here to forge a more meaningful role for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. In my own remarks at that summit, I expressed the view that “the key to ASEAN’s strength, to its increased recognition as a respected force in international affairs, is the economic progress of each and every one of its members.”

I was speaking as the new leader of a country that had been less fortunate than all the others in its leadership. A country that fell behind the region it was leading. But it is also, now, a country whose recovery and continuing progress bespeak the effectiveness of its secret of success.

That secret is the truth, the truth that sets all men free; the willingness to face the facts, and tackle them fearlessly and without hesitation.

I am pleased and honored to be addressing a profession whose first and last duty is the discovery and fearless presentation of the truth: the accounting profession throughout ASEAN.

It is your function as accountants to track fearlessly and impose coherence on the myriad facts generated by the economic activities of your respective countries and of the region as a whole. As you know, it is ASEAN’s dream to have a regional complementary economy. That dream has eluded us up to now.

The reason is that we know, without grasping the details, the obvious fact that our countries have developed unevenly. As a result, if we were to push the complementation of our economies, all we would achieve is the subordination of some of them to the others. Rather than knit ASEAN more tightly together, this unequal relationship will be the force that will finally split ASEAN permanently apart

Worse, we do not even understand sufficiently each other’s economies. As a result, our plans are at best vague aspirations that are too risky to implement as they are. As a further result, we begin to lose faith in the ASEAN dream.

What is needed therefore is a clearer and more detailed grasp of the ASEAN economies. With that certain grasp, we can then make, as a regional organization, the right decisions that will finally realize the ASEAN dream.

This is what you can help us achieve. You command the information about our economies, down to the last detail. You command the analytical skills to make sense of this information. You are the best placed of all sectors to advise the leaderships of the ASEAN states on the steps that should be taken to bring us faster and more safely to our dreams.

The mass of information generated by the vigorous growth of the ASEAN economies, a vigor now shared by the Philippines, increases geometrically and makes correspondingly greater demands on your information gathering and analytical capabilities.

Under this tremendous pressure, you must not bend, even an inch, from your inflexible standards of truth. Only the unvarnished and even painful truth can help ASEAN achieve its aims.

Potential investors in the regional economies turn to the accounting profession for advice. This adds to the pressure of each national profession to downgrade the economies of the other countries, and play up its own economy. Such one-sided judgments detract from the honor and dignity of the profession. Yours is a higher calling: to tell the truth, in the unwavering confidence that the people who listen to you will act right accordingly.

This is what I ask, more particularly, of the Philippine accounting profession: be accurate, so we can know how far we have gone as a nation and what our mistakes have been to avoid repeating them. Above all, help us, as businessmen, to know what our obligations are to ourselves, to our posterity, and to the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

I wish this conference every success. Good day and God bless you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Fulbright Scholarships

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On the Fulbright Scholarships

[Delivered at the Philippine Plaza, December 6, 1988]

A BENEVOLENT INFLUENCE

The President sees on this occasion a time to remind ourselves that the best hope of a lasting friendship between America and the Philippines lies not in a shared perception of international risks but in the renewal of our faith in that gift and common heritage.

In the Fulbright Program, she recognizes the education of her government where she sees in its roster of distinguished alumni people who are now working closely with her.

The Philippine-American educational program — better known by its flagship, the Fulbright Program — had a movingly symbolic beginning. The program was established immediately after the Second World War. It was to be administered by the U.S. Educational Foundation in the Philippines using funds from the sale of war surplus property. The Fulbright Program was almost literally an attempt, in the aftermath of history's most terrible war, to beat spears into pruning hooks, and swords into plowshares to work the rich heritage of human learning,

On the level of national strategy, it was a rare attempt to build an enduring bi-lateral friendship, not by partnerships of military and economic convenience, but in the hearts and minds of two peoples who held certain truths to be self-evident. Such truths as that God created all men equal, that all men have certain inalienable rights, and that the subsequent inequality of men through the violation of these rights give rise to the duty to change the government and erect another more truly dedicated to the safety and happiness of the people.

These words need not be identified. They express the heritage of all men, yet also America's greatest gift to mankind.

I am happy to be invited to this occasion, for it is time to remind ourselves that the best hope of a lasting friendship between America and the Philippines lies, not in a shared perception of international risks nor in accommodations to each other's economic interests, but in the renewal of our faith in that gift and common heritage.

Certain moments in the dramatic restoration of Philippine freedom brought back a taste of the original purity of our two peoples' democratic commitments. I think of the broadcast journalist who interrupted an argument on the Political impracticality of an official US commitment to Philippine democracy, with the words, "But this is family." He was implying that certain things are beyond strategic calculation and must be decided by faith.

All that seems so long ago. On both sides, the talk since then has been about military necessities and economic pressures which seek to bend our original high purposes to lower and more pragmatic ends. Where we both once spoke of a second economic chance for the people to complement the rebirth of freedom, we are careful now to be practical, to accept a lesser improvement in the lives of the common people to avoid greater dangers to the country as a whole. "Prudence" is the watchword, in a setting where friendships fired by idealism are fast fading away.

We note these changes with some regret, yet also with a firmer resolve to forge ahead and achieve all we can of the vision that awoke the heroism of a race. We forge ahead in the hope and in the faith that we of this generation shall still see that vision completed.

A great part of that hope is grounded in the belief that idealism still abounds on both sides of this relationship. The sterling proof is the Fulbright Program, to which I can say I owe practically the education of this government. For I see in its roster of distinguished alumni many of those who struggled and worked beside me. To name only a few: Presidential Spokesman and reluctant everything, but now, just the same, Senator Rene Saguisag; Customs Commissioner and now, to his intense relief, Senator Bobby Tanada; and that courteous companion and fellow worker in our struggle for freedom, now Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Marcelo Fernan. I see the names of current members of my Cabinet also.

And I see the name of another Fulbright scholar who learned to love freedom not wisely but too well, and gave his life to give it back to his people. He reminds us that there are things — principles and goals — that are beyond calculation and compromise.

These names prove what I have said: That America cannot exercise a more benevolent influence in the affairs of other nations than by building in the hearts and minds of men.

I wish the Fulbright program and other programs like it every success and express the hope that they will continue to generate, among our people, brave and able workers for their welfare and unyielding protectors of their freedom.

Thank you and good evening.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the Energy Management Association

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the Energy Management Association**

[Delivered at the Manila Garden Hotel, December 9, 1988]

LIFEBLOOD OF INDUSTRY

Government has taken significant steps to forestall any crisis in energy in case the OPEC reaches a consensus that would result in higher oil prices throughout the non-oil producing world. The President however, emphasizes that the principal actor and factor for the success of the government's energy program remains the private sector, the main energy consumer.

I am pleased to be here today before a sector that is crucial to our country's continuing progress. This conference is held at an auspicious time: the upturn of the Philippine economy after many years of decline.

The economy pulled itself out of negative growth almost immediately after we took power, showing that it is morale more than material that the economy needed to get out of the doldrums. It posted a 5.7% GNP growth last year, and 6.8% in the first half of 1988. All the indicators favor our achieving the 6.5% GNP target we set ourselves for the year.

We have a right to be proud of the progress we have made. Yet equally we have the duty to take the measures necessary to maintain and increase the growth momentum we have achieved.

The price of economic progress has been higher energy consumption. Thus, in 1987, the country increased its energy consumption by 6.5%, it is now using energy at the faster pace of 10.9%. Electrical consumption alone is 12.8%, with industry showing the highest demand growth rate of 15% among all sectors.

These statistics prove the progress that is being made. Yet equally they show the area of our greatest vulnerability.

Energy is the lifeblood of industry; the single most important factor for economic progress, not to say survival. But energy, to a great extent still, is not a natural resource of our country.

It behooves us therefore to take stock of our energy requirements, to review our native energy resources, and study the measures that must be taken to achieve greater energy independence and a wiser and more conservative utilization of the energy we generate and import.

We may be tempted to delay in this duty. There is a glut in the world's production of oil. But nothing is forever. The OPEC will one day achieve a consensus among its members and higher oil prices will again be the order of the day throughout the non-oil producing world. For that day we must make preparations.

Government has taken the significant steps.

We have organized training programs for your engineers to become energy conservation managers. We have already sponsored 69 training courses with a total participation thus far of 3,225 representatives from 1,120 government and

private groups and 33 engineering schools. In addition, briefings are being conducted in schools and universities so that energy conservation becomes the natural reflex of a nation that is dangerously dependent on outside sources for the life-blood of its economy.

Government also offers to private industry energy audits for free. Thus far, 622 audits have been made.

The Federal Republic of Germany has been most helpful in our energy conservation campaign through its Rational Use of Energy project or RUE. I suppose the acronym expresses the warning that “We shall rue the day of higher energy costs and lower energy supply, if we do not act now to conserve energy.” The project gives expert management advisory services to energy-intensive industries.

We recognize that damage control, so to speak, is not enough. We must go on the initiative in finding more creative and efficient uses of energy.

Cognizant that new energy technology is expensive, we have set up, with the US AID, the Technology Transfer for Energy Management or TTEM project to spearhead the development of local energy conservation technology. The project, although new, has had notable successes, with PLDT and Benguet Corporation. Fully operational the project is expected to generate combined savings of nearly 1,234 megawatt hours of electricity per year. While this is a mere P2 million pesos, compared to the project cost of P5.2 million, we believe that over the long term we shall come out ahead.

We have started to offer tax incentives to industry for energy conservation measures and technologies, but the principal actor — and factor — of the program’s success remains the private sector, the main energy consumer. We are relying on this organization to galvanize the private sector in this campaign.

Other non-oil producing countries have risen to the challenge of high energy consumption and costs, and prospered remarkably. I see no reason why the same challenge before this country should not result in equal success.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Revised Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the celebration of the 40th International Human Rights Day

**Revised Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the celebration of the 40th International Human Rights Day**

[Delivered at the Philippine Training Trade Center (PTTC), December 10, 1988]

**STANDING AGAINST
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION**

With the celebration of the 40th International Human Rights Days came the declaration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. There is no better example of respecting human rights than the EDSA Revolution where people stood up unarmed for their human rights and for the human rights of the soldiers who opposed them. The President says that respect for human rights is the core value of our bloodless revolution and the single most important reason for the survival of democracy.

This celebration of the 40th International Human Rights Day pays tribute to the common bond of decency that proclaims all men as brothers. That bond is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We call it universal because all men, by their humanity, declare an unwavering commitment to respect those rights. The preamble of the Declaration is clear on this:

“The General Assembly of the United Nations proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and nations,

“to the end that every individual and every organ of society shall strive

“by teaching and education

“to promote respect for these rights and freedoms

“and by progressive measures

“to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance.”

I have quoted the preamble at length because we must return to the root for the true meaning and spirit of the commitment that the world made to itself after history’s most terrible conflict.

Wars had never been like this. It was not a war for economic advantage and military glory only, but one aimed at the annihilation of whole peoples simply for being who they were.

The war was a crime against humanity, for the aggressors denied the humanity of all who did not belong to their race and follow their creed.

It was a war where signal acts of human endurance were overwhelmed by shocking acts of inhuman cruelty. Acts committed by individuals against individuals – in military prisons, in concentration camps, in the charnel houses of the great dictatorships.

It is not surprising therefore that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights marks out the individual, and not just governments, as carrying a special obligation to promote, by teaching and education, respect for human rights; and by progressive measures, secure their universal and effective recognition and observance. Thus:

By specific order of the Human Rights Commission, detainees are accorded liberal visitation rights and their persons are secured against mental or bodily abuse.

By executive order, an extensive education and information campaign has been conducted to spread awareness and respect for human rights.

And finally, by living example, we, the Filipino people, taught the world how to respect human rights.

There at EDSA a people stood up unarmed for their human rights and for the human rights of the soldiers who opposed them.

There at EDSA an army responded with equal respect for human rights by not firing on the unarmed multitude. No army in the Western world would have shown such forbearance. What might have been the tragedy of Kent State became the miracle of EDSA.

There are those who question the human rights commitment of this nation and this government. I want them to prove their accusations. I, and everyone else concerned about the safety of democracy, have a stake in punishing the human rights violators in the military. The hand that can abuse a prisoner will have the mind to plot a coup d'etat. Such violations show an indiscipline and inclination to anarchy that a democracy cannot tolerate in its armed forces.

Until that time, I must say what the facts proclaim: That this new government has never adopted, by neglect or design, a policy or pattern of human rights violations for any purpose.

That there are sporadic violations of human rights in this country, I must acknowledge. We are only in the third year of regained democracy. The inhumanity of people obsessed by power or possessed by dogma, whether in the uniform of the regular army or in the casual wear of the insurgency, will be with us for some time yet.

But for as long as Filipinos have a democracy, human rights violations will never become the pattern and policy of government in this country.

Sadly, I cannot speak for all Filipinos. I cannot speak for those who refuse to adopt peaceful means to express their rejection of democracy. If there is a pattern of human rights violations, if there is a conscious policy of terrorism in this country, you will find it among them.

The government does not shoot traffic policemen to secure the fearful respect and cooperation of the people.

The government does not demand ransom from individuals as the price of their lives.

And we do not execute our fellow workers for their mistakes.

As every individual must respect the human rights of everyone, so must his human rights be respected by all.

"Everyone has the right of life, liberty and security of person.

"No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

"Everyone," says the Declaration, "is entitled to all the rights and freedoms" set forth therein.

That includes the policeman who falls to the pavement with a shattered head.

That includes the poor farmer whose children are killed or horribly disfigured because their homesteads have been chosen as the battleground of an ideology.

That includes the insurgent who is executed because he gave a second thought to democracy.

And that includes the leftists and labor leaders who were tortured and assassinated by the rightwing elements in the military.

Yet the same obligation to respect human rights that binds governments binds the killers of these people as well.

I cannot allow any accusation against the human rights commitment of this country and this government to go unchallenged – or uninvestigated and unpunished.

It is not a matter of pride, but of memory. It is a matter of self-preservation.

Those of us who lived in the shadow of violence under the dictatorship, will not allow it again to darken the door to human rights and freedom that we have opened for our people.

That there are violations, the Lupao massacre proves. That they will occur again is inevitable in any country riven by a rebellion led by fanatics.

I have made it clear that I intend to win the war against the insurgency. There will be no substitute for the permanent victory of democracy.

I have given the order for the vigorous prosecution of the war so that its early end will shorten the agony of this nation and hasten the recovery of its former strength and status in this region.

Yet, I will not accept the heat of battle as an excuse for brutality – towards the people we are pledged to protect, and even towards our enemies. Democracy needs force, but this government will not stoop to terrorism to survive.

I welcome the continuing concern of human rights groups, both here and from abroad, about the human rights situation in the Philippines. We need all the eyes that can be spared to uncover the abuses that still occur, even as we need every pair of hands to bind the wounds and bring the perpetrators to justice. I welcome most specially the recent vigilance of Congress, particularly the Senate.

Yesterday I met with some members of FIND (Families of Victims of Involuntary Disappearance). They were accompanied by Senator Wigberto Tanada. Also present at the meeting were: Executive Secretary Macaraig, Justice Secretary Ordonez, Chairperson Mary Concepcion Bautista of the Human Rights Commission, AFP Chief of Staff Renato de Villa, Brig. Gen. Rodolfo Biazon, Brig. Gen. Aguirre, Defense Undersecretary Quisumbing, and Special Presidential Counsel Azcuna.

Secretary Ordonez proposed and I approved the designation of city and provincial state prosecutors as “human rights coordinators”, whose immediate task will be to help relatives search for their missing kin in military camps and detention centers.

I shall set up a committee, to be chaired by a representative of the Department of Justice, which shall have as members representatives from the Office of the President, the Human Rights Commission, the Department of National Defense. There will be two representatives from private sector human rights groups. If Congress so desires, both houses shall also be represented in the committee. I shall take this matter up with the Congress at the earliest opportunity. This committee shall monitor the human rights situation so it can advise me on the proper measures to be taken.

This is a matter of the greatest urgency. What is at stake here is the life of democracy. We must be on our guard against the emergence of a pattern of human rights violation, against any systematic abuse of the people, because these are the harbingers of dictatorship. Martial Law in 1972 was preceded by systematic and widespread violence. The same violence may be the signal for another assault on our freedom. If only out of self-preservation, we cannot relax our vigilance.

Respect for human rights is the core value of our bloodless revolution. It is the single most important reason for the survival of the democracy we installed. Without it, we lose the meaning of our struggle against all who seek to destroy our freedom – whether fascist or communist. We shall be no better than our enemies; no better than the murderers of our husbands and children.

That will not happen.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Filipino farmers in Mindanao

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines Before the Filipino farmers in Mindanao

[Delivered at the Dolefil/Del Monte – NDC, Cotabato City, December 12, 1988]

A STRUGGLE AGAINST FEAR

The day is a significant milestone for a great number of Filipino farmers who became owners of the land they have worked, and partners of their former bosses. It is the single biggest land transfer to agrarian reform beneficiaries thus far. President Aquino commends the gesture of the multi-nationals to rise to the challenge of the times while she acknowledges the work done by the various government agencies.

Today we mark a milestone in the history of the Filipino farmer and in the history of multinationals in the Philippines.

We mark a milestone because we are distributing to a great number of Filipino farmers great stretches of agricultural lands that were operated and exclusively controlled by foreigners. In these lands, the Filipinos were mere workers, and the foreigners were virtually the landowners and bosses — benevolent ones to be sure. For the way these companies treat their workers has been a reproach to our own management practices.

Now the workers have made a giant stride — in their prospects of an even better life. For today they become owners of the land they have worked, and partners with their former bosses. It is our hope that this partnership will release an even greater burst of industry, a more copious flow of wealth, than these rich lands have seen.

Our achievement today is the fruit of a long and difficult struggle. That struggle has been mainly against fear. The fear of trying something new.

Of breaking with a tradition of bondage on the land that is centuries old.

Of breaking away from the fear that the ancient promise of agrarian reform will prove inconsistent with the modern and more productive practices of agriculture.

That we are here today to parcel the lands of some of the biggest multinationals around is a testament both to our fearless resolve to bring land justice to the people and to the wisdom and compassion of the multinationals who have joined with us, rather than opposed us.

This is the single biggest land transfer of agrarian reform beneficiaries thus far. Del Monte and NDC-Guthrie alone have transferred 15,300 hectares of land to 10,300 farmers and farmworkers. Dolefil has transferred 9,000 hectares which will benefit 7,000 farmworkers. Together, these transfers will benefit about 14 percent of the targeted beneficiaries under Phase One of agrarian reform in Mindanao.

The multinationals I have mentioned have risen to the challenge of the times. They have shown the wisdom to grow with our country, and to help our people attain their proper dignity as free and independent workers on the land. I hope that you, the multinationals, will continue in this generous vein. Your long and productive experience working these lands gives you an edge in know-how that I hope you will share with your new partners. I, on the other hand, assure you both that government will extend the fullest assistance in making this new partnership work.

I should like to acknowledge the work done by the various government agencies, such as the Departments of Agrarian Reform, Agriculture, and Natural Resources, and the Land Registration Authority in making this event possible. But their continuing dedication and work is essential to the success of the new partnerships we have forged. The National Development Company must be especially commended for its efficient management of the NDC-Guthrie joint-venture, which shall now directly benefit its workers. Unlike with other enterprises run by the past government and its friends, we are not picking up the pieces but spreading the benefits of a well-managed venture. We expect the NDC to continue providing the same talent and energy towards the success of other agro-industrial projects, and thereby show to the landowners that there is life and progress in other fields after agrarian reform.

In closing, I should like to address the other landowners in Mindanao. The multinationals, who had the most at stake in the old system, have dared to try the new. Their cooperation with agrarian reform is a challenge to Filipino landowners to show the same foresight and the same appreciation for the ancient aspirations of our people. Agrarian reform is the key to bringing to the vast majority of our people — not just to a select few — the fruits of the economic progress we are striving for. I know they will rise equally to the challenge.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino on the visit of Soviet Union Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the visit of Soviet Union Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze**

[Delivered in Malacañang, December 22, 1988]

A MESSAGE OF CHANGE

The President says that the Soviet official's visit signals the Soviet Union's intent to assume her place among us as an Asian country. She welcomes the visitor as the bearer of a universal message of change with a plea for Asians to restructure our world to our respective national visions.

This is the first high level visit of a Soviet official to the Philippines in a long time. We view Mr. Shevardnadze's visits to this part of the world as a signal that the Soviet Union, through the Soviet Far East, will now assume her place among us as an Asian country. She comes at a most opportune time, on the threshold of the century of progress that is promised for the Pacific.

We remark the geographical fact that the greater and most promising part of the Soviet Union is in Asia, even as the Soviet Union herself cannot deny that the strongest driving forces in her history have come from its Asian parts.

We welcome the Soviet Union's renewed interest in her Asian heritage. We view that renewal without alarm, despite its great power, because under her new leadership, she comes to Asia not as to her Eastern front but as to the roots of her history and the place where her greatest economic and cultural progress will unfold. We look to the development of the Soviet Far East with equal eagerness, for the progress of any part of Asia can only add to the stability and progress of the whole.

More importantly, we welcome the Soviet Union, not only as a fellow Asian country, but as the bearer of a universal message of change. She comes with the message of *perestroika*. She comes with a plea that we Asians restructure our world according to our respective national visions, yet with due regard for the universal aspirations of humanity, just as the Soviet Union has bravely embarked on her own restructuring.

We note the congruence of our own desires for a prosperous and peaceful world with the goals expressed in the new thinking in the Soviet Union.

There is the goal of a world made safer from nuclear destruction by reductions in the destructiveness and deployment of nuclear weaponry.

There is the goal of a world made less cruel and bloody by the limitations on free market access to conventional weaponry, whose lethality equals that of nuclear weapons – as the millions of dead in recent conventional conflicts would testify, if they could speak.

There is the goal of a world made stable, secure and humane by just laws and fair conduct among nations, rather than intimidated into a fragile order by the terrifying prospect of destruction by superior powers.

There is the goal of a community of independent nations that have realized their unavoidable interdependence if they wish to survive the crises that are upon us already.

There is the crisis of the environment which is progressively being poisoned and destroyed — by a few for the few — to the prejudice of mankind and the future of the race.

There is the crisis of the international economy which is growing in the parts that need it least, and regressing in the parts that cry out for the alleviation of their shocking poverty and misery — the Third World which is being crushed under the burden of debts and protectionist policies.

There is the crisis of energy as the world prodigally finishes off the unrenowable sources of mankind's material progress and the foundation of civilization as we know it

And there is the crisis of humanity faced with the prospect of nuclear extinction.

This is the gravest crisis, yet also the area of greatest hope. For progress in this field has been truly remarkable in recent years. The INF treaty comes immediately to mind.

The earnest and fruitful talks between the great powers on issues of national security are an even more hopeful sign that the sorting out of problems and the search for solutions shall thenceforth be, in Mr. Gorbachev's words, "along the lines of dialogue" rather than the vectors of force.

That traditional foes can come to such far-reaching agreements on such deeply antagonistic issues as nuclear security gives the rest of us hope that the same cooperation can be universally achieved in areas of common concern, such as the protection of the environment and the limitation of the incidence and destructiveness of conventional wars.

The new thinking in the Soviet Union would have us all cooperate in achieving a new balance — not of terror, as in the past — but of interests as in the future that can be ours if we would only dare to attempt the new.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast:

To our distinguished visitor Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, one of the principal architects of the new stability in the world;

To the Soviet Union who has opened the Asian wing of her great house to the future in the Pacific;

And to the Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, and the message of *perestroika*, and its challenge to us all to reach out to each other — over the barriers of national suspicions, ideological blindness, and political ambitions — and remake the world in the image of everything that is universal and good in mankind.

Za sovietski sayuz iye družbu. (To the Soviet Union and friendship.)

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Toast of President Corazon Aquino at the State Dinner in Honor of U.S. Senator Richard Lugar

**Toast
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the State Dinner in honor of Honorable Richard Lugar, Senator of the United States of America**

[Delivered at the State Dining Hall, January 7, 1989]

A FRIEND OF DEMOCRACY

The President commends US Senator Richard Lugar as a committed man who led the group of US Congressional Observers to the Philippine Snap Election. Their presence, according to her, influenced significantly the final outcome of the events that led to the restoration of Philippine democracy.

In relation to the events that led to the restoration of Philippine democracy, we have praised the realists who saw at the last hour the situation for what it was and wisely acted accordingly. When people, Church and army united behind my victory, nothing could undo it. The most practical counsel was to accept it; the most dangerous folly to resist it.

To those who doubted our determination to vindicate our victory at the polls by a revolution in the streets, I made it clear that they were inviting the long-term displeasure of the next government for the short-term pleasure of the foredoomed incumbent.

Yet still we commend those who read the obvious and came down finally on the side of right and freedom. For it is always difficult to change old ways of thinking for the new, untried, and uncertain.

But the highest praise must go to those who see the future not as it must unfold, given the naked balance of forces, but as it must be given one's commitment to a certain vision of political freedom and human dignity.

Among such committed men is US Senator Richard Lugar, whose presence honors us and brings back vividly the selflessness of those days that now seem so remote from the ways of the present.

Senator Lugar, as we all know, led the group of US Congressional observers to the Philippine SNAP Election. As a foreigner, Senator Lugar will admit to only the passive role of observer of those fateful events. I think we are mature enough to acknowledge that Senator Lugar and his group did more than observe; they influenced significantly the final outcome.

Senator Lugar and his group did not agree to come and watch just any election that the dictatorship would stage. Their critical contribution started even before the SNAP Election when they laid down clear guidelines for a fair election.

Those guidelines became the watchwords of the Philippine struggle: NAMFREL accreditation, opposition representation in the COMELEC, recognition as Dominant Opposition Party, equal access to media, neutrality of the Armed Forces, a quick count by the COMELEC and NAMFREL, and the presence of international observers.

Given those conditions, the future was set for the restoration of Philippine democracy by elections. For all the people wanted was a chance to be heard, and their call would sound clearly for change.

By the same token, the violation of those conditions would hasten, rather than delay, the restoration of Philippine democracy – by a revolution. For all the people needed was a last straw to break the back of their patience.

Senator Lugar denounced the violations in the strongest terms. Yet if his statements were initially ignored by his government, they gave us the greatest encouragement here at home. He showed us a face of America we had started to despair of.

Somehow he managed to get himself invited to virtually every TV news program. He hammered on the message that for the US to back the dictatorship, in the face of its frauds, would be to march with a false and fallen friend into a foreign policy disaster. The truth of his message must have spoken for itself, for I am told that Senator Lugar can be as flat a speaker as I am reputed to be. Yet his message hit home and America officially came down on the side of freedom.

Senator Lugar served his country well by his actions in those days. Without him, there would be no Philippine-US relations to speak of by now. For, against the official line, Senator Lugar came right out and said that the preponderance of fraud was by the dictatorship. This mollified the national rage over the allegation that the people had committed fraud to match the fraud the dictatorship had perpetrated on them. Senator Lugar's words assured us that truth held an honorable place in the American pantheon of values.

Three years down the road from that fateful, almost fatal, turning point in Philippine-US relations and I believe that we shall need Americans like Richard Lugar as those relations evolve and adapt themselves to the emerging realities of our country, the region, and the Pacific as a whole.

We need men with the intellectual clarity to see things here for what they are: unavoidable and not always neat stages in a people's sense of nationhood coming finally to completion; and the sincere attempts of a developing nation to overcome its condition, and rise to the full height of its aspirations of material progress, social justice, and genuine sovereignty.

We need Americans of his faith that so long as our two countries share the same vision and practice of democracy, we shall always be friends and useful allies, genuinely concerned for the common safety yet understanding and respectful of each other's unique approaches towards that common end.

Senator Lugar is described in a short biography as "not a man of passion." That is good. For passion is dangerous to long-term relationships, for which the best ingredients are reason, mutual respect, commonality of fundamental values, and the steady trust of tested friendships, such as the friendship of Senator Lugar and our country.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast:

To Senator Lugar and his wife, the best of health and continued success in all their endeavors.

To President Reagan, the American people, and the American vision of liberty and justice for all. Long may they live and prosper.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Western Police District on the occasion of their 88th anniversary
Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Western Police District on the occasion of their 88th anniversary

[Released on January 9, 1989]

MANILA POLICE, MANILA'S FINEST

The Manila Police Organization has well deserved the honor of being called "Manila's Finest". It has proved that democracy can protect itself quite well if its guardians have just two basic qualities: loyalty and courage. The President said that an anniversary is not only a time for celebration but for reflection as well on the many members of the Manila Police who gave their lives to deserve its distinction as first among the forces of law and order.

Bago ang lahat, nais ko munang ipaabot sa ating mga panauhin at sa lahat ng ating mga kababayang Pilipino ang taos-pusong pagbati ko sa inyo ng isang Manigong Bagong Taon.

At sa mga kawani at tauhan ng Pulisya ng Maynila, nais kong makiisa sa inyo at sa mga taga Maynila sa pagdiriwang ng ika-88 anibersaryo ng pagkakatatag ng inyong kawanihan.

The Manila Police organization has held fast to the honor of being called "Manila's Finest." It has well deserved that honor, particularly in the period of General Alfredo Lim's forceful leadership.

It has discharged with distinction the traditional police role of maintaining peace and order in the capital city. It has added to that distinction by playing a signal role in the defense of democracy and in the stunning defeat of its enemies. It has proved, by its vigorous enforcement of the laws, its relentless suppression of political anarchy and plain criminality, that democracy can protect itself quite well if its guardians have just two basic qualities: loyalty and courage.

These qualities the Manila Police has in abundance, I am grateful to say.

As the oldest police organization the Manila Police is expected to provide the role model for police organizations throughout the rest of the country.

Its efforts to cleanse its ranks and impose internal discipline must have shown it that this is the more difficult and challenging task, a task as old as the first question of political science: Who will guard the guardians, who will police the police?

The Manila Police has been very conscious of the importance of this task, for on it depends the continuing faith of our communities in the primacy of law and order and in the usefulness of government.

I am pleased to note that the Manila Police has pursued relentlessly the cleansing of its ranks. Our communities need not fear that the continuing purge initiated by General Lim will reduce the forces committed to law order. By winnowing out all but the best, this process can only have a multiplier effect on the efficiency of the organization that will remain. Anyway, the pride of the Western Police District is not in its numbers but in its quality.

An anniversary is a time for celebration, especially when it marks the 88th year of an organization that is almost as old as Philippine independence. Yet it is also a time for bereaved reflection on the many members of the Manila Police who gave their lives so that it might continue to deserve its distinction as first among the forces of law and

order. We honor them this morning by calling attention to that distinction, which is owed in no small part to their final sacrifices.

We take this occasion also to thank the many civic and barangay organizations whose cooperation enhance greatly the effectiveness of police forces. We take note also of the support extended by the Metro Manila Commission headed by Governor Elfren Cruz. I am particularly pleased at the help extended by media, which the Manila Police formally acknowledge this morning.

On the suggestion of General Lim, I would like to make special mention of the tremendous contributions of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce, whose president is honored this morning. I am referring to the forty-one (41) brand new mobile patrol cars the Federation has donated to the Western Police District.

We are in a new year, on the threshold of the decade that will decide whether we shall realize the full potential of our country or settle for less. The past year was one of great progress, of many achievements that I think should be acknowledged. Yet, unquestionably, much remains to be done, particularly in the peace and order situation. I am determined that we shall make significant inroads into that problem this year. To that end, I want to relieve our police forces of many of the stumbling blocks that prevent them from doing a good job.

Take, for instance, the multitude of agencies authorized to investigate police abuses, such as the PC JAGO, the police court martial, the PC Inspector General, the CIS, the Provost Marshall, the Regional Staff Judge Advocate, the Regional Inspector General, the Regional Intelligence and Operation Unit, not to mention the Napolcom and the NBI. While law enforcement agents who violate the law deserve specially to be punished, the many more who adhere faithfully to their duties do not deserve such harassment.

To that end, and in recognition of the civilian character of the police forces, I shall initiate as a priority administration bill the amendment of PD 1850 reverting to civilian courts the prosecution of criminal complaints against policemen. Administrative complaints shall be the exclusive jurisdiction of the National Police Commission. The bill shall further provide that the Adjudication Board shall include a member from the National Police Commission, another from the Department of Justice, and a third from the civilian police organization.

To equalize opportunities for career advancement, we are studying the feasibility of a One-Year course for non-officer policemen that will graduate them as police lieutenants on a par with graduates of the Two-Year Philippine National Police Academy Bachelor Course.

I have instructed the National Housing Authority to accelerate its studies for more housing for police forces. In particular, I have instructed the NHA Director and the General Manager of the GSIS to immediately look into the possibility of a housing project for the Western Police District.

Several other proposals are under study, such as automatic job placement in government; and a four-year college scholar for at least one child or a chance to enter the PNPA under preferential admission rules.

I am directing the Department of Budget and the INP Director General to study the conversion into cash value of accumulated sick and vacation leave credits of policemen, even before their retirement, and to be paid on a yearly basis.

As the police command tasked to maintain law and order in the capital city, where the seat of government is located, I cannot over-stress the importance of your role. Nor can I exaggerate how well you have discharged it, particularly in helping to quell the last and gravest threat to democracy. As you are Manila's Finest, that day when you stormed and took Channel 4 and other rebel redoubts was your finest hour. Let it not be the last of such moments in the long and — I have no doubt — equally distinguished period that lies ahead for you.

I thank you for your service. The government commends you most highly for your professionalism. The people of Manila thank you for your sacrifices. Our nation honors you for your loyalty and courage, for your commitment to its safety and its freedom.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the multilateral aid plan Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the multilateral aid plan**

[Delivered on January 19, 1989]

A SHARED CONCERN

With the initiation of the US Congress for a bi-partisan call for a multilateral aid plan for the Philippines and with the creation of the Coordinating Council of the Philippine Assistance Program, the President opines that we are now prepared to advance the activation of this plan for freedom, justice and progress.

Along with the restoration of democracy, we set out to secure the material progress that is essential to its long-term survival.

These were the challenges we faced:

To build from an utterly ruined economy,

To raise the living standard of a growing population living in the direst poverty,

To restore to its former strength and high standing, the economy of our country, and

To prepare this nation for the period of greater growth, yet also of fiercer economic competition, that lies ahead for the Pacific.

Motivated by the desire to be part of that future, yet fearful also of losing our precious freedoms in the sea of poverty that already engulfs the majority of our people, we set out to recover what we had lost and build higher towards our goals — freedom, justice and progress.

The process of attainment was simple: A democracy cannot survive with the majority of its people in poverty. Poverty cannot be eliminated without economic growth. Growth can be attained only harnessing the productive energies of private enterprise. And private enterprise cannot be productive unless liberated from state interference on the one hand, and supported by basic infrastructure on the other. The implementation has been far from simple or smooth-going.

Yet, we achieved a measure of success no one can pretend to overlook, and of which we are justly proud. By our own efforts — fettered by obligations and hampered by the consequences of the corrupt and mistaken practices and policies of the past—we made progress, astonishing progress. The challenge of growth with equity, rendered yet more difficult by the economic decline with which we began and by the crushing legacy of debt, was met vigorously by sweeping reforms that gave new life to the economy and a new faith in our country—among ourselves and among the nations who have stood up to be counted as our friends.

Yet, we have always known that the timely completion of our task, before regressive forces overwhelm our efforts, depends not only on ourselves but on timely and meaningful financial assistance from abroad.

The dilemma of growth and debt threatens the survival of democracies and must be a shared concern of the international community.

Its resolution is a shared responsibility.

The consequences of failure will be everyone's fate.

Recognizing these facts and inspired by the success of a similar effort in the past, four legislators from both Houses of the US Congress initiated a bi-partisan call for a multilateral aid plan for the Philippines. They proposed to repeat the assistance mounted for a Europe liberated from the Dictators for a Philippines liberated from its own.

In a parallel development, the leaders of seven leading industrial countries meeting in Toronto in June last year endorsed a similar proposal put forward by the President of the United States.

In response to this liberal and far-sighted initiative, I constituted a Task Force to develop, in consultation with sectoral groups, the framework of a program that will efficiently absorb the assistance contemplated by the initiative.

The work of the Task Force has reached the stage where it can only continue on the level of a Coordinating Council, able to draw on the resources, expertise and the coordinated actions of the various agencies and departments of governments and of groups in the private sector.

I have therefore created the Coordinating Council of the Philippine Assistance Program. The Council shall be a tri-lateral body with members of the Cabinet and representatives of the Congress, as well as of the private sector.

I am pleased that a distinguished citizen, Mr. Roberto T. Villanueva, has agreed to serve as my special representative to foreign governments and institutions for the adoption and early implementation of the international aid plan. He will act concurrently as Chairman of the Coordinating Council. In both capacities, he has stipulated that he will serve *pro bono* but in a full-time capacity. We all commend him for his high sense of duty and patriotism.

As Chairman, he is empowered to call on all departments, agencies, and instrumentalities of government to assist him in this task. I appeal as well to the private sector to lend him every cooperation and assistance. What he has committed himself to accomplish is for all of us.

My decision to draft a man of Mr. Villanueva's accomplishments and stature underscores the importance of the aid program in our over-all plan of development, and the critical part that the sector from which he comes will play in the success of both the program and our developmental efforts.

With the creation of the Coordinating Council and the appointment of its Chairman, we are now prepared to advance the activation of the multilateral aid plan.

When the initiative was made, it was asked if we were prepared for it. With the greatest confidence, pointing to our accomplishments to date, we answer: We are.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Toast of President Corazon Aquino in Honor of Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, Chatichai Choonhavan

**Toast
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
In honor of Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, Chatichai Choonhavan**

[Delivered at the Ceremonial Hall, Malacañang, January 26, 1989]

**PEACE THROUGH PROGRESS
AND PROSPERITY**

The President wishes the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, Chatichai Choonhavan, and his lovely wife, Khunying Boonwen Choonhavan, long life, greater success and happiness. She hopes for a stronger friendship and cooperation with Thailand, and a long and happy reign to His Royal Majesty, King Bhumiphol, the spirit and guiding light of their country's progress and prosperity.

We are honored by the visit of the Prime Minister of Thailand, Chatichai Choonhavan. The Prime Minister, I learned, is also the Defense Minister. In the past, he was Minister of Industry twice in the periods that we associate with the remarkable progress of Thailand which has made her a model for the populous, agro-industrial nations of Asia. He is the first prime minister in twelve years to serve as an elected member of parliament. His cabinet, largely composed of members of parliament, has been hailed as a new step in the development of democracy in the Kingdom of Thailand.

We can say of him that he has one hand on the helm; another, prudently, on the sword of his nation; and his shoulder, farsightedly, to the wheel of the economy.

The remarkable things that one could say, and learn, from Prime Minister Chatichai do not stop there.

In the progress and prosperity that Thailand has achieved under a succession of wise and dedicated ministers in the inspiring service of His Majesty King Bhumiphol, Prime Minister Chatichai has seen the key to enduring peace in an embattled peninsula.

The way to peace lies in removing the roots of instability and war: underdevelopment and poverty, and the suspicion and aggressiveness they foster in countries that see themselves as too weak to assume the posture of peace.

Prime Minister Chatichai has extended Thailand's hand of cooperation to the militant nations of Indochina; offering to turn, in his words, a zone of war into a zone of peace through the shared progress and prosperity of the nations whom fate has thrown together in that peninsula. If the gesture was totally unexpected coming from a country continuously under threat, the responses have been equally astonishing and hopeful from Thailand's "ideologically different" brothers in the area.

In the fraternal spirit in which the offer was made, so, it seems, has it been accepted. The Philippines and other Southeast Asian nations in the Pacific have good reason to hope that the tremendous energies that went into the fiercest war in recent memory will be directed with happier effect towards the progress and amity of all who must share the common destiny of this region.

Peace, it is said, is breaking out all over. Prime Minister Chatichai is making sure that this placid epidemic does not subside. He is feeding the fever through the region-wide replication of Thai progress.

The task that Prime Minister Chatichai has set himself is enormous, and he has proved himself equal to the task. Yet for his daring vision alone, he has our highest respect and admiration.

Many great and unprecedented things are taking place in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, things having to do with the materialization of the economic and political potential of the Region — for the further progress of its economies and the fuller enjoyment of freedom among all its peoples. But two achievements stand out for their similarity: both are conquests of fear — fear of one's own weakness, fear of one's perceived enemies. These fears fed the tragedies from which they arose and assured their endless repetition.

One of these victories over fear took place on a stretch of highway in the Philippines. The other in the hand of friendship and cooperation extended by a brave and wise man to his country's long perceived enemies.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast to the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, Chatichai Choonhavan, a major architect of the Asian peace and progress to which we all aspire, and to his lovely wife, Khunying Boonnien Choonhavan: long life, greater successes and happiness.

To the friendship and cooperation of our two countries — may they grow stronger and wider.

And to His Royal Majesty, King Bhumiphol, the spirit and guiding light of Thailand's progress and prosperity, a long and happy reign in the affectionate regard of his grateful people.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 2nd ASEAN Science and Technology Week

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 2nd ASEAN Science and Technology Week**

[Delivered on January 30, 1989]

NEW AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

The President welcomes the ASEAN Heads of Government in a joint declaration meeting to strengthen Intra-Asean cooperation in Science and Technology. In that declaration, a development of an intelligent and productive work force is called for. She added that Asean's growth lies in the development of further technologies and sharing them with the rest of the Asean region.

I am pleased to welcome all of you to the Philippines.

We are certainly honored to host the Second Asean Science and Technology Week.

At the Third Meeting of Asean Heads of Government in Manila in December 1987, all member States signed a joint declaration stating, among others, that we would strengthen Intra-Asean cooperation in Science and Technology to improve the quality of life in this part of the globe. This gathering is but one step in support of this pledge to help one another.

In developing countries, poverty and culture are often blamed for the creeping pace of Science and Technology. For it takes intensive education, specialized training and tremendous research to breed scientists. Then too, a huge outlay is needed to bridge the gap between the theoretical and the applied or practical sciences. Unfortunately, most of us in Asean do not have these finances. Thus, we suffer the irony of being economically disadvantaged due to our lag in technology. Which lag, in turn, is due to our being economically deprived. And so, pure science and research have become luxuries for a select, highly qualified few whose potentials are subsidized and gradually developed by whoever can afford it.

For some of us in Asean, technology has taken a back seat to other priorities. The needs of the majority are still the basics of food, shelter and medicine. So that whatever technologies we have developed have been directed toward feeding and housing our teeming millions, keeping flesh and bones together.

But let me ask you: If we are to become the newly-industrialized countries of the 21st century, should we, at this point barely a decade away, still continue to concentrate on basic needs alone? Must we still follow the old notion that third world countries should solve the problems of hunger and poverty only through traditional approaches? That, to my thinking, would relegate us to the status of forever developing. Of being perpetual receivers of second-hand processes and goods from better-developed nations. Of being favored dumping grounds of outmoded technologies.

I believe you agree with me on this. That is why your theme for this conference is "New and Emerging Technologies".

This is not to say that we should change our priorities. Our primary task is still to solve the problems of food, clothing and shelter. We need to do so, if we are to aim for peace and prosperity. We can pin our hopes on adaptive technology to increase our harvests. To maximize the use of our resources. To improve communication and transportation. To unify peoples fragmented by language, geography and beliefs. And while we do so, v/e can

welcome more advanced technology so that we may compete in the world market, and thereby lift ourselves from the morass of poverty.

I fully support the two-pronged approach in Science and Technology that was included in the agreement drawn up at the Asean Summit of 1987. In that declaration, we called for the development of an intelligent and productive work force capable of keeping up with international advancements in Science and Technology while it evolves its own knowledge and experience from a Southeast Asian perspective.

Allow me then, to call your attention to this phrase – *From a Southeast Asian Perspective*. Today, we lag behind the West in Technology. And so we borrow: we borrow technology; we import sophisticated machinery and trained technicians to operate them; and at the worst, we import the whole product itself.

But someday we will become leaders in some scientific fields. This conference buoys up our hopes.

For now, we can, perhaps, take as models the experiences of our industrialized Asian neighbors. We can adapt. We can innovate. We can copy and then improve. Or, hopefully, we can draw our very own set of methods and processes, develop our own equipment to manufacture new, Asean-discovered, Asean-made products — but all from an Asean perspective.

The key to our growth is technological self-reliance. Only with it can we rid ourselves of any form of technology and import dependence. And, to a large extent, of that albatross around our necks called foreign debt.

But to achieve together this coveted rise in status, we need to share our knowledge, our resources with each other. We must balance out each other's needs. For instance, I understand that with all the gigantic strides that Thailand is making in new fields, the country is hard put getting the trained manpower to operate at optimum levels.

In the Philippines, we have a large pool of engineers and capable technicians. With a little retraining to suit the needed technology, an exchange of resources could be made possible: know how vis-a-vis manpower. With this, we can help each other out.

I want to emphasize the necessity of full cooperation among Asean member nations. For no single Asean nation has a monopoly of the scientific advances and resources needed to propel us all to the future as NIC's. I am glad to note that cooperation is clearly spelled out in your conference's objectives.

In the spirit of cooperation, therefore, each nation must identify its strengths and weaknesses in new technologies. I am aware of the broad range of specializations that you intend to compare in this conference. May I encourage you then, to be open with your latest discoveries, as well as your needs?

We, in the Philippines, are happy to share with the rest of the Asean region our modest discoveries in new and emerging technologies.

For instance, we have noteworthy accomplishments in software generation for information technology. We have made significant strides in Biotechnology for agriculture. From a native weed called *Talahib*, our Biotechnologists have isolated a nitrogen-fixing bacterium that reduces in half the nitrogen fertilizer input for rice and corn. Our forest biologists have succeeded in increasing the height, diameter, volume and bio-mass of trees.

Our scientists have generated simple, low-cost devices for dehydrating perishable rootcrops so that these may be converted into stable and ready-to-mix forms. I have also been informed of new approaches to animal feeding and new in-vitro fertilization techniques.

Our researchers have also established the possibility of utilizing pulverized charcoal as a substitute for imported fuels.

Likewise, we have formed a task force to identify the scientific and technological activities which will boost Philippine economy to the level of a newly-industrialized country by increasing our gross national product annually. By the turn of the century, hopefully, our annual growth rate shall have reached ten percent a year.

Let this growth be our humble contribution to the Asean dream of reshaping this region through technology.

It has been said that a country that does not undertake research is bound to stay hungry and frail and, therefore, politically unimportant. This is where our thrust towards new and emerging technologies in Asean becomes most significant. We cannot forever depend on handouts from the super-rich.

As I welcome you, so do I challenge you now, the best and the brightest of our Asean scientists and technologists. Your most important contribution to Asean's growth lies in your development of further technologies, truly Asean discoveries, that will pull us out of hunger, of sickness, of poverty. Technologies that will emancipate us from our dependence on non-Asean expertise. Technologies that will eradicate want and bring happiness and economic abundance to all of Asean.

Once again, I welcome you all and wish you success in this cooperative undertaking. Mabuhay kayong lahat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Luncheon with World Bank Officials

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the Luncheon with World Bank Officials

[Delivered on February 15, 1989]

OPTIONS FOR GROWTH

The President welcomes President Conable and his party to the Philippines and expresses her gratitude to him and the World Bank group for the assistance extended to the government to support the country's economic recovery, as well as for services through consultations, project missions and studies.

We are pleased to welcome President Conable and his party to the Philippines at a time of promise and continuing challenge.

In the autumn of eighty-six, I had the privilege of meeting with you, Mr. Conable (and Mr. Larossiere, your former counterpart at the International Monetary Fund), in Washington, D.C. We discussed the broad objectives of my government and the policies taken to reverse the debilitating decline in income and production bequeathed to us by the previous administration. You welcomed our restoration of democracy and endorsed our efforts to rebuild the Philippine economy. Shortly thereafter, your bank extended financial assistance to support our economic recovery.

By the end of 1988, the World Bank had approved 9 loans to this government for a total commitment of US\$998 million. During this period, the international Finance Corporation of your World Bank group had also extended direct support to 10 private enterprises in the Philippines, through equity, loans, and guarantee operations, amounting to cumulative commitments of US\$109.89 million. Your staff had rendered a wide-range of services through consultations, project missions, and studies that had contributed to our deliberation of policy options and formulation of projects. We are therefore grateful to you and the World Bank group for this rich range of assistance extended to my government.

From the nadir of three years ago, our economy has bounced back. Output is up for the third year with unemployment declining. Private enterprise has been reinvigorated by major political and economic reforms. Investments have recovered with business confidence restored. Exports have accelerated as inflation is kept within bounds. While this performance may stand out among heavily indebted countries, more needs to be done.

A majority of our people still live in poverty. We have to improve their condition and ensure that growth is broadly based to better their life. More jobs need to be created to absorb the unemployed and the 700,000 new additions to our labor force each year. Agrarian reform has to be accelerated with ownership broadened to millions of landless farmers. They in turn must be supported and transformed into self-reliant producers.

The thrust is to open up opportunities for harnessing their productive energies and channelling these to income generating activities. This would provide the foundation for enduring improvement in the well-being of all our citizens. The majority in poverty must have a stake in the creation of wealth of the nation. Their alienation from this process was the seed for insurgency that tears at national cohesion and drains limited resources from productive enterprise. Growth therefore has to be sustained with equity.

This task is fundamentally ours and best served by promulgating efficiency and productivity in the economy. However, our resources are severely constrained, with up to 30% of our foreign exchange receipts used to pay our external debt and 43% of our budget diverted to service both our external and domestic debts. For us to succeed, continuing assistance from the international community is essential.

To obtain the necessary inflows required for sustaining growth, we shall continue to work closely with the international community and the World Bank. With them, we will develop projects and programs deserving of support. Given our large overhang of inherited debt, it is imperative for us to maximize recourse to highly concessional assistance. We shall also continue to explore options with our creditors for debt reduction schemes to alleviate debt constraints on our growth. We look forward to initiatives from the World Bank in addressing and resolving this problem of debt.

President Conable, I have been informed of your heavy schedule and that of Mrs. Conable for the brief duration of your visit. Before your departure you would have met with government officials, members of the legislature and the business community, non-governmental organizations, and our lively press. You would have visited some project sites and acquired direct knowledge of poverty and environmental problems in the Philippines. In your dialogues and visits, you will gain insight into issues, problems, and how these are resolved in our democratic setting. With your long and distinguished service in the U.S. Congress, I am confident that you will appreciate the political process involved in arriving at national decisions on policy choices and look forward to your trip as a meaningful one that will be reflected in greater world bank support for projects and programs sensitive to our political environment.

Ladies and gentlemen,

May I invite you to a toast in honor of his Excellency, Mr. Barber Conable, President of the World Bank, and Mrs. Charlotte Conable, for their continued good health, happiness and success.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 5th Asian Parliamentarians' Conference on Population and Development

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 5th Asian Parliamentarians' Conference on Population and Development**

[Delivered on February 17, 1989]

CHALLENGE TO PARLIAMENTARIANS

The President notes the issues to be tackled in the Conference that have a direct bearing on our respective countries' progress and prosperity. The challenge to Parliamentarians is to strengthen the population programs so that people may be fully aware of their options in attaining the desirable population levels in accordance with their conscience and moral beliefs.

It is my pleasure to welcome all of you to the Philippines for this 5th Asian Parliamentarians' Conference on Population and Development.

When Parliamentarians meet, it is but to be expected that the substance and processes of law will dominate the agenda.

This time it will come as no surprise if the high-flown rhetoric on the floor is heavily spiced with socio-economic and demographic jargon instead of legalese.

For you are gathered here, not to wrestle with the abstract but to address issues that have a direct bearing on our respective countries' progress and prosperity.

Those of you from highly industrialized economies have much to share with those of us from the developing countries in terms of how we can push up our GNP and pull down the levels of population. Japan, Singapore and even Malaysia have, through the years, managed to stabilize their population growth. So have other western nations that now seek a turnaround to raise fertility rates from estimated zero population levels.

On the other hand, policy makers in developing countries continue to be challenged by high birth rates that have outstripped the resources at hand.

This imbalance in the ratio between population growth and resources has resulted in low income levels, unemployment and underemployment, malnutrition and inadequate housing, education and health facilities.

In the Philippines, our task in government has been mandated clearly enough in the constitution in these words: "The state shall defend the right of spouses to found a family in accordance with their religious convictions and the demands of responsible parenthood."

As I see it, the challenge to parliamentarians is to strengthen the population programs adopted in their countries by appropriate legislative action. At the same time, the different governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations, taking their cue from such initiatives, can complement these programs by conducting broad information programs so that the people may be fully aware of their options in attaining the desirable population levels in accordance with their conscience and moral beliefs.

I wish all of you a most fruitful and meaningful dialog.

Good day and thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Commencement Exercises of the Philippine Military Academy

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Commencement Exercises of the Philippine Military Academy**

[Held in Baguio City, February 19, 1989]

IDEALS FOR THE MILITARY

The President enjoins all Filipinos to dedicate the next generation of officers to the ideals of the Revolution: freedom, justice and national reconciliation. She urges the graduates to fight the enemies wherever they appear and threaten our people — the Communist terrorist in city and barrio, the right wing Conspirator in our military camps, and the lawless elements who seek to deny unity to our country.

This will be the last PMA class to have witnessed from this hill the great historic events that unfolded in our country below.

The Academy's commencement exercises have been moved closer to the anniversary of those events. Not deliberately to connect the two events, yet the change has produced the deepest symbolism.

Now, each generation of officers must step forward and take their duties in the shadow of the People Power Revolution of 1986.

Now, each generation of officers must take their commissions under the burden of proving themselves worthy of that event, and the obligation to uphold the ideals it represents.

In that light, I ask all Filipinos to join in dedicating the next generation of officers to the ideals of the Revolution: freedom, justice and national reconciliation.

Three years after EDSA, the freedom is unquestionable. But the work of justice has barely started. And national reconciliation is still a dream.

Yet the duty stands, incumbent on officers and men, on President and nation, to complete the work of justice and realize the dream of national reconciliation in the fullness of freedom that we enjoy.

Those who made the Revolution may never see reconciliation completed. For some, the wounds have been too deep to ever heal completely.

Yet we cannot give up.

We cannot concede that we and our posterity must forever array our forces on lines of opposing views-the Left against the Right, and both against the Center. For this would be the ultimate betrayal.

It would be the betrayal of those who fought and died, he and many others, in the dark night of the dictatorship for just such a reconciliation.

It would be a betrayal of the spirit of the people who turned a near bloodbath into a miracle of compassion.

No, the work must go on—to reconcile the factions that still threaten to rend our society, and the opponents of democracy to our unshakeable resolve to make it endure.

But if we cannot mend the quarrels and divisions of the past, at least let us not hand them down to the next generation.

To the enemies of freedom, the armed opponents of our government on the Left and the Right, I address these words:

Let us sit down and try to settle our differences by talk, and if we cannot, by all means let us do so by arms. But let us not infect the next generation, in civil society and in the armed forces, with narrow causes and partisan hatreds from the past.

Let us save the future generations for the task that still needs to be done: to reach by the work of every Filipino hand the goal that once united us—a nation free and just and peaceful, united and strong.

Let us keep the future pure for that end, especially the future that stands before us today in the proud uniform of idealism and sacrifice—the next generation of officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

To the graduates of the Philippine Military Academy, Class of '89, I say, You are leaving the walls of this Academy at a time when important changes are taking place in the country. You will step forth from this day into a country of refired hopes, of real progress, and of better prospects of peace than our troubled land has had for a quarter of a century.

As you come forward to receive your commissions, you will receive into your charge the gains that our country has made in the past three difficult years.

These gains are very important. They were made in the face of the gravest threats and the most daunting challenges. Every step forward was bitterly contested, and stoutly held. Not an inch of ground was surrendered. In three years, we reversed this country's descent into economic collapse, political disintegration, and social revolution and started our ascent to the future.

It is so easily forgotten how bad the situation was. But those of us who have helped raise this country from desolation and despair remember it well. We built it up, stone by stone, in the teeth of our enemies, who mocked the halting progress of the country they had crippled. We plodded on, we persevered—to reach this day and beyond it to the future that we all seek.

Those who sapped the strength of this country will ask you to join them in exploiting its weaknesses. Ignore them.

Ignore them out of patriotism. Ignore them out of prudence.

This country, this government, and this leader have more strength than appearances suggest.

It is the character of democracy to look weak. It is the fate of its vanquished enemies to feel its strength.

Four years in this Academy have taught you your role in the scheme of progress. Your duty is to defend what your government and our people are building.

The intervention of the military in Philippine politics under the dictatorship and in the Revolution is supposed to have confused the military mind.

There is no confusion.

The military serve for honor and the sum of military honor lies in this: the professional soldier always obeys the Commander-in-Chief and never runs from a fight.

You have my orders. You know the enemy: the Communist terrorist in city and barrio, the rightwing conspirator in our military camps, and the lawless elements who seek to deny unity to our country. Fight them wherever they appear and threaten our people, our work, what we are striving to make of this country.

The battlefield is everywhere. That is the nature of the threat, the challenge to your intelligence and leadership. The mission is to protect our people and establish the social conditions of progress-law and order. The prize is the loyalty and respect of our people, the peace and prosperity of our country.

Your government cannot give you all the men and logistics for the task. You are expected to make up for the shortage of both with an excess of dedication and zeal. A lot will be expected of you, which only an extraordinary self-discipline and courage will enable you to fulfill.

You will be continuously under fire—from the guns of the enemy and the attacks of front organizations that seek to instill in the people fear and loathing, rather than confidence and respect, for the uniform you wear. At times it is you who will be painted as the enemy. But the discipline imbibed in this Academy will enable you to survive these assaults and complete your mission.

That discipline is also the key to breaking the insurgency. For what we seek to win in feats of arms are the hearts of men.

Let no one find in your actions faults that would prove to the people that the enemy is the better choice.

To the enemy, show the fighting qualities for which you have trained long and hard at the Academy. To the people show the utmost concern for their safety and the most careful regard for the human rights you are sworn to defend.

This is the fight into which you have asked to be called. All the rest is politics, of which this country is beginning to have too much.

The long grey line that passed in review this morning includes those of us, in or out of uniform, who share its spirit of total service. It extends beyond the graduates here to those who have passed before and left us memorials of their courage. It reaches farther back still to the birth of the nation, to the examples of our heroes, to the root of all service in the Republic: duty, sacrifice, and love of country.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Philippine Embassy Staff

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Philippine Embassy Staff**

[Held in Japan, February 23, 1989]

TO THE EMBASSY STAFF

The President thanks the Philippine Embassy Staff in Japan in keeping the friendship and respect between two peoples and enjoins the staff to continue their good work.

We are gathered here on a most solemn occasion — the funeral of the late Emperor of Japan. We came to share with the Japanese people the burden of their grief, as well as their joy and highest hopes for the reign of their new Emperor.

Japan is an important partner of Philippine progress. It is one of the most important players in Asia today and in the foreseeable future. We are fortunate that our two peoples have only the greatest friendship and respect for each other. That friendship has been well kept and encouraged by the Philippine Embassy staff and by our most able and dedicated Ambassador Ramon Del Rosario. His unflagging efforts to translate this tremendous fund of goodwill into concrete cooperation and assistance in Philippine developmental efforts deserve our highest commendation. That commendation he shares with the staff whose support and talents he has constantly attested. I thank you all for the good work you have been doing.

We are privileged to be here on a most important historic occasion — the funeral of a Japanese Emperor and the accession of another. It is the most important moment in the history of a most interesting, dynamic nation. We should remember it well that we may be able to pass the memory of it to our posterity. We, who are gathered here — members of the embassy, members of the Filipino community in Japan, are a part of that moment. That we are sharing it has forged a special bond between us.

I thank you again for what you are doing and urge you to continue the good work.

Mabuhay!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the burial of Emperor Hirohito

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the burial of Emperor Hirohito

[Held in Japan, February 23, 1989]

A LAST TRIBUTE

As the Japanese people shared the anguish of our struggle for freedom, as well as the joy of our victory, the President joins other world leaders in paying a last tribute to the late Emperor of Japan and the bright hopes for the reign of the new one.

We are leaving to join other world leaders in paying a last tribute to the late Emperor of Japan. In so doing, we express the desire to share with the Japanese people the burden of their grief at the final rites for their beloved emperor.

The emperor Showa's reign spanned the most momentous events in the history of Japan and the world.

His reign opened at the rising of the Japanese sun. It has closed in greater and truer glory – a peace-loving, more prosperous, and neighborly Japan

As the Japanese people shared the anguish of our struggle for freedom, as well as the joy of our victory, so do we, the Filipino people, open our hearts to their grief at the passing of their old Emperor and their highest hopes for the reign of the new one.

In the new Emperor's time we may see the fulfillment of his father's hopes at a time when the world was rushing into war. I quote the poem he wrote in January 1940, the month of his death 49 years later:

<i>On</i>		<i>this</i>		<i>New</i>		<i>Year's</i>		<i>Day</i>
<i>We</i>	<i>pray</i>		<i>for</i>	<i>the</i>	<i>time</i>	<i>to</i>		<i>come</i>
<i>When</i>		<i>east,</i>		<i>west,</i>		<i>and</i>		<i>all,</i>
<i>Making</i>		<i>friends</i>		<i>with</i>		<i>one</i>		<i>another</i>
<i>Will share in a prosperous future.</i>								

I shall take to the Japanese people our condolences over their loss, and our congratulations at the new age that has opened for Japan and Asia — as expressed in the late Emperor's hope.

Before going, may I say that every provision has been made to assure the tranquility of our own state in our absence, not least the vigilance of a free people on the eve of celebrating their democratic victory. This is the most dependable provision of all.

I leave in the profound assurance of our own strength and common resolve to keep the flag of freedom flying in our country. I shall be back well in time to join you at EDSA.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Message of President Corazon Aquino to the New Japanese Emperor

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the New Japanese Emperor**

[Delivered at a toast on February 23, 1989]

LESSONS FROM THE EMPEROR

In this occasion, the President wishes the new Emperor a long and happy reign and hopes for the continuance of our two countries' abiding friendship and common resolve to see both our peoples progress further in wisdom and well-being.

I am very pleased to be with you this evening. Gathered here are some of the most important people in Japan whom the Philippines can count on as friends.

The occasion that has brought us together arouses mixed feelings. I can understand the sadness at the passing of one who was Emperor and spiritual guide to the Japanese state and people, and who was, to the rest of mankind, an example of kindness, humility, and complete devotion to duty, all the more remarkable for who he was. I was greatly honored and deeply moved to have made his brief acquaintance.

Yet the occasion is also one of even brighter hopes for the reign of the new Emperor. There is no question that in his reign, Japan's voice will be listened to with even greater regard than heretofore, in the councils of Asia and the rest of the world.

In the deliberations that must precede the entry of the world in the 21st century – whether held within our respective governments or between our countries – I hope that all shall keep in mind the words of the Emperor Showa:

*Would that the wise voice
Of the man in the street
Spoke daily to guide us,
That we might do no wrong
In performing our duties.*

In the last analysis, he is saying, it is to the welfare of the common people that the productive capacity and energies of all nations must be bent. Let us take inspiration from his great compassion for the small, and let our hearts, in his words, go out:

*To all our people
In a prayer for their well-being.*

I am deeply honored to be here in Japan on this auspicious moment in her history. And I am most sincerely pleased this evening to be among friends of the Philippines.

Please join me now in a toast,

To our two countries' abiding friendship, to our common resolve to see both our peoples progress further in wisdom and well-being, and

To the Emperor, a long and happy reign.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the 20th Anniversary of AIM

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines During the 20th Anniversary of AIM

[Released on February 28, 1989]

DEVELOPER OF MANAGERIAL TALENT

The President stresses the role played by the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) in the emerging economic dominance of Asia. She added that once upon a time, the AIM met the challenge of Asian growth. Now she gives it the challenge of Filipino progress. The AIM should continue its sharing of managerial expertise with the rest of Asia and must help our country, our government and our people scale the heights of progress to fulfill our dream of a peaceful, prosperous and progressive Philippines.

The Asian Institute of Management is called alma mater by some 13,000 managers from all over Asia, and the number is growing. That's quite a constituency for me to be addressing. Moreover, it is a constituency that is notable not only for its size but for the role it played in the emerging economic dominance of Asia.

The start of the AIM twenty years ago coincided with the beginnings of the Asia that now commands the respect and careful regard of its competitors in the West. Let me say therefore how very pleased I am to be here with you to mark this milestone in the history of the Asian Institute of Management.

It was 20 years ago that AIM started to fill the need for the managerial competence to release and direct Asia's tremendous productive forces, just then stirring into life. Far from being the exception in having this potential, the Philippines was ahead of her neighbors in concrete progress.

I will not repeat the sad story of missed opportunities, of poor foresight, of bad management, and of the outright deliberate twisting of economic priorities to suit private greed.

That is all water under the bridge. We have no time for regrets. The height of our fall from years of public mismanagement and public theft measures only half the height we must scale to catch up with the competition just here in Southeast Asia.

Our competitors were not standing still when we were falling back. Now, they have achieved such a high level of economic growth that they can well afford to match it with generous programs of social services.

We, on the contrary, must address two equally pressing priorities: economic progress and social amelioration. Both priorities press hard upon the same limited stock of resources.

Not the least of those resources is the managerial competence to put limited means to the most productive and honest use.

We have been getting, pre-eminently from schools like the AIM, the managerial skill to encourage and direct the growth of the private economy. As the distinguished record of this school shows, we have even supplied that talent to the competition. Give it to the Filipino, he can fall behind in anything, but not in the intellectual command of essential disciplines and in his generosity in sharing what he knows.

But an equal, if not greater need, urges itself on our managerial capacity: the need to prepare the ground for the great strides in industrialization and agricultural production, and in social services, that must be made. And they must be

made quickly if we are to regain our former ranking in this region and to survive as a just, compassionate, and democratic society.

We need managers for development even more urgently than the managers we have so excellently trained to meet the bottomline of private profit. We need development managers not only on the level of the central government but, more importantly, on the levels of the local government units.

Somehow, political vision and practical programs founder on the reefs of managerial ignorance in the implementation stage. Somehow things get bogged down, and less gets done than we have a right to expect, given the time and resources devoted. We are frustrated because it seems that the best political will, like some rivers, will disappear in the sand before it gets to the sea. Too much is lost in the translation of programs into concrete works and real opportunities for our people.

We need development managers to carry through the programs to their only aim: a concrete improvement in the lives of the people, and in the prospects of our country for growth – and more growth.

Take the constitutional call for agrarian reform. This does not mean the mere subdivision of poverty on the land, but the increase of incomes and the general well-being of the vast majority of our people who live off the land. Passing out titles is easy. Making the land produce a decent life for the farmer, and a future for his children, that is the challenge. The aim was not the vindication of a certain idea of land justice, but the material improvement of rural life through infrastructure building and extension services that will increase productivity and incomes. So it is with every program, whether aimed at the farmer in the field or the worker on the shopfloor or in the office building. Words of the law and pronouncements of policy are not worth the paper they are printed on without the hands and minds that will make laws and policies work out in reality as they were intended to: To raise the people step by concrete step to a better life.

So it is with the Constitutional call to decentralize political authority and the expenditure of public resources. It is not the aim of the Constitution to merely spread the exercise of political power, or to decentralize opportunities for graft and waste. Decentralization has the same aim of improving the lives of our people by bringing public services closer to them.

In my talks with the provincial governors, I have come to appreciate how better attuned local officials are to the developmental and social needs of their people. I have also seen how badly competent managers are needed to meet those needs.

Competent development managers are needed to identify projects and see them through to completion. The need becomes particularly critical at this time as we compete for foreign development assistance. Our absorptive capacity for assistance in the public sector is being questioned. We have to show that we can use resources swiftly and productively. That nothing will go to waste or disappear into graft, and yet that something significant can be accomplished in record time. We have to show, not by mouth, but by action. We have to prove our capability to use further assistance by showing in completed projects what we can do with what we already have.

At present, the DAP offers short-term courses for development managers. DAP's output, however, may not be able to satisfy all the requirements of the prospective Philippine Assistance Program for new managers. I am, therefore, suggesting that AIM, in coordination with the DAP undertake a similar program that will turn out new development managers at a faster rate.

We are trying to de-regulate our economy, and even the public service. We must not only loosen, we must release completely the stranglehold of regulation that is choking private initiative and turning off local and foreign investments, and discouraging development assistance. I have started to believe that there is no regulatory aim that is worth the cost in lost opportunities and in frustration as a result of government regulation of economic activities. Not a single aim has been worth the delay nor the missed opportunity for more growth.

One of the most important measures of economic deregulation – the Kalakalan 20 program – has met with some resistance. The measure will hopefully become law very soon. This and other measures designed to release the productive power of Philippine industry and agriculture, on every level – from the big to the grass-roots – need friends in Congress to make them law, and managers in the countryside and on the shopfloor to make them work.

Once upon a time, the AIM met the challenge of Asian growth. Now I give it the challenge of Filipino progress.

The AIM, as its name “Asian” demands, should continue its generous sharing of managerial expertise with the rest of Asia.

But the AIM as central developer of Filipino managerial talent, must rise to that challenge. It must help our country, our government, and our people scale the heights of progress –

So we can catch up with our neighbors in Asia;

With the competition in the rest of the world;

And with our dream of a peaceful, prosperous, and progressive Philippines.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the Annual District Conference of Rotary International District 381

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the Annual District Conference of Rotary International District 381**

[Held at Manila Hotel, March 3, 1989]

**HARNESSING
PRODUCTIVE ENERGIES**

THE

YOUTH'S

The President commends the Rotary International District 381 on the occasion of its Annual District Conference and in sponsoring the academic scholarships and vocational training skills programs as well as youth development campaigns and its major components and asks for their continued support and involvement in PSYP.

Three years ago, we were in the process of settling down to the business of organizing and running a government that was to be truly democratic and free. Today, we can look back with pride and satisfaction on our accomplishments even as we are aware that more needs to be done.

The private sector is the major partner of the government in nation-building. For all the growth that the nation achieved in the past year, the grit and the will to bring about the needed gains belonged to the private sector. The significant growth of the past year vindicates our faith that while the government must do its part to create the stability and continuity needed to support enterprise, it is to the private sector that we must look to for the risks and the entrepreneurial daring to push our democracy toward a better quality of life.

On the other hand, the gains so far bear out the renewed confidence and optimism of our people. These gains do not mean a slackening of efforts but point to the necessity for an expanded partnership between you and your government.

I am very pleased that the Rotary International District 381 on the occasion of its Annual District Conference shall tackle the theme of nation-building. It goes without saying that each and every Filipino must be involved and must do his share.

But for today, I should like all of us to focus our attention on our youth.

I am aware that the Rotary International is currently undertaking significant programs for youth development. In particular, I would like to commend the academic scholarship and vocational skills training programs as well as the youth development campaigns being sponsored by the various Rotary International Districts in the country.

The country's youth played a key role in the installation of this government, not only during the crucial confrontations at EDSA but throughout the long, hard struggle for freedom. And lest we forget, it was often young Filipinos who had to make the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

Only a few days ago, we marked the Third Anniversary of EDSA. As in the two previous celebrations, we marked it with that odd mixture of solemnity and revelry often described as uniquely Filipino. And again, it was the youth in the forefront of things.

To be sure some quarters are quite critical of the manner by which we celebrate the historic event. The sight of young men and women dancing in the streets is seemingly incongruous, at first glance, with commemorating the heroism of the Filipino people and the serious business of rebuilding a nation.

However, there is a time for everything. A time for celebration and festivity and a time to roll up our sleeves and buckle down to work. As starkly illustrated at EDSA three years ago, youthful exuberance and daring need not be synonymous with mindless frivolity and folly. That the Filipino youth have time and again willingly laid their lives on the line is proof that they are an integral factor in Philippine national life.

But in our preoccupation with our own everyday concerns, national and business affairs are often judged as matters too serious to involve the young. With summer almost upon us, this misconception will doubtless be reinforced. For this season of the year is almost always associated with youthful energies being expended on frivolous pursuits or dangerous mischief.

This need not be so. Our youth have amply demonstrated that not only are they concerned about the future of this country but that they are willing to do something about it.

Thus let me announce today the launching of the PSYP program. PSYP stands for the President's Summer Youth Program, one which will give young Filipinos a chance to utilize their youthful zest and idealism in the development struggle and nation-building.

The focus of the PSYP will be youth involvement in productive endeavors. The program will not be used for political ends nor will it be used to build personality cults around certain individuals.

The PSYP will involve high school, college and vocational school students as well as out-of-school youth. Both the government and the private sector will be tapped to provide the means and the venue for youth involvement in this program. It is thus that I appeal to members of Rotary International and to other organizations to support and get involved with any or all of the PSYP components.

The PSYP has five major components: 1. summer work appreciation for students; 2. government internship program; 3. immersion and service outreach work; 4. summer camp and travel programs; and 5. culture and sports programs.

THE SUMMER WORK APPRECIATION PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS

This program will make available to the youth opportunities for exposure to actual work situation during summer and for them to develop the values of work appreciation and ethics. Likewise, a stipend equivalent to 50% to 75% of the prevailing minimum wage will be provided by the sponsoring company to the student participants who have entered into a training agreement for the duration of the summer period.

It will be launched nationwide by DOLE and it is expected to benefit a conservative target of 5,000 youths during the summer period.

The proposed guidelines for the program were drawn up together with the Employer Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP) and the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP).

As businessmen, you are in an ideal position to support this program. Aside from giving our young people a chance to be productive, your own respective organizations will most likely benefit from the injection of fresh and idealistic energy and talent.

GOVERNMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Government will likewise offer a counterpart program. Internship programs in various government agencies, including government owned and controlled corporations, will be made available to the youth this summer. The program will give them a chance to be actively involved with the bureaucracy and public service. It is hoped that through their participation in government work, they shall be acquainted with the programs and projects of the government and thereby support and get more involved in the national effort to achieve stability and progress.

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) will be the lead agency for this PSYP component. As envisioned, students will be recruited on the basis of their field of study to work with the various agencies. For example, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources plans to recruit natural science students to participate in conservation programs while social science and journalism students will work on the information campaigns on the river revival and anti-pollution campaigns. On the other hand, out-of-school youths will be tapped for the Department's seedling production and anti-illegal logging programs. The Department of Public Works and Highways plans to recruit engineering and architecture students to serve as draftsmen while High School and vocational students will undergo apprenticeship in carpentry, plumbing, automotive mechanics, electricity and the like. The Department of Social Welfare and Development will recruit apprentices in its Day Care Centers as well as in its various welfare institutions. The Department of Education, Culture and Sports will recruit students to participate in its literacy campaign.

OTHER PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The immersion and service outreach component shall see students going out to the grass roots to render various basic services. The Department of Health, for example, is negotiating with the Association of Philippine Medical Colleges (APMC) so that student volunteers can render community health services and assist in the delivery of primary health care programs.

The summer camp and travel programs shall be handled mainly by the Department of Tourism (DOT) with the assistance of private travel companies. The intention is to package tours for students so that their appreciation of the country's history and culture will go beyond what they read in their school textbooks.

To round out the summer activities, the various public and private schools as well as the various local governments will be tapped for the promotion of sports and cultural programs on the municipal or even barangay levels.

The various agencies are now drawing up the detailed mechanics of the program and its various components. Neither is this concept radically new. It has been tried before in other countries with very good results. What we make of it here is entirely up to us.

I have designated the Office of the President Youth Affairs Secretariat (OP-YAS) to be the agency-coordinator and secretariat for the PSYP. They shall be linking with various non-government youth organizations and youth-serving institutions for the success of the PSYP. They shall also consult with these youth organizations and institutions, as well as the local private sector on possible new activities which can be included in the program. Together with the Cabinet Secretary, they shall monitor the progress of these programs, and ensure the full and active involvement of the youth. The OP-YAS shall submit, by the third quarter, a preliminary assessment of the program, and their recommendations to me. We want to see this modest program grow, hence I have instructed the OP-YAS to develop and recommend a comprehensive youth development program, in coordination with the concerned agencies, with the results of the PSYP as a start-up point. This shall be the government's response to our youth's development needs.

On the private sector's role, I should like to reiterate my appeal, not only for your support, but for your active participation in *any or all* of the program's components. Without your support and participation, I am afraid that this program will not have much chance of success. We owe it all to our youth to make it work.

And so I appeal first of all to Rotary International and to all the parents to support PSYP.

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Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the launching of the Philippine Development Plan for Women

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the launching of the Philippine Development Plan for Women**

[Delivered at the Heroes Hall, Malacañang, March 8, 1989]

FOCUS ON WOMEN

The President in her declaration of Women's Week and the whole month of March as Women's Role in History Month honors the women who preceded us in shaping our nation. She calls for the support of all concerned agencies to ensure full implementation of the programs and projects outlined in the Philippine Development Plan for Women. She thoughtfully adds that men should not be threatened by these stirrings for equality and development; they should instead encourage and support the efforts to elevate the status of women.

Greetings to all of you on International Women's Day. The Philippines also celebrates Women's Rights and International Peace Day today. I have also declared this week as Women's Week and the whole month of March as Women's Role in History Month. These meaningful celebrations demonstrate our solidarity with women all over the world in our common struggle for equality, freedom and peace.

As we celebrate, we also honor the women who preceded us in shaping our nation like Teodora Alonzo and the women of Malolos. All those who resisted traditional confines and restrictions to assert themselves. The peasant rebel women who fought side by side with the men like Gabriela Silang. The early suffragettes who were the forerunners of today's feminists. Above all, we pay tribute to the women who played a crucial role in the People Power Revolution at EDSA.

Many have told me that the greatest single event that projected the image of Filipino womanhood the world over was when a woman ended the country's 20-year subjection to a dictator. Given the opportunity to serve that I had, I am sure other Filipino women can also prove that they are indeed equal to Filipino males.

The past decades bore witness to the international awakening of women to their rights. Credit this mainly to the global women's conferences in Mexico, Copenhagen and Nairobi. In our country, the direct fruits of these consciousness-raising sessions were the creation of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women and the drawing up of blueprints to focus national attention on women's concerns in the fields of education, law, health and nutrition, labor, agriculture and others.

More recently, the persistent lobbying of women's groups succeeded in including a provision in our Constitution that ensures fundamental equality of women and men before the law. Its direct offshoot was the Family Code which should go a long way in eradicating the pockets of discrimination against women still existing in our society.

We have to admit that educating our people, to think of women as individuals who are entitled to rights and respect as much as their menfolk, is a tough problem. It is heartening, therefore, to note that we now have academic offerings on women's studies. My own alma mater, St. Scholastica's College, is leading the pack, as it were, in opening the eyes of women to their great potentialities. After my term, each one can aspire to become President.

Since I assumed this office, I have appointed more and more women to high-ranking and policy-making positions. Without exception, they have proven their mettle.

In my trips to the provinces, I have met very competent women managers who had been at the helm of their enterprises for several decades. I have met professional and technical female managers who perform as effectively as their male counterparts. We have many female decision-makers who can hold their own in the board rooms of predominantly male corporate boards.

Because many of our women in the rural areas are involved in the so-called underground economy, I am happy that the House of Representatives has passed on third reading the bill I certified to Congress that gives various kinds of incentives to countryside business enterprises. If enacted into law, these family enterprises will be encouraged to come out in the open. As you may know, we have entered into an agreement with J.C. Penney for the export of \$20 million worth of goods to their outlets all over the United States. Much in demand are the artificial plants, papier mache, shell products, RTW and jewelry Accessories that our women are so expert at manufacturing.

At this point, we have to confront two vexing problems.

First, we must recognize and acknowledge the “invisible” Filipino woman. The ordinary woman in the farms and fishing villages, in the factories, the streets and in the homes. We must give value to the actual contributions she makes for the survival and well-being of the family, the community and the nation.

Having acknowledged her present contributions, we must then give the ordinary woman the opportunity to improve the quality of her contributions by liberating her from narrow stereotyped roles and broadening her options for growth and service.

In other words, we must recognize and give value to the work of the “ordinary housewife.” Then give her the necessary support to develop her other potentials.

Now the Philippine Development Plan for Women which we launch today is the major instrument for government action on the equality and development of women. I have issued Executive Order Number 348 approving and adopting this plan. All government departments, bureaus, offices, agencies and instrumentalities, including government-owned or controlled corporations are enjoined to take appropriate steps to ensure the full implementation of the programs and projects outlined in the plan. An appropriate focal point for women’s concerns or any other similar mechanism shall be constituted in these agencies.

The National Commission on Women, in coordination with the National Economic and Development Authority, is tasked with monitoring the implementation and periodic assessment of the plan.

Firmly believing in the importance and urgency of the Philippine Development Plan for Women. I call on all concerned to cooperate fully with its implementation. I also call for the support of non-governmental organizations in the private sector which are our allies in all aspects of our work in government. For my part, I will follow its progress closely through my regular meetings with the National Commission on Women. I do not want it said with any degree of credibility that under a woman President, the situation of Filipino women did not improve significantly.

A word on the vital role of media in combatting the prejudices against women. Oftentimes, they permeate the consciousness of the unwary through subliminal messages beamed through different forms of mass media. Advertisements sometimes depict women as objects of pleasure not as human beings. As second-rate citizens incapable of decisions beyond her kitchen and her wardrobe. To add further injury, media perpetuate these biases as frequently as they show these ads.

I urge the women's groups, therefore, to enlist media's support in their unrelenting campaign. And I ask media in turn to police their ranks, particularly the ladies, lest they lend themselves unwittingly to the cause they seek to destroy.

It is difficult for me to speak on the development of women without reflecting on my own life. I spent a lifetime as wife to Ninoy and mother to my children, willingly and lovingly performing the responsibilities of the wife of a politician, a political prisoner and, finally, a martyr. I bore and reared five good children of whom any mother would be proud and who have now begun to give me the pleasures of grand motherhood.

While I sometimes look back on that season of my life as a housewife with affection and nostalgia. I am sure that I would not be disloyal to the memory of Ninoy and my children if I admit that despite its obvious burdens, I value this stage of my life with its many challenges. For it has given me the opportunity to serve my country more directly and more fully. I believe that every Filipino woman deserves similar opportunities for growth and service.

As we celebrate now, let us remember that the support of our men is crucial to our efforts to elevate the status of women. To all Filipino men, I say: Do not be threatened by these stirrings for equality and development. The women are not anti-men. Nor are they governed by a destructive spirit of competition. However, they do want to be recognized for what they are and what they can achieve given the necessary encouragement and support from you.

Finally, let us remember that to fully realize our development, each has to realize her own self-worth first. The efforts start from us, ourselves. Government and other basic institutions in our society can only be supportive of our aspirations. And our efforts will bear fruit only to the extent of our sincere commitment – not just on paper, not merely in words, but more in deeds.

Let me hear you pledge that you will couple your support for this Plan with action.

Higit sa lahat, tayo ay kailangang magkaisa. Hindi lamang ang kababaihan kundi ang buong sambayanan. Sa ating mga balikat nakasalalay ang pagasa ng bayan na makamit ang kapayapaan, at kasaganaan at kaunlaran.

Maraming salamat sa inyong lahat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry**

[Held at the Philippine Plaza Hotel, March 10, 1989]

PIONEERS OF ENTERPRISES

The President enjoins the Federation to assist the government in its rural development program particularly in industry dispersal and livelihood generation to hasten the overall economic growth of the country. She also challenges the Federation to be more involved with the affairs of the nation by effectively generating investments and exports from their foreign counterparts to promote countryside development.

I am pleased to congratulate the members of this Federation on its 17th Biennial Convention. I am also pleased to note that your theme echoes my call for a more aggressive countryside development program for 1989. With the 169 Chambers of Commerce and Industry all over the country affiliated with your federation, I know that you can be a potent force as government's partner in the task of reenergizing our economy.

Let me refresh your minds with the past year's economic accomplishments in which the private sector had played a key role. Our GNP's growth at almost 7 percent in 1988 is a continuing improvement over the 5.7 percent we achieved in 1987 and the 2 percent in 1986.

Industry has been the leading sector of this growth with its gross value added at almost 9 percent, an improvement over the 8 percent in 1987.

1988 was also a banner year for investments and exports. For the first time in our country's history, investments in 1988, as registered with the Board of Investments, reached an unprecedented P31 billion in total project cost – eclipsing the P11 billion record breaker of 1987.

Also, for the first time in the country's history, Philippine exports broke through the US\$ 7 billion barrier to reach US\$ 7.07 billion in 1988.

We can now paint a rosier picture of our economy even as we open new opportunities for growth.

But we need to build on top of the gains we have so far achieved. We need to redistribute the growth that so far has been felt mainly in the cities. We have picked out rural development and livelihood generation through countryside development to hasten our overall economic growth. And it is in this area that I will primarily ask your help.

Allow me to point out that in the recent past, we have been encouraging legislation that would offer incentives to draw out investments by small and family-based enterprises. You are, of course, aware that the House of Representatives has passed the Countryside Business Enterprises Bill which I certified to it. The many small and family industries now operating underground will be encouraged to come out into the open and expand, after all the incentives in the Bill shall be operational.

We are also supporting public and private sector programs aimed at rural development such as industry dispersal. We have recently established Regional Industrial Centers aimed at providing the infrastructure that business needs to operate.

Our campaign for countryside investment has effected last year a 55% flow of total investments into the rural regions. Then, too, our “Tulong-Sa-Tao” program as of February 1989 has approved the loan application of 125 private voluntary organizations amounting to P36 million, to benefit 7,801 micro enterprises all over the country. From this, P32.5 million will be channeled to small businesses in regions outside the National Capital Region.

The Chinese in the Philippines have a long history of being forerunners of economic progress in the country. Of being pioneers of enterprises that still flourish today, I am asking you now to continue playing that role.

Additionally, I urge you to encourage your Taiwanese counterparts to invest here and avail themselves of duty-and tariff-free privileges that the Philippines enjoys under the U.S. Generalized System of Preferences. With Taiwan’s having graduated from the U.S. Generalized System of Preferences privileges, our country’s duty-free privileges should present the best incentive for Taiwanese investors to manufacture GSP-covered items in the Philippines.

As you are aware, Taiwan today is one of the Philippines’ most important investors with P2.31 billion or US\$ 109.3 million investments in 1988 comprising 22.8% of total foreign investments. For 1989, we hope to increase Taiwanese investments by 50%.

The approval of the Board of Investment’s Board Resolution No. 046 last February 23 which spells out the basic rights and guarantees of Taiwanese investors in the country will enhance the attractiveness of the Philippines as an investment area.

Corollary to this, our BOI will put up a one-stop shop investment center in Taiwan to offer services that will help the Taiwanese save time. This center will provide information, counselling, pre-processing, information completion, identification, investment mission, travel assistance and coordination services.

The Department of Trade and Industry is closely coordinating with the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Immigration Office to grant multiple access visas so that Taiwanese investors will have ready access to us.

Lastly, as you know, I have appointed a new BIR Head in the person of Commissioner Jose Ong. He has pledged to improve collections, for taxes are the lifeblood of our nation’s progress. In turn, I have assured him of my full support in the exercise of authority and powers vested in him. Help him with this task, and you shall have helped me and our country.

I take this occasion to announce that your government will not tolerate citizens and residents who sap the strength of the country by their refusal to pay taxes or by paying way below what is due from them. I am determined to put a stop to all these. If persuasive efforts will fail, I will be constrained to apply the full force of the law on them.

Let me close by challenging you to be more involved with the affairs of the nation. How you can effectively weave together the national concerns of generating investments and exports from your foreign counterparts to promote countryside development is the challenge which you will address in this convention. I am sure that your sincere commitment will bring about significant results. I look forward to hearing about your resolutions to assist countryside development.

I thank you and bid you a very fruitful convention.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the PDP Laban Convention

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the PDP Laban Convention**

[Held at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium, March 18, 1989]

LINES OF ACTION

In meeting with the PDP-Laban, the President says that she is also willing to attend the convention of other parties if invited. She adds that a multi-party principle is intended to take in advance every shade of opinion and every kind of interest. Likewise, she urges everyone to work together for the advancement of the nation.

I am happy to be here today upon the invitation of Senator Nene Pimentel. Last year I had told both Speaker Mitra and Senate President Salonga that if I were invited by their respective parties I would attend their conventions. The multi-party principle is intended to take in and advance every shade of opinion and every kind of interest. Yet the result should not be a universal standoff but rather the advancement of the nation – on the broadest front, if possible, but never to stop moving because this is necessary. For there is a lot of catching up that we must do.

With due allowance to inevitable differences among leaders, parties, and groups, the ground for agreement should be equally broad and compelling: we are first Filipinos: no one else will care for us as we do. We are also tested friends and long-time campaigners for democracy. The enemies of freedom are powerful against each of us individually, but powerless before our unity.

Within the wide framework of our democratic faith, let us work together where we agree, and respect each other where we do not. And never doubt each other's patriotism.

The deepest concerns of your party are among the most pressing issues that I have addressed.

We have pushed hard for the kind of regional autonomy that will improve the living standards of the communities involved, compensate for their weaknesses and build upon their strengths. We are not for the kind of autonomy that will merely perpetuate the underdevelopment of these regions and leave their communities far behind the rest of the nation to which they must be tied by bonds of indissoluble union. We are first Filipinos before anything else.

Much has been achieved in the devolution of power, authority, and control of resources on local governments. We want this enshrined in a new local government code that will be a covenant guiding the relationship between national government and local governments.

We also want to give regional autonomy to our Muslim brothers and the Cordillerans whose histories and unique cultures must be recognized as different yet enriching the one country to which we all belong.

We have gone further, in line with the constitution, to encourage the growth of non-governmental organizations to harness the energy and idealism of communities.

We have committed to honor all our legitimate obligations. What we are seeking are repayment terms consistent with the imperative of growth – given the growing demands of a growing population that is fired by the high

expectations that go with political freedom. Thus we have negotiated hard for fairer terms of payment. We have made our chief appeal to reason: in our economic progress lies the best assurance that we shall discharge our proper obligations.

It is the basic thrust of this government to generate the resources for our needed growth through the more efficient use of our resources and by convincing our friends abroad that we are serious about our desire for progress and are prepared to pay for it in necessary sacrifices.

Thus, the tax system has been reformed to enhance revenues and introduce greater equity into the system. All tax exempt privileges were removed effective December 1986. To the extent possible, everyone should pull his own weight unless the national interest and the wellbeing of our people require the extraordinary assistance of government. We shall build this country strength upon strength, and, to the extent we can, without nurturing any weaknesses. To that end, we shall gradually open our economy to the full range of competition, strong in the confidence that we shall make the grade.

Transparency is the first principle of democratic government, before which all other considerations must bow. For we have the greatest confidence that the people will always understand what is foremost their affair: the government of their country and determination of their future.

Past and ongoing negotiations on international security and on financial and economic affairs, particularly the foreign debt, have been thrown to public debate. The need for a wider and more formal exchange of views on this critical issue is recognized. But at the end of the road government has had to make decisions – not the best in a perfect world, but the best, I can say with confidence, in the imperfect circumstances in which our country finds itself today.

The country's natural resources must be preserved and developed, for what is a country if not its natural wealth and its people. The devastation that has been visited by the greed of commerce, the corruption of officials, and the ignorance of men on our fair country has got to stop. Floods and other natural calamities signal that it is almost too late. Extraordinary measures are needed to stop the denudation of our forests, the pollution of our waters, and the poisoning of our air, and turn the tide of devastation into the progressive recovery of the ancient wealth and beauty of our land.

Equally must we regain the preeminence we enjoyed as one of the best and most widely educated nations in the world. The mind is the best resource of a country, and if we do our work well, it is potentially infinite. We have achieved near universal education at 98.5 percent and are working hard to improve its quality. We have introduced free high school education. Yet we recognize that we are still far behind the wide proficiency in the hard sciences that is key to swift modernization. We must work together to fill this gap.

We are committed to the complete and meaningful implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law. The law was fully debated and every interest on the land was considered. The law contains the irreducible minimum of land justice for the farmer. The implementation of the law is my responsibility and it will be done to the letter.

We recognize poverty and injustice as the roots of insurgency. The first is buried deep in the structure of our economy and the second in the attitudes of officials and the institutions of society. The structural reforms that we have been implementing have started to bear fruit in an economy once again on the move, in noticeable improvements in living standards, in gradually pulling out the roots of poverty. More recent measures seek to unleash, by de-regulating the economy, our people's boundless ability to generate wealth.

While the reform of the justice system is properly the domain of a co-equal branch, the magnitude of the problem of judicial delay and corruption calls for the combined efforts of all the branches to meet this basic demand of communities, which is also the first principle of political community : justice. Education must be geared to sharpening our people's awareness of their rights.

I have given some of my thoughts and outlined the initiatives I have already taken in areas of common concern. I understand that you will proceed from here to discuss these issues further, in the light of new developments and your own experiences at the grassroots. I look forward to the results of your discussions, for I believe that there is much that Filipinos can learn from each other.

I am pleased to be a part of this search for the best approaches to the future we all desire for our country. I hope that we can continue to share the common ground of patriotism that the presence of so many here has opened up. Before politics, country must come first.

We must show that today and everyday of our lives.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 92nd Army Day

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the 92nd Army Day

[Held at Fort Bonifacio, March 21, 1989]

ARMY: THE PEOPLE IN UNIFORM

President Aquino pays tribute to the people in uniform whom she expects to gift the people a future of peace, amity and progress. She urges army and society to grow together and improve together to make a better country for ourselves and our children.

Today we celebrate the 92nd anniversary of the Philippine Army as a prelude to celebrating the 91st anniversary of our Independence. This is fitting and proper. For in celebrating Army Day we lay stress again on the martial virtues that make national independence meaningful and real.

It is not surprising that we are celebrating the creation of our country's army before we celebrate the anniversary of its birth. For everything that is good can be born only after a struggle. And all struggles are won only by courage, by daring and hardiness, by feats of arms – in short, by the acts and virtues that make up an army.

The army that was created 92 years ago defeated one imperial power and lost only by the betrayal of a friend. Yet that army went on to fight the wars of that uncertain friend, and fought them with honor.

The Army fought in Bataan but did not fall with it. It carried on by guerrilla action to keep hope alive until the country's Liberation. The Army's battalion combat teams fought in Korea; its civic-action teams helped in Vietnam.

It has fought continuously perhaps longer than any other army in the world – for we have had a festering insurgency. Yet, where larger and better-stocked armies failed, it broke one Communist insurgency. And it is taking the initiative again against a second rebellion. Yes, the Army today has quite a tradition to live up to.

What is an army? you might ask. An army is the people in uniform, I will answer; as others before me have answered. This is an unchanging truth. The army is the image of the state, and the reflection of the society it defends.

The state that fields the Army today is a state dedicated entirely to the wellbeing of our people, to the material progress of our country, and to the increase of our influence for good abroad.

The society which that army defends, is not yet what we would wish it to be. But it is moving in the direction of being a society worthy of the sacrifices the Army daily makes in lives, in crippling wounds, in long absences from family, and in other hardships, as it crosses the length and breadth of our land to put down its enemies.

We look to the Army to show us the stern virtues that we need to reform our society and make our country strong: honor, duty, self-sacrifice, the willingness to give all for country.

As the people is the Army in uniform, the Army integrates itself back into the people through service. Service on every level affecting the security of our communities, and even, through civic-action, their material wellbeing.

Today we honor that service in the stirring example of Sgt. Francisco Granpil who is this day given the Medal of Valor. Sergeant Granpil is the sixteenth to receive this award for bravery in action over and beyond the call of duty

and human expectation. His example shows that the Filipino is the equal to any challenge that arises, to any threat that can be thrown against his country and his people.

Army and society must grow together and improve together – welding might and good to make a better country for ourselves and our children.

After years of confusion under a corrupt dictatorship, the Army has found its bearings in unqualified loyalty to constitution and state, and ready obedience to the authority of the Commander-in-Chief. We have adopted the best strategy for an ever changing situation. “To advance is to win,” goes the military maxim. “When in doubt, attack!” That is what the new Army has done. We have taken the war back to the enemy.

In 1988 alone, the Army conducted 54,702 small unit combat patrols – almost 150 patrols a day. We must now make sure that the ratio of patrols to contacts, through efficient tactical intelligence, will bring us conclusive victories. But, unquestionably, this is an army on the move again.

Special Operations Teams dismantled the political infrastructure of the CPP in one year and won back the support of 845 communist-infested barangays.

Our camps are constantly moving, our troops are harassing the enemy, preventing him from massing and disrupting the work of rebuilding the country. Our equipment is worn and battered. Yet the Army fights on with whatever lies at hand.

Still, it must train harder. It must acquire in every part the qualities that make armies formidable: long habits of regularity, great exactness of discipline, and great confidence in competent commanders.

But, all in all, we can say that the fighting spirit is back, the combat skills are improving. We are building our strength not on defense but on the attack. As Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, I appeal to the Congress to give us the numbers and the logistics to carry the war to a swift and conclusive end. Even as we need audacious troops to sweep the enemy before us, we need militia to secure the communities we have liberated against the return of the communist foe.

Above the heat and din of battle, we feel the first fresh wind of peace. Our people want to turn their energies from war, their hearts from fear, and their thoughts from mere safety – to peace, to friendship, to community, and to progress.

The Army whose 92nd anniversary we celebrate today swears to give this future of peace, amity and progress as their gift to the people from which it comes. Every soldier swears it in the Code that rules his life:

“I am a Filipino soldier. I will fight all forces that would destroy the freedom and independence of the Filipino people.

“I am a Filipino soldier. I will uphold the supremacy of civilian authority over the military in war, or in peace.

“I am a Filipino soldier. I will live and die in the true Filipino tradition of valor and honor, duty and loyalty.

“To all these I pledge my life, my treasure and my sacred honor.”

Mabuhay ang Hukbong Katihan ng Pilipinas!

Mabuhay ang Pilipino!

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Toast of President Corazon Aquino in Honor of Mr. Stephen Solarz

Toast of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines In Honor of Mr. Stephen Solarz

[Delivered in Malacañang, April 1, 1989]

LA FAYETTE OF OUR REVOLUTION

Although there are different views and opinions from the US Congress regarding the Multilateral Aid Initiative for the Philippines, the President gives credit to Mr. Solarz's leadership for bringing them together in support of a Philippine aid plan.

We are pleased to welcome again our country's true and most constant friend.

Mr. Stephen Solarz comes to brief us on the latest developments in the Multilateral Aid Initiative – America's concrete expression of support for the ideals we proclaim as the animating spirit of our two democracies.

Reports of the latest developments preceded Mr. Solarz. We have viewed the tape of the subcommittee proceedings on the Philippine assistance plan chaired by him.

The views there expressed were a complete education, not least about America's view of the world and the place of the Philippines in its international priorities. We listened carefully and came away with a greater appreciation of our friends than with deprecation for the smaller views that others hold of our country and our efforts.

The thrust of the proceedings did not escape us. Largely through Mr. Solarz's efforts, a bi-partisan consensus is forming in the US Congress for a multilateral aid initiative for the Philippines. To what extent, when, and how it will materialize remains unsettled.

Speaker of the House James Wright gave me a yellow rose of Texas at the US Congress. He proved the sincerity of his tribute to our revolution by speaking up for the multilateral initiative. Indeed, the United States spends hundreds of billions in vain to arrest the narrowing safety of its nuclear shield when it might go forward at much less expense, and extend more amply and surely the influence of its beneficent example.

Senator Dole applauded my home run at the US Congress but thought I was bit overpaid for it. He obviously hasn't followed professional baseball carefully. I was happy to see that he has changed his mind after visiting the Philippines and seeing for himself the parity of our exertions with the challenges we face, and the disparity of the material means available to us.

These and other distinguished men and women in the US Congress and in the Executive concluded individually that such an initiative is critical to the continuing freedom of one side of the Pacific and to common safety of both. Yet we must credit Mr. Solarz's leadership for bringing them together in support of a Philippine aid plan.

The subcommittee hearing showed at least that the United States understands the problems and the peril of democracy in our country.

No one pleaded ignorance of the broad outlines of the challenges we face; a few expressed doubts about the utility of helping overcome them.

We too understand the problems the United States faces with its deficit; the paucity of its means in relation to its aim of helping the Philippines, and the ranking of that aim among America's geopolitical priorities. The experience is not new. When pressed by La Fayette to go on the offensive because the French court was impatient with the slow progress of American arms, Washington gave what has become a stock reply these days: "We must consult our means rather than our wishes."

It was a bad time for America.

Long on debts, short on supplies, plagued by the uncertain loyalty of its troops, its currency devaluating – the young American democracy had only its foreign friends to depend on, even for forces in the battlefield.

We have not gone that far in our requests for help. So I think it goes a little far to say that we regard America as a dairy cow and that we are asking her to pay us for the privilege of taking her for a ride, as one US Congressman put it. May we assure you that Filipinos wouldn't dream of taking a cow for a ride. And milk is not popular with Filipinos.

To those who still fault the pace of our recovery and progress, we say, "We must consult our means and not our wishes." Agrarian reform must wait on the resources that will make it more than just the equal division of property rights to a miserable existence on the land.

The contribution the US proposes to make, while small in relation to the total assistance required, is critical, for it sends a signal to the rest of the world. We hope that signal is sent. Needless to say a change of heart would send another signal to these countries – and still another message to our own people.

The success of this first small step towards a fully-fledged aid plan is not certain. Yet, it is never too early to express our country's gratitude and affection for one who has stayed by her in the struggle that is far from over. You have always known this, Mr. Solarz, and so have stayed the course with us, unlike so many whom we remember gratefully as having stayed only for the celebration of our freedom.

You know that we can't achieve our goal of a free and prosperous country with one stroke, but by a long sustained effort, using every resource that comes to hand, putting every shoulder to the wheel, and hoping but not stopping to wait for others to add their strength to our own. But we shall always pause from our exertions to enjoy the fresh wind of sincere friendship that comes from America in you.

I want to thank you most specially for defending the memory of the Filipino soldiers and partisans who gave their lives so that both our countries might be free. Throughout the Pacific, only two nations can honestly erect monuments to freedom out of the gravestones of their heroes – Americans and Filipinos. Let no one forget that. We are not as rich as those whom America more readily defends these days, but we are not poor in heroes for democracy even at this late date.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast to the good health and success of Pres. George Bush and of our country's truest friend – Stephen Solarz. Now more than ever, the La Fayette of our Revolution.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Labor Day

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Labor Day**

[Delivered on May 1, 1989]

GROWTH WITH EQUITY

The President says the government has always been active in laying the groundwork towards labor empowerment. She cites a number of measures to help the work force of the country, among them the empowerment of unions to increase their access to policy and decision making. She butts for economic growth with equity, an economy that creates employment opportunities, increases family incomes, and a future for children. Labor, she states, must be assured of its dignity and just reward.

Today we honor in a special way the men and women on whose toil our nation moves.

As I said last year, we must follow a course that translates real economic growth into addressing the social and economic needs of our workers. The task is to build an economy that creates employment opportunities, increases family incomes and ensures the delivery of social services that will give our workers the essential requirements for health, for housing, and for education.

From the day our people entrusted me with the Presidency, I have made this vision clear. I want economic growth with equity. I want the worker to be its direct beneficiary. This means food on his table, a roof over his head, and a future for his children. For while government must assure the investor the proper climate for business, with greater reason must it assure labor of its dignity and just reward.

Last year, the incidence of strikes went down by 39% compared to the 1987 figure. With the relative calm in the industrial front, much was gained. For this, I pay tribute to the responsibility and maturity of the labor movement. Yet no gain is ever enough. We must preserve what we have achieved. We must sustain the momentum.

This is possible only when industrial peace prevails. Peace, not apathy. A peace by involvement and consensus, not by force and imposition.

I am encouraged by your action of promoting the welfare not only of your members but that of their families as well. You have set up credit and multi-purpose cooperatives, extended emergency loans and housing assistance, provided health services, and conducted labor education and specialized training. I would like to see more of you involved in these projects that complement government's thrust to provide employment opportunities and augment incomes.

Encouraging as these developments are, your achievements underscore the need for more responsible organizations and less of individualism and self-seeking. Records of the Department of Labor and Employment show that only 10 percent of our 9.3 million wage and salary workers are organized, and of this number only 4 percent are covered by collective bargaining agreements.

Pro-labor laws alone cannot and will not guarantee protection from exploitation and abuse. Not even a pro-labor government can shield workers from oppression. Unions can serve as a formidable counter-force against social

inequities and injustices. What labor needs is empowerment that can only spring from the genuine support and involvement of the working masses, even as the exercise of their rights must be within the responsible and disciplined framework of the law.

This government has always been actively laying the groundwork towards labor empowerment. In 1987, I issued Executive Order 111, which abolished the one-union, one-industry policy and lowered the membership requirements for union registration. This year, to further hasten unionization and encourage collective bargaining, we have provided for automatic certification elections, and in unorganized firms, a mere petition of a legitimate labor organization is sufficient. A worker can now become a member of the union on his first day of employment.

Empowerment of unions also means increased access to policy and decision-making. There will be stronger labor representation in the proposed regional wage boards and in the restructured National Labor Relations Commission. And as soon as the question is finally resolved by the Supreme Court, I shall appoint more sectoral representatives from labor in Congress.

The alleviation of poverty, by creating job opportunities and keeping the prices of basic goods and services at affordable levels, continues to be the principal thrust of government. Within this context, we continue to be guided by a wage policy that considers most importantly, the interest of the poorer segment of our working class who do not, as yet, enjoy the benefits of unionism and collective bargaining.

Much as this government would have wanted fully to accede to your demands, we are, at this time, unable to do so. Legislating a minimum wage that will drive up prices beyond our control and reduce prospects for employment will deprive most workers of the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of growth and negate the gains we have so far achieved.

A P15-increase for Metro Manila and a minimum increase of P6 for the rest of the country is the most viable option available.

I would like to see the day when trade unions shall be able to organize a significant number of our workers so that they can themselves negotiate for even higher wages and greater benefits. I am concerned that by regularly legislating minimum wage increases, we may erode the gains trade unionism has made in the field of organization. The future lies in less dependence on government and more on self-organization and collective bargaining.

We are likewise concerned about our fellow workers in government. For them, we have budgeted P4.7 billion to cover salary adjustments. And I look forward to the passage by Congress of the proposed salary standardization plan for a longer-term solution to this problem.

Let me now take this opportunity to redeem the pledges I made to you last year. While the unemployment problem continues to stagger us, we were able to provide jobs for more members of our labor force. The unemployment rate averaged 9.7 percent last year, down from 11.2 percent in 1987 and slightly lower than the projected 10.6 percent.

The number of Filipinos looking for additional work decreased from 33.6 percent of the labor force in 1987 to 32.5 percent by end of 1988.

We made inroads in solving these problems as a result of increased investments, which placed our economic recovery on firmer ground, and increased assistance for people-based businesses, and small-and medium-scale enterprises in the countryside.

To disperse economic opportunities to rural areas, we launched a national livelihood program. Now being carried out by eight of our departments, it accounts for 35 livelihood projects. As of today, these projects serve 162 groups and benefit 450,000 persons most of whom are farmers, fishermen, rebel returnees, out-of-school youth, disabled persons, displaced domestic and overseas workers and their families whose incomes fall below the poverty level.

A total of P28 million from the National Livelihood Support Fund has been made available to the DOLE to finance livelihood projects of workers and their families as part of the department's social investment project.

I would like to meet with you again to discuss how the unions can best pursue these programs and the manner in which government can best assist you. I would like to get project proposals from you for which we can make funds available. I am directing the Department of Labor and Employment to provide the necessary support services for the early submission of such proposals for my action.

While the focus is on economic recovery and employment, we did not waiver from the pledge to bring about improved social conditions through the delivery of social services:

(a) Phase I of the CARP, a pillar for rural transformation, is already being implemented. Since 1986, 132,253 land emancipation patents covering 116,441 hectares have been given to farmer beneficiaries. This represents a 535 percent increase of the total land area distributed during the entire 13 years of land reform under the previous administration. Last year, some 16,000 farmworkers in Del Monte and DOLE plantations were awarded about 20,000 hectares. In Agusan del Sur, 1,368 farmworkers were awarded 7,266 hectares from the NDC-Guthrie estates and plantations.

(2) From the increased budget for 1988, we set aside a record P17.9 billion for education. This allowed us to implement the free secondary education program. The program brought enrolment in public secondary education to over 2 million. DECS also implemented a service contracting scheme for public high schools. For schoolyear 1988-89, a total of 52,249 students were enrolled in the 1,130 participating private schools.

I have also approved in principle the proposal to provide tuition subsidy in lieu of another round of tuition fee increases. The DECS is now studying how the subsidy can be funded.

(3) We also passed the Generic Drugs Act. Together with the national drug policy, this will effectively reduce the cost of medicine and medical services. And even as malnutrition, malaria, tuberculosis and schistosomiasis continue to disable many of our countrymen, the NEDA Board has approved for funding the Philippine Health Development Project III. This will provide our low-income communities with effective health services.

(4) Total government housing assistance last year resulted in the construction of 56,405 units, up by 110 percent over that registered in the previous year. We have expanded housing benefits for marginal and low-income groups. 17,648 units were completed in 1988. Interest rates for housing loans were also cut from 12 to 9 percent. For non-members of the GSIS, SSS, HDMF and PAG-IBIG, the government launched the community mortgage program in Manila, Cebu and Davao. This is to help 120,000 family beneficiaries attain security of land tenure. Furthermore, on-site services and basic facilities, such as public faucets and electrification, will continue to be provided to low income groups.

(5) Last year, we rolled back the price of petroleum products three times to keep inflation down to 8.7 percent. Following these price cuts, we obtained the commitment of manufacturers and traders to freeze prices till the end of the year. I must tell you, however, that oil prices abroad have gone up, putting pressure to increase oil prices in our country. I have therefore tasked a committee composed of the NEDA, the DOLE, the Department of Finance and the Energy Regulatory Board to postpone any such hikes by looking at the limited options we have on hand. I cannot promise that there will be no price hikes. But I shall seize every opportunity to cushion the adverse impact of any price increase on our people.

Isa sa mga paksang humahati at gumugulo sa atin ay ang Letter of Intent at ang Memorandum of Economic Policy na iniharap natin sa International Monetary Fund. Itong LOI na ito ay binigyan ng kung anu-anong kahulugan na bumabagabag sa kalooban ng ating mga kababayan. Nais kong bigyan ng diin na kahit kailanman ay hindi ako papayag na ang ating pag-unlad ay mabigo upang mapasaya lamang ang ating mga pinagkakautangan.

Hindi tayo tatalikod sa ating mga pananagutan ngunit ang ating unang pananagutan ay sa ating bayan.

Bilang pangwakas, isang hamon ang inihaharap ko sa inyong lahat – *Palakasin pang lalo ang kilusang manggagawa upang ito ay maging mas mabisang puwersa sa ating lipunan. Sa isang malakas, demokratiko at responsableng kilusang manggagawa nakasalalay ang kaligtasan ng ating mga kalayaan, ang kasiglahan at kaunlaran ng mga manggagawa, at ang pagtatanggol ng kanilang karapatan.*

Salamat po at magandang araw.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on her visit to Tawi-Tawi

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On her visit to Tawi-Tawi

[Delivered in Tawi-Tawi, May 5, 1989]

PROMISES KEPT

The President, in her return visit to Tawi-Tawi, asks that the government focus on developing livelihood opportunities for the people and urges to use effectively and efficiently all the resources that we have to demonstrate to our people that this government can and will make things happen.

Mga minamahal kong kababayan.

Assalamu aleikum.

Peace be with you.

I have come back to report that what I had promised I have delivered.

In February last year, I made two promises. I pledged that this government would take the necessary steps to extend meaningful autonomy to Mindanao. Today, both the Senate and the House of Representatives have passed on third reading their respective bills formulating an organic act for an autonomous region in Mindanao. The people of Tawi-Tawi will have the chance to decide whether to join this autonomous region or not.

The Senate and the House will still need to meet in a conference committee to reconcile their two versions of the Organic Act. I have constituted a cabinet level liaison committee to work with Congress on this crucial issue.

The task of charting a course towards autonomy has been complex and controversial. The attention we have focused on the issue of autonomy reflects our concern and commitment to address a political problem that has imperiled peace in our country. Mindanao is a national concern that deserves the full involvement of our leaders.

It will take the collective wisdom of our legislators to insure the passage of an organic act that upholds our constitutional commitments, addresses the aspirations of our people, specially those from Mindanao, and provides for an administrative framework more conducive to the effective delivery of services. The organic act must be consistent with the constitution, acceptable to our people and workable in practice.

The last criterion connects to the second promise I made last February. I reported to you then the message coming from the most depressed areas in Mindanao. The people in these communities were not unaware of political issues. But a more urgent concern was their lack of basic services.

A new structure of government such as the Organic Act will create is not sufficient. That new structure must also improve upon the government's ability to meet the basic needs of our people. I remain convinced that we shall find it difficult to attain the peace and stability we seek if we are not able to improve the conditions in which our people live.

I promised you last year that the government would take the necessary steps to reduce the burden borne by the poorest among our people. We have taken in the last 15 months some measurable steps towards this end.

Last year, Bongao could get water from their faucets for only one to two hours a day. The Bongao water system I inaugurated today can now deliver potable water to 700 households the whole day, and to an additional 300 by year end. In addition, over a hundred artesian wells and five water catchment tanks have been constructed over the last year to provide water to other municipalities.

The upgrading and expansion of Sanga-sanga runway now makes Tawi-Tawi's air connection to the rest of the country less dependent on the uncertainties of the weather. It will now be easier for the government to monitor the progress of projects on Tawi-Tawi.

When I came in February last year, TAWELCO could only provide power for four hours during the day. Several months before my arrival, power service had been increased to eight (8) hours. Today, I switched on TAWELCO'S 24-hour service in fulfillment of my promise made during my last visit here. I direct NPC President Ernesto Aboitiz and NEA Administrator Rodrigo Cabrera to ensure regular 24-hour power service from this day on.

Many of you know the problems that hampered the implementation of our projects here. But you also know that we have persevered and with the help of your governor, your mayor and your other local officials, we have prevailed.

I hope that my return today serves to demonstrate some fundamental points about the thrust of my government. First, the priority given to Tawi-Tawi reflects an exercise in affirmative action. If we have given special attention to Tawi-Tawi, it is because Tawi-Tawi has been isolated and ignored for so long. We are in part compensating for this neglect.

Second, my return visit underlines my commitment to "follow through." This is a message I want clearly communicated to the bureaucracy. We do not have all the resources that we need. But the resources that we do have, we must use effectively and efficiently. Our task is not to produce plans. Our task is to deliver the goods and the services. We must demonstrate to our people that this government can and will make things happen.

Apparently, this message has already reached some of our countrymen and persuaded them of our good faith. Since July 1988, over 750 rebels have decided to abandon the armed struggle and rejoin the mainstream of society.

This year, I have asked that the government focus on developing livelihood opportunities for our people. For Tawi-Tawi, I have directed key line agencies to work with the provincial government in developing the seaweed industry. Already, Tawi-Tawi accounts for almost 85 percent of the total Philippine seaweed production. I have asked Secretary Dominguez of the Department of Agriculture to allocate initially P1.0M to assist seaweed growers in the various municipalities of Tawi-Tawi and to take the lead in establishing a seaweed processing facility to produce alkali-treated seaweeds for domestic and foreign markets.

The DA will also identify the areas ideal for seaweed growing. Together with the Southern Philippines Development Authority, it will train and organize seaweed growers and assist them in securing loans. The Development Bank of the Philippines will provide financing to the processing center which will be operated by a cooperative to be organized by the DA. The Department of Trade and Industry will assist in strengthening the domestic and foreign markets of the seaweeds.

Outside of the seaweed industry, as explained by Secretary Dominguez, the Department of Agriculture will initially make available through its lead program some P1.32 million for projects in such areas as cassava production, goat raising, and fish and marine products processing.

The Department of Trade and Industry will also assist Tawi-Tawi in exploring opportunities in the pandan mats and shellcraft industry. P1.5M from the National Livelihood Support Fund will be made available through PBSP through NGOs and PVOs to finance micro enterprises in the province.

To provide additional livelihood opportunities, I would like to mention the Mag-aaral Saka-unlaran Project of the Department of Agrarian Reform and the Tawi-Tawi Agricultural College. With this project, we expect to see a good

number of our local agricultural graduates become direct beneficiaries of three (3) hectare farmlots each which they will eventually own under the CARP. The selected agricultural graduates can transform the allocated 3 hectare farmlots into model demonstration farms and transfer new farming technologies to their communities.

To ensure continued development of the province, the Philippine Ports Authority has allocated P2.5M for the rehabilitation of the concrete pier of the Bongao Commercial Port and P10.0M for the improvement of the Sitangkai Port.

The initiatives I have announced today provide some opportunities, open some doors for the people of Tawi-Tawi. It will take the effort, enterprise, and the vigilance of the people to make government programs succeed.

We know that resources invested by government have not always reached the intended beneficiaries, or produced the desired benefits. You yourselves must be vigilant that the limited and precious resources government is able to mobilize are not stolen or squandered away. The people must become full partners of government in the pursuit of development and peace. I am confident that the people of Tawi-Tawi will measure up to this responsibility.

Now, I would like to introduce to you the members of the cabinet and other government officials who have accompanied me:

Secretary				Sonny				Dominguez
Secretary				Philip				Juico
Secretary				Joe				Concepcion
Cabinet		Secretary		Ping		de		Jesus
Presidential	Adviser	on	Rural	Development	Secretary	Edilberto	de	Jesus
Undersecretary	Ben	Diokno	of	the	Department	of	Budget	and
Undersecretary	Mina	Gabor	of	the	Department	of		Tourism
Undersecretary	Felix	Bautista	of	the	Office	of	the	Press
Undersecretary	Eddie	Ermita	of	the	Department	of	National	Defense
President		Ernie		Aboitiz		of		NPC
Administrator		Rod		Cabrera		of		NEA
The New Administrator	of LWUA	Ric Quebral						

And of course, Senator Nina Rasul and your Congressman Al Bandon.

In closing, I want to thank all of you for the warm welcome you have given me and I hope we will all continue to work together to bring about the continued development of your beautiful province.

In shallah.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Toast of President Corazon Aquino in Honor of Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita

**Toast
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
In Honor of Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita**

[Held at Malacañang, May 6, 1989]

SPECIAL FRIEND BRINGS HOPE

The President is grateful for the critical role of His Excellency, Noboru Takeshita in shaping a new order in Asia. As the Philippines rose from economic and democratic devastation brought by the last regime, the clearest and most encouraging, answer came from Japan in the form of concrete measures of economic relief under His Excellency's tenure. For this, the country is deeply grateful.

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome Your Excellency and Mrs. Noboru Takeshita once again. We in the Philippines consider you to be a good and true friend – sympathetic to us in our present situation and most helpful in the search for solutions to our problems.

As heads of our respective Governments, we have met on two different occasions in the past, first at the ASEAN Summit Meeting in December 1987 in Manila and then during the state funeral of His Majesty Emperor Showa last February in Tokyo. During those meetings I was impressed by your warm sincerity as a neighbor and a staunch ally.

Your present visit in the region provides another proof of the importance and high regard you attach to the countries of ASEAN as Japan's partners in the search for political stability and economic progress in this part of the world. During your tenure as Prime Minister you have always paid sympathetic attention to ASEAN concerns and problems. For this we are extremely grateful.

Because of our long history as neighbors, the relations between the Philippines and Japan have always been close. We have shared the same ideals of democracy, peace and freedom as members of the Free World. We subscribe to the same political and economic principles in our search for prosperity and the well-being of our respective peoples. We bear true faith and allegiance to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Since I assumed office, the Japanese Government has shown strong support for my Administration in the urgent task of restoring democratic institutions, rehabilitating our economy and promoting economic growth. The generous assistance that Japan has extended during the past three years has been invaluable in enabling us to achieve the progress that we have so far made. During Your Excellency's tenure, the level and scope of Japanese assistance have steadily increased.

Your Excellency will be best remembered by the Filipino people for your enthusiastic response from the very start of the Multilateral Aid Initiative proposed in early 1988 to promote economic growth and strengthen democracy in the Philippines. We are highly appreciative of your unwavering support for the Philippines expressed on many occasions – during the G-7 Summit Meeting in Toronto in mid-1988, at your last conference with President Reagan in Washington in January of this year, at your first meeting with President Bush last February, and at our meeting in Tokyo.

To highlight your support, Japan has kindly offered to host an enlarged Consultative Group meeting on MAI and the Philippine Assistance Program in Tokyo. During your meetings with President Reagan and more recently with

President Bush, the necessity of launching PAP this year was stressed. The meeting in Tokyo will serve as the forum for this project which is of paramount importance to the Filipino people.

I will not deal with the details of PAP tonight. Suffice it for me to say that it offers a unique opportunity for the Philippines to unshackle itself from the bonds of poverty and join the long march towards progress and development. PAP will trigger a social and economic process that should enable us to share in the rich promise of a coming Age of the Pacific, as we stand on the threshold of the 21st century. And it is, therefore, the fondest hope of our people that this Program be launched at the soonest possible time.

We are thus deeply pleased and honored to welcome Your Excellency, Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita. For you have led in the shaping of a new order in Asia and of a new role for Japan in the world.

And closer to home, you have with singular attention focused on the cause of Philippine recovery and progress in the great councils of economic powers. As we looked for a sympathetic response to the necessity for economic relief to assure the survival of Philippine democracy, we found the clearest and most encouraging answer from Japan.

Through personal efforts and supportive policies, Your Excellency has applied Japan's enormous influence to initiate the significant and concrete measures of economic relief for the Philippines. Your action showed a rare perception of the linkage between the material well-being of peoples and the harmony of nations, the prospect of enduring peace and continued progress throughout the world.

May I now express our deepest appreciation to Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita, whom history will mark as the first of the leaders of the new Japan, and whom we shall gratefully remember for all time as a special friend of our country.

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I ask you to join me in a toast to the continued good health, long life and happiness of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan. Mabuhay!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the First Asian Conference on Street Children Speech
of**

**Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the First Asian Conference on Street Children**

[Delivered at the Heroes Hall, Malacañang, May 8, 1989]

NEW HOPE FOR STREET CHILDREN

The President thanks the organizers of this conference for holding this first conference in the Philippines and for raising public awareness on the plight of children who work and live on the streets. She announces the creation of the Fund for Street Children to be used solely for the welfare of the street children.

I am glad to be with you today for this first Regional Conference on Street Children in Asia. Both as President, and as a mother, I share your view that there is an urgent need to help the most underprivileged of children in the world – the street children.

I would like to thank the organizers of this conference – UNICEF, CHILDHOPE, the National Council of Social Development Foundation of the Philippines, Inc., and all other organizations of participating Asian countries, for the decision to hold this first conference in the Philippines. This must be in recognition of our country's having pioneered in a nation-wide program in 16 cities to respond to the needs of street children.

As I welcome all foreign participants of this conference to the Philippines, so do I give the assurance that we stand ready to share with them the country's experience and frustrations in implementing the various programs to help the street children of the Philippines.

I laud CHILDHOPE and its collaborating agencies for raising public awareness internationally on the plight of children who work and live on the streets. Also, for providing an international network of technical and material linkages for projects on street children.

It cannot be denied that the world's future is in our children. Indeed, "The Child is Father to the Man." So, what kind of world will the future hold if the child of today who will become the man of tomorrow, is an abused, uncared for child?

No single age group requires more of our attention than the children's group. And there is no single children's group that now deserves our collective concern more than these children under 15 years of age who are threatened by exploitation, abuse, neglect and abandonment – the street children.

The term "street children" may be newly-coined, but the problem itself is as old as poverty, and as menacing as death itself. The street children of today are the same children that Dickens and Dostoyevsky wrote about centuries ago. Our street children are the Oliver Twists of the Twentieth Century.

They are an offshoot of burgeoning cities that breed growing slums, the ultimate product of an upsurge of rural-to-urban migration that has sent millions of families to the metropolis in search of hope and a share of the city's prosperity. Nowhere is this phenomenon more bitterly felt than in Third World countries which many of us in this hall represent.

A recent study on Philippine street children shows this profile. More than 85% of them have parents of low education levels who are jobless, or self-employed as laborers, street vendors and scavengers. They usually come from large families. Many are from broken homes, where either or both parents live with other men or women. This heart-

breaking portrait shows a breakdown in the moral fiber of their origins – their homes – such that they finally choose to separate from the harsh realities in their dwellings only to find harsher realities in the streets.

Most abandoned children earn a living vending cigarettes, flowers or candies, while many survive by scavenging, begging, and indulging in criminal activities as prostitution or pickpocketing. In their early age, they learn that survival is the ultimate name of the game. Thus, they grow up battered physically and psychologically, hardened by their constant brushes with rejection and exploitation. Theirs is the grim picture of a future of unceasing ignorance, poverty and hopelessness.

Having recognized this growing problem in the Philippines many years ago, our Department of Social Welfare and Development started a pilot project in 1983 to identify and assist street children in major cities throughout the country. Since then, the concern for street children has been shared by other Departments of our government such as the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, the Department of Justice, the military, particularly our National Police and the Philippine Constabulary and our Department of Tourism. From several non-government agencies such as civic and the religious groups, sprang the National Council of Social Development Foundation of the Philippines, and umbrella organization of government agencies and NGOs and a member of CHILDHOPE.

Our government's commitment to the goals of child survival and development is but in response to our state policy enunciated in the Constitution that "The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well-being." Implementing this mandate are our Family Code, the Child and Youth Welfare Code and several other statutes and administrative rules and regulations.

In keeping with the government's commitment to improve the lot of our street children, I would like to announce the creation of the Fund for Street Children under the President's Social Fund. We are allocating P20 million for this fund, to be managed by the Presidential Management Staff. The fund shall be used solely for the purpose of expanding the capabilities of existing programs of member organizations of the Council for the Welfare of Children, the National Council of Social Development and other independent NGOs.

Street children are a perennial presence in growing cities. Experts say that if the trend of rural-to-urban migration continues, by the year 2000, more children will be growing up in urban areas than in rural villages.

Now we are the first to recognize that the program we have launched for our street children is mainly for rehabilitation; for cure rather than prevention. But if we must totally eradicate this blight in our national lives, we must address our efforts to the roots of the problem – the structures of poverty dependency and underdevelopment. This is particularly true for us in Asia. Unless we can stamp out these causes, we shall only live along the fringes of development, continuously suffering from the vicious cycle of poverty that breeds ignorance and injustice.

I know you share my vision for a better tomorrow for this country and for the world. That is why you are here today. So let us all join hands in moving the rest of the world into acknowledging the problems of the street children, and finally doing something about it – all in the spirit of the Lord and Master when He enjoined one and all to "Suffer the little children and forbid them not to come unto me for of such is the Kingdom of God."

I wish you all a fruitful conference and a good day.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Welcome Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Keidanren Mission

**Welcome Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Keidanren Mission**

[Released on May 18, 1989]

A MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS PARTNERSHIP

The President welcomes the Keidanren Mission whom she expects to see enough of the country to form a sound judgment in committing Japanese industry to participate in the new development and progress of the Philippines. She enjoins the technological and financial power of Japan in developing riches of our country and bringing a measure of prosperity to the Filipino people.

May I extend to the Keidanren Mission a warm welcome and may I express our deep appreciation for the effort they have made to see our country for themselves. The schedule of the Mission is rather tight, yet I hope they will see enough to form a sound judgment committing Japanese industry to a larger participation in the development and progress of the Philippines.

The Keidanren Mission comes to us with impressive credentials going by its distinguished membership alone. Yet it comes as well with the highest endorsement of the Government of Japan.

We reviewed with your Prime Minister the status of our countries' economic partnership, and the tremendous potential for mutual advantage that yet remains to be tapped. We hope at this meeting to impress upon this Mission the same sense of promise with which your Prime Minister came away from our meeting.

We have made tremendous progress in this country. I will say with the same confidence that we have made tremendous progress in absolute terms. We have achieved this progress hand-in-hand with the restoration of democratic institutions and guarantees, and without derogating in the smallest particular from our international obligations. Indeed, we have bought our recovery and progress only with our own determination, dedication, and industry, and with the assistance extended to us by such friends as Japan.

We hope that this assistance will be increased, for there is a great deal more to do before our economy is fully recovered and set on a steady course of progress. But we hope even more that this assistance will take the form of mutually advantageous investments made by Japanese business in the future of the Philippines. For our faith in private enterprise is boundless. And in none more so than in Japanese private enterprise which has raised Japan to unparalleled economic power.

We should like you to join us in focusing some of the technological and financial power of Japan on developing the riches of our country and bringing a measure of your prosperity to the Filipino people. We extend this invitation towards a greater partnership in terms that will be mutually advantageous.

Many of your colleagues have preceded you. Japanese industry and trade have long been significant factors in Philippine economic growth. Our country is not new and unknown to our Japanese friends. The only thing new is a government committed to make the greater partnership we offer work better than it has in the past.

As Japan rises to still greater heights of technology and economic progress, it behooves her to spread the foundation of her progress to the rest of Asia – particularly to nations critical to the security of key sources of energy and raw materials such as the Philippines. More importantly, the spread of material prosperity to new countries like the Philippines – the opening of new markets, the spread and enhancement of purchasing power to newly developed nations – can only redound to the even greater prosperity of Japan.

This part of the world is coming closer in a tighter weave, and our fortunes are more and more tied to each other. I ask you to accept the offer of greater partnership that we hereby extend for the development of the Philippines, to the mutual advantage of our two peoples. Welcome and may your Mission be a great success.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 72nd anniversary of the Department of Agriculture Speech
of**

**Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines**

On the 72nd anniversary of the Department of Agriculture

[Delivered on May 26, 1989]

BACKBONE OF THE NATION

On the 72nd Anniversary of the Department of Agriculture, the President honors and congratulates our farmers and fishermen who form the backbone of our nation. Her dream is to see the farmer and the fisherman standing proud and secure in the thought that the government as their partner is continually creating an environment conducive to agricultural growth.

First, I would like to greet all the Filipino farmers and fishermen today. Mabuhay kayong lahat, mga kababayan kong magsasaka at mangangisda!

As we celebrate the Department of Agriculture's 72nd Anniversary, we honor once again our farmers and fishermen who form the backbone of our nation. This is the least that a grateful people can do for the agriculture sector, which comprises 70% of the population and employs half of our labor force. For our farmers and fishermen not only feed the nation, they contribute approximately one-third of our Gross National Product and nearly one-third of our export earnings. Who is to dispute that indeed, they are the salt of the earth?

I am also happy to welcome our Asean neighbors who have come to celebrate with us the first ever Asean Farmers Week. Their presence adds significance to this year's celebration. They likewise prove again that the commitment towards Asean cooperation forged here during the 3rd Asean Summit remains just as strong.

We in this region have been blest with long coastlines and peninsulas crisscrossed by bodies of water. It follows, therefore, that fishing, long before other industries were developed, was the mainstay of the very early inhabitants of our countries, our forefathers.

Having been so lavishly endowed by Nature, it is but our duty to cherish our waters and its marine life. Unfortunately, modern technology has brought about despoliation of our natural resources. Industrial toxic wastes pollute the waters, thus poisoning all forms of life that abound therein.

If only to preserve mankind, all of us are called upon to make common cause with fishermen and farmers to arrest the wanton destruction of what is both our staple food and principal means of livelihood.

Today, as we celebrate, we give due recognition to this year's outstanding agricultural workers and organizations for what they were able to achieve, thus providing models that the rest can well emulate. I, therefore, congratulate all our awardees for surpassing themselves. While I urge you winners and all past awardees to make striving for excellence a habit, I also ask you to share your techniques with your neighbors, in true Asean spirit.

This year's theme – "*Higit sa Isang Butil ang Hangad at Handog ng Magsasaka*" – is an apt choice. For despite the tremendous contribution of the farmer and the fisherman to the nation's economy, they have received so little in return. As an agricultural nation like most of Asean, the Philippines is expected to give its farmers and fishermen a better deal than what they have now. Benefits for them have been long overdue.

This government has, therefore, taken steps to improve the conditions of those who toil in the farms that there may be adequate food on their tables. We are pump-priming rural economy through support programs to enable our

farmers to lessen production cost and correspondingly increase their profits. These programs are what we can now share with our Asean friends.

In November 1987, the Department of Agriculture launched the Rice Productivity and Enhancement Program (RPEP) that provided farmers with subsidized fertilizer through a “buy-two, take-two” scheme. The program covered 624,000 hectares in 70 provinces, and by April 1988 had distributed fertilizers to more than 400,000 farmer – beneficiaries, increasing harvest by 8.78% cavans per hectare.

Encouraged by last year’s success, we will soon implement an expanded version of RPEP, involving not only fertilizer subsidies, but also funds for other production and marketing needs.

And then, we take pride in being the first country to adopt Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as a national crop protection policy. That was in 1986. Since then, IPM has significantly increased farmers’ profits, reduced health hazards and decreased pest outbreaks.

To encourage lending to our credit-starved farmers, we have launched the Livelihood Enhancement for Agricultural Development (LEAD) program last year.

Under LEAD’s bank-assisted program, loans provided by banks to farmers’ groups are backed by government guarantee mechanisms which assume up to 85 percent of the risks involved.

Our programs have delivered results even in the short haul. Our agricultural exports earned a total of US\$1.7 billion in 1988, indicating a growth of 13% over the previous years’ exports. Worthy of particular mention is the phenomenal growth of the local prawn industry from an inconsequential rank to the 3rd ranking export as of last year, bringing in around US\$250 million. On the local front, average farmgate prices of principal agricultural commodities have risen steadily since 1986, gaining for our farmers additional gross revenues of P8.86 billion. Hence, I also congratulate the officials and all employees of the Department of Agriculture for giving importance to what our farmers and fishermen have been doing to help increase productivity.

This government, as you can see, is committed to give the millions of farmers and fishermen in the countryside their just share in the process and benefits of development. I am confident that with closer coordination between government agencies and the people’s full cooperation and support, agricultural development will proceed despite difficulties.

We, members of Asean, all aspire to be among the newly industrialized countries in the 20th century. Three years ago, I made a commitment to place agriculture and the farmer at the center of the nation’s recovery program. There is no contradiction in these two statements. For, as the Philippines slowly veers towards industrialization, it continues to anchor itself on agricultural production.

For such is my vision of the farmer and the fisherman – standing proud and secure in the thought that the government as their partner is continually creating an environment conducive to agricultural growth. This is how we can give to the millions of farmers and fishermen in the countryside their just share in the benefits of development.

Here is where I find parallels between the Philippines and the other Asean countries. Being similarly-situated and having almost similar economic levels, with few exceptions, our countries have similar agricultural-related problems. It is to our common benefit that we share our experiences and adaptive technologies with each other.

For Asean is friendship. Asean is sharing. And as we share our strengths as well as our woes, we can develop together in a manner that none of us could achieve singly.

Finally, I congratulate again all the awardees for agriculture. And to the Department of Agriculture as well as the organizers of the Agri-Aqua Fair, my felicitations for work well done.

Magandang araw sa inyong lahat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the Integrated Bar of the Philippines

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines Before the Integrated Bar of the Philippines

[Delivered at the PICC Meeting Room, June 3, 1989]

VIGILANCE AND CORRUPTION

AGAINST

GRAFT

The President calls on private organizations such as the IBP to help in assuring the most efficient use of the country's resources and to call our attention not only to outright graft but also to bureaucratic mismanagement and delay. She looks to the lawyers as the strongest arm in the fight for honesty and adds that their first obligation is to do justice to their country and to give their client the best defense under the law, not outside the law.

I welcome this opportunity to address the members of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines and its distinguished guests. The three branches of government are well represented here by some of their top officials. We have as well the heads of the IBP's 78 chapters throughout the country. The country's legal lights shine nowhere more brightly than here.

But for a call of the heart that I could not deny, I would include myself among you. I was a pretty good law student when I got married. As it is, I stand with Magsaysay outside the tradition of lawyer-presidents. Only history will tell whether the country was better for having lawyers for presidents.

The legal minds of our country are here gathered in answer to the call that has been sounded by a nation conscious of the weakness it inherited from the past, and eager to go forward:

The bickering must stop, the waste must end, and the graft that yet remains must be uncovered and punished. Our limited time and resources must be more strictly conserved for the task that yet remains: The long-delayed fulfillment of our people's age-old dream of freedom, justice, and progress.

Even as you enter into yet another political exercise, this time for your own sector, we are heartened by the simultaneous assertion that this will not be just another political exercise, but an occasion for high moral commitment: The commitment to take a stronger hold on the elusive goal of honesty, in the public service and throughout our society.

That corruption exists in the public and private sectors is admitted by the decision of the Integrated Bar to establish anti-graft bodies in each of its chapters.

Corruption must be stopped not only where it ultimately cashes in — at the disbursement offices of the government — but before it gets started: in board rooms, in law offices, and in the backrooms of government departments and agencies.

The Judiciary has made several initiatives to speed up the administration of justice on the theory that justice delayed is not only justice denied but a clear invitation to corruption.

The Judiciary is trying to re-instill in lawyers on the bench and across the bar a compelling sense of the high mission with which they have been trusted: the delivery of the highest service of the State — justice to one and all. There is a

note of urgency in this effort, for at no time is society more in danger than when people finally despair of getting justice.

The new order in our country came to power on the crest of moral outrage over some of the worst examples of official corruption and private greed in the history of mankind. No small part of that corruption was prepared by lawyers and validated by judges from the legalization of dictatorship to the systematic plunder of the national patrimony. As one constitutional expert observed, while dictatorship was set up by one man, it was legally constituted by a majority of the Supreme Court in 1973 over the vigorous and admirable dissent of a valiant few.

Worse than usurpation and graft, is the legalization of crimes by the artifices of a corrupt justice system. It is lawyers in the end who make this possible. The fruits of official crime cannot be enjoyed until they are “legalized” and I put that in quotation marks — with the help, among others, of lawyers.

The commitment herein made by the Integrated Bar evinces a determination of the Philippine legal profession to prevent yet another travesty of its noble mission, and to lend its considerable expertise to the prevention, detection, and the punishment of graft and corruption.

In that mission, the help of the common citizenry is indispensable. Temptation is everywhere, and weakness is in us all. It behooves us to exercise a wide and unrelenting vigilance. We need every pair of eyes, here and abroad, to alert us against the resurrection of the past. That is how the corruption of the previous regime was uncovered. It is the prying eyes of Filipinos at home and abroad that will expose the houses of corrupt officials in California, New York, and New Jersey.

We are encouraged by the linkage that the IBP has established with various private sector initiatives for transparency in all transactions, in government and in business.

We have to lick this problem, on which the credibility of our national effort of recovery and progress depends.

In this regard, I repeat my warning: Nobody is above the law.

In fairness, we should not condemn officials before the evidence is in; yet for the common safety, we cannot delay the investigation and punishment of official crimes.

Even in the face of public criticism, we shall always be fair to officials who are recklessly accused of crimes, yet we shall never relent in our resolve to maintain the highest integrity and competence of government.

I call on the private sector, on organizations such as the IBP, to help us in assuring the most efficient use of our resources. We ask you to call our attention not only to outright graft but also to bureaucratic mismanagement and delay.

But laudable as these initiatives are of people-powered vigilance against graft and corruption, the real battle must be fought within each of us. No one in government will receive bribes, if no one in the private sector will give them.

I look to you, the men and women of the law, to be among the first to win this battle in your hearts. Over and above being counsel and defender of your clients, you are officers of the court, charged equally with judge and prosecutor to pursue justice for all. Your duty is to give your clients the best defense under the law, not outside the law. As lawyers, your first obligation is to do justice to your country.

Our country looks to you therefore as its strongest arm in the fight for honesty. We are confident that you will come through for us, for the Filipino people.

On that note of confidence, I wish you a successful convention. Good day and thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 88th anniversary of the Supreme Court

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 88th anniversary of the Supreme Court**

[Delivered on June 9, 1989]

IMPROVING THE JUDICIAL PROCESS

As men and women of the highest integrity, intelligence and wisdom and with a new Code of Judicial Conduct, the President believes that proper deportment of judges in the disposition of justice may reflect more honor on the Bench and generate a greater respect for the law throughout our society.

According to a constitutional law expert, the President – equally with the Court – may interpret the Constitution in her own lights as part of her duty to uphold and defend it. The Court owes her interpretation the deference due to a co-equal and preeminent political body. Naturally I am extremely pleased with this reasoning, but I am not kidding myself. The last word in the Constitution and the laws is still the Court's.

The theory is that all three branches are equal. The reality is that one is more equal than the others when it comes to the Constitution. Therefore, from an equal to one who is more, may I as President extend to the Supreme Court my best wishes and our country's congratulations on its 88th anniversary.

It is not meet for me to lecture the Court and the vast judicial system on duties it knows far better than I. Yet it behooves me at this juncture to express to you the growing concern of our people over the deterioration of the image, not to say the substance, of Philippine justice.

The greatest peril we face is not in the economy nor from any external threat, but in the disenchantment of a people with their own society when that society denies them justice.

We are troubled to hear it said in this country justice cannot be had, unless it is bought. That, as usual, is an exaggeration. Yet it proves the case that the just and honorable work done by the vast majority of our judges is easily undone by the handful of exceptions to the general integrity and competence of the courts. Yet this false but spreading view of a corrupt justice system, may spell the end of the democratic faith that was born with our freedom three years ago.

I would not raise this problem publicly for it reflects sadly on us all. Yet, standing before men and women of the highest integrity, intelligence, and wisdom in our country, I must raise it. For I believe that you, if anyone, can do the most about it.

The value of assets immobilized in litigation is already beyond estimation. The insecurity of property rights because of judicial delay has had a far more chilling effect on further investments in our economy than the insurgency. We are distressed to hear people say that if they cannot get justice from the government, they will take it into their own hands.

The spread of common crimes undermines our sense of security at home and in the streets. The failure to punish corporate crimes undermines our faith in economic opportunities and in the general fairness of our society and government.

The structural weakness of our economy, the legacy of debt, the corrupt values that linger from the past regime, all these continue to take a terrible toll on our country. Yet the heaviest toll is exacted by one simple act repeated again and again throughout our society: a man is denied justice, not in the streets, but in the courts.

We—the Court and the Executive—share the primary responsibility of doing justice to the people. Equally, I might add. The new Constitution gives the Judiciary the fiscal and administrative independence to pursue its mandate free from any influence, other than that which the judges invite. The Court has used this independence and discretion most widely towards the solution of the problems of our justice system.

The problem of delay has been seriously tackled by the Court. The judges have been put on notice to dispose of cases within defined periods. The judges, I understand, would like to serve the same notice on the Supreme Court.

A new Code of Judicial Conduct has set forth in unmistakable terms the proper deportment of judges in the dispensation of justice, so that their work may reflect more honor on the Bench and generate a greater respect for the law throughout our society.

We hope that the Executive has done its part to help. We have tried to speed up budgetary allocations for court house construction and for the relocation of the high Court to premises commensurate with its high dignity and vastly expanded responsibilities. The help comes late, but better than never. For too long, the temples of Philippine justice—our courthouses—have reflected the shameful neglect that justice has suffered in our country. We hope that the new allocations and constructions will reflect the first priority we have put on justice.

Infrastructure is basic. We must show towards the work of justice the respect it deserves. Yet a more difficult job remains: improving the judicial process and the men who run it so that justice may come through more easily.

This is largely the work and responsibility of the Honorable Court. The best that I can offer would be, not suggestions, but rather this commitment: I stand foursquare behind your efforts and will do all I can as Chief Executive to make them succeed. Give the word and it shall be done, if it lies in my power. The fate of the nation hangs on your success. That is the sum of what I have tried to say in these remarks.

Congratulations and thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino upon signing of Wage Bill

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Upon signing of Wage Bill**

[Delivered on June 9, 1989]

NEW LAW FOR WORKERS

With the signing of the Wage Rationalization Act, the President believes that the wage increase under this law will be sufficient to cushion the impact of price increases. She adds that management and Government should work together to maintain industrial peace essential for the improvement of productivity and investor confidence.

We have just signed into law Republic Act No. 6727 known as the Wage Rationalization Act. In signing this, the following points must be stressed:

First, we believe that even with the expected increase in power rates and prices of petroleum products and other selected goods and services, the P25 – P20 – P15 wage increases provided for under this law will be sufficient to cushion the impact of said price increases.

Second, labor, management and Government should now work together to soften the inflationary impact of the wage increase on our people, particularly on the unemployed. Productivity at the enterprise level should now be improved in order that the added labor cost brought about by this wage increase need not be passed on to the consumers. I have instructed the Department of Labor and Employment to give priority to the establishment of productivity improvement schemes, to be undertaken with the active participation of employers and organized labor. At the same time, I consider it essential to the improvement of productivity and investor confidence that industrial peace at the workplace be maintained.

Third, labor and management should strive to improve and strengthen further the collective bargaining process so that in the future, wage-fixing and the determination of other terms and conditions of employment shall be in their hands.

And finally, with the creation of the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards, the authority to fix wages is now devolved to such bodies, and henceforth, there shall be no need for Congress to intervene in wage fixing. We concur with the policy stated in this law that such Boards are in the best position to determine the appropriate wage rates, taking into account regional socio-economic differences and industry peculiarities.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino upon signing of Private Education Assistance Bill

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Upon signing of Private Education Assistance Bill**

[Delivered on June 10, 1989]

A WORTHWHILE INVESTMENT

Education has always been the top priority of this government. This is the reason why the government is providing substantial assistance to private education. The President is positive that the Department of Education, Culture and Sports will work towards the smooth and speedy implementation of this law.

It is with a very special sense of pride and satisfaction that we sign into law this bill providing government assistance to students and teachers in private education, since we are aware that this represents in many different ways, truly landmark legislation.

It is in the first place a bold step forward into government providing substantial assistance to private education. This bill makes real in a very decisive manner the constitutional mandate for the integration of the public and private school systems, and recognizes what we have all known and taken for granted: that private schools serve as partners of government in delivering to our citizenry the public service of education.

This bill also represents perhaps the widest coverage of direct individual assistance to our citizens. When school opens this Tuesday, more than 1.7 million out of our country's 2.5 million private high school and college students will get some form of individual assistance from government, in tuition supplements, textbooks subsidies, scholarships, and allowances. The impact of such concrete help to millions of families in an area as important to them as education will be felt throughout the whole country for a long time to come.

Finally, we are proud of this landmark piece of legislation, not just because of the product, but also because of the process. We know that the final shape of this bill was forged at the anvil of public scrutiny, with constant inputs in public hearings, media, and other venues from students, parents, faculty, administrators, and other concerned publics. We know it was forged in an atmosphere of sustained collaborative consultation, not just between both houses of Congress, not just among the different executive departments, but also between the legislative and executive branches as well, with technical groups working collaboratively and jointly to see that deliberations in different fora were proceeding within a common framework and objectives.

As we sign this bill into law today, we are aware that while it represents a meaningful first step to assist private education, much remains to be done. It is therefore not a panacea that will solve all problems, and not all will be happy. Schools will want larger increases, teachers will want greater protection, students will want wider coverage of tuition subsidies. But this represents the best and most realistic response to the present situation, and it now remains for the Department of Education to work towards the smooth and speedy implementation of this law, and for the beneficiaries to cooperate with this implementation positively and wholeheartedly.

Education has always been the top priority of this government. In the first budget approved by this administration, education was immediately restored to its primacy as the sector with the largest budget. The following year, legislation was enacted making public high school education free of tuition for its two million students, for the first

time in Philippine history. This year, we are now assisting 1.7 million private high school students with close to one billion pesos. Unlike most other forms of government expenditures, the commitment of resources to the education sector does not produce instant results. But we are confident that when this commitment eventually bears fruit in the better educated generations to come, it will be vindicated as ultimately the wisest use of our resources.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Vin D'Honneur Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Philippine Independence Day

Vin D'Honneur Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On Philippine Independence Day

[Delivered on June 12, 1989]

We celebrate the 91st anniversary of Philippine Independence in a different light than last year's. Then it seemed that peace was breaking out all over. That the divisions among the great powers had healed along the lines of a shared concern for the common survival in the nuclear age. And that warring states had seen the folly of wasting more in lives and treasure than they would ever acquire in victory.

The compassionate road to freedom first mapped out in this country three years ago seemed capable of limitless extension. The gentle flame of our example ignited similar freedom movements in other countries, where freedom made major strides. And if freedom has yet to reach its final goal in all the countries concerned, one could still say that the process was irreversible.

Irreversible because, freedom once tasted, cannot be forgotten. And because, at a certain point, a contagion of courage can never be contained.

It seemed last year that the world was becoming a common country, as governments reached avidly for peace and peoples marched resolutely towards freedom. In such a world, the measure of nationalist distrust that is indispensable to a nation's safety must yield to an unguarded optimism about the possibilities of international cooperation and sharing.

Recent events prove that the declared aspirations of statesmen, the declared policies of great powers, even the noble dreams of men of good will must yield before realities. The reality of powers, institutions, and forces long established by history. And of the inability of men to see except through the prism of their fears.

Recent events teach us that we must fall back upon true nationalism as the first strategy for the national safety and for international order. That we must indeed, as I said last year, burn with a forward ambition to be strong at home before we trust our national security and economic progress to forces abroad.

So last year I said, let us make a start in true nationalism. Let government and people join in winning a more meaningful independence – of states from external influence; of people from fear, poverty and injustice.

In so doing, we are not turning our backs on the goals of international security, stability, cooperation, and friendship but rather contributing more meaningfully to those goals.

There are only two superpowers and their desistance from destroying each other and the rest of the world along with themselves is sufficient to establish the peace. But for the multitude of small powers, our best contribution to international peace and security is the political stability of our societies and the material progress and well-being of our peoples.

The enduring pact of international concord and peace will not be written on paper by the leaders of great powers but in the hearts of men satisfied with the country that they, and no one else, has built in freedom and dignity.

By looking each to his own country's safety and to his own people's progress, we can all look forward with more assurance to a world of enduring peace.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast:

To the progress of each of our countries so that together we can achieve peace in the world.

To my countrymen, I would like to propose a special toast. Let us toast those whose defiance in the face of certain defeat, and whose courage in the face of death must remind us of the degree of commitment necessary to achieve the goal we have set: a strong and truly independent Philippines. We had a measure of it once when we struggled to be free. We must have it yet again to be strong as a nation. Mabuhay!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Independence Day [Filipino]

**Talumpati
ng
Kagalang-galang Corazon C. Aquino
Pangulo ng Pilipinas
Sa Araw ng Kalayaan**

[Ipinahayag noong ika 12 ng Hunyo, 1989]

KARANGALAN AT KAPURIHAN

Sa pagdiriwang natin ng ika-91 anibersaryo ng ating kalayaan ay muling sinariwa ng Pangulo ang ating nakaraang pakikibaka sa EDSA upang muling maibalik ang ating demokrasya na matagal ding nawala dahil sa isang diktador. Ang pakiusap niya sa lahat ng Pilipinong nagmamahal sa kalayaan ay huwag sayangin ang ating ginugol upang maibalik ang demokrasya. Mag-sikap tayo at magkaisa patungo sa kaunlaran at kasaganaan.

Ngayong araw na ito ay ipinagdiriwang natin ang siyam-napu't-isang anibersaryo ng ating kalayaan. Siyamnapu't isang taon na ang nakalipas ngunit noong nakaraang tatlong taon lamang tayo napansin at pinagmasdang mabuti ng buong mundo. Sa pamamagitan ng telebisyon, nalaman ng lahat, na dito sa dako ng mundo, ay may isang lahi na marunong ipaglaban ang kalayaan sa pamamaraang mapayapa. Ang nagawa natin noong Pebrero 1986 ay hinangaan ng buong mundo at ibig tularan ng ibang mga bansa. Nakita ng mga dayuhan sa kanilang mga telebisyon ang "People Power" sa EDSA. Nakita nila ang mapayapang pag-aalsa ng mamamayang Pilipino. Nakita nila ang mga madre at pare na nagdarasal ng rosario. Nakita nila ang katakut-takot na tao, mga matanda at bata, mga babae at lalake, na sama-samang ipinaglalaban ang demokrasya. At pagkatapos ng apat na araw, nagulat sila nang makita nila ang pagtatagumpay ng "People Power". Napaalis ang diktador at ang inyong abang lingkod, na dinaya sa halalan ay naging pangulo sa pamamagitan ng "People Power".

Dahil sa nakita nila sa telebisyon, inakala ng mga dayuhan na napakadali ng ating rebolusyon. Akala ng iba ay naganap ang pagpapaalis ng diktador at pagbabalik ng demokrasya sa loob lang ng apat na araw. Ngunit kayo, mga minamahal kong mga kababayan at ako, alam natin ang tunay na kasaysayan ng pagbabalik ng ating kalayaan. Pahintulutan po ninyo na sariwain ko sa inyong isipan ang totoong pangyayari.

Noong nagdeklara si Marcos ng "Martial law" noong Setyembre 23, 1972, iniutos niya ang pag-aaresto at pagkukulong ng daan-daang tao. Ang unang mga nakulong ay ang aking asawa, si Ninoy Aquino, kasama sila Pepe Diokno, Chino Roces, Monching Mitra, Soc Rodrigo, Max Soliven, Jose Mari Velez, Nap Rama, Teodoro Locsin Sr., Joe Concepcion, Bren Guiao, Amando Doronila at marami pang iba.

At hindi lamang nawalan ng kalayaan ang marami nating kababayan- nawala rin ang tinatawag nating "freedom of the press". Ang pahayagan, ang radio at ang TV ay inilagay sa kamay ng diktador. Ang ating tinatanggap na balita noon ay censored ng diktador. Ang katotohanan ay ipinaglihim sa atin. Iyon lamang gusto ng diktador ang lumalabas sa pahayagan at nakikita sa telebisyon at naririnig sa radyo. Parami nang parami ang ikinulong noong panahon ng "Martial law". Talagang sinindak ng diktador ang mga tao. At dahil sa takot marami ang nagsawalang kibo na lang.

Salamat na lamang at may mga magigiting pa ring mga Pilipino. Sila ang unti-unting gumawa ng paraan upang gisingin ang kapwa nila. Nagising muli ang mamamayang Pilipino noong 1978 noong halalan para sa Interim Batasang Pambansa. Iyon din ang pagsilang ng Partidong LAB AN. Dalawampu't-isang kandidato ng LABAN ang humarap sa mga kandidato ng KBL dito sa Metro Manila.

Noong April 6, 1978 ginanap ang "Noise Barrage". Marahil natatandaan pa ninyo na parang bagong taon ang nangyari noong April 6. Halos lahat dito sa Metro Manila ay nag-ingay upang ipahiwatig nila sa bayan na panig sila

kay Ninoy at sa mga kandidato ng LABAN. Ito ang unang pag-kakataon na nalaman ng mamamayang Pilipino na marami palang ayaw na kay Marcos at maraming ibig bumoto para sa mga kandidato ng LABAN.

Nagulat si Marcos at upang sugpuin itong nagising na pagpupunyagi ng mamamayang Pilipino, dinaya niya ang halalan at natalo ang lahat ng kandidato ng LABAN. Hindi pa nasiyahan si Marcos sa pagdaraya. Pinaaresto niya ang mga kandidato at opisyal ng LABAN at ikinulong. Kasama rito si Senador Lorenzo Tanada, Soc Rodrigo, Nene Pimentel, Tito Guingona at marami pang iba. Nung ikinulong itong mga lider na ito, medyo bumaba ang “morale” ng mga na sa oposisyon. Ngunit tuloy pa rin ang pagmimiting nila at pagpapalano kung papaanong maaakit ang kanilang mga nakararaming mga kababayan upang tumulong sa paglaban sa diktador.

Ilang taon pa ang dumaan. Noong ika-dalawampu’t isa ng Agosto 1983, bumalik si Ninoy sa Pilipinas mula sa Amerika. Bumalik siya upang makiusap kay Marcos na isauli ang demokrasya. Binaril siya sa paliparan. At ang pag-aalay ni Ninoy ng kaniyang buhay ang naging Simula ng pagbabago ng maraming Pilipino. Nawala ang kanilang takot. Dalawang milyon ang nakiramay at nakipaglibing. Ipinakita nila na nakikiisa sila kay Ninoy. Ipinakita nila na nakikiisa sila sa mamamayang Pilipino na ayaw ang diktador. Nag-umpisa na ang “rally” at mga demonstrasyon pagkatapos ng libing. Nagkaroon tayo ng halalan ng Batasan noong 1984. Lumaban ang oposisyon at sa tulong ng mga mamamayang Pilipino, halos tatlungpung porsyento ang nanalo sa mga kandidato ng oposisyon.

Sumunod ang “snap elections”. Maraming hrap at sakripisyo ang dinanas nating mga kababayan noong “snap elections”. Maraming nag-volunteer upang tumulong sa kampanya. Marami rin ang nagsanay kung papaano nilang maipagtatanggol ang mga “ballot boxes”. Marami rin ang sumali sa mga “rally” at nagpakita ng kanilang pakiki-isa sa mga lumalaban para sa demokrasya. Nakita natin kung anong pagdaraya ang ginawa ni Marcos at ang kanyang mga tauhan noong “snap elections”. Nakita rin natin ang katapangan ng ating mga kababayan na nagbantay sa mga ballot boxes. Hindi iilan sa mga tumulong sa ating kampanya ang nabaril at napatay. Isa na riyan si Evelio Javier ang dating gobernador ng Antique.

Noong iprinoklama ng batasan si Marcos raw ang nanalo sa halalan, hindi tayo pumayag. Dito mismo sa lugar na lito nagkaroon tayo ng “Tagumpay Ng Bayan Rally” na dinaluhan ng halos kalahating milyong tao. Sinimulan natin ang ating “boycott movement.” Sa halip na nawalan ng pag-asa, lalong lumakas ang paninindigan natin. Ipinagpatuloy natin ang paglaban upang ibalik ang ating demokrasya.

Kung kaya’t noong nangailangan ng “People Power” sa EDSA, maraming handa na manindigan, sapagkat marami nang mamamayang Pilipino ang matagal nang naghihintay at nagsu-sumikap upang ibalik ang ating demokrasya.

Katakut-takot na hrap, pawis, luha at dugo ang inialay natin upang ibalik ang ating kalayaan. Hindi iisang tao at hindi iilang Pilipino ang nagmalasakit upang malasap nating muli ang kalayaan. Huwag na huwag nating kakalimutan itong bagay na ito.

Kaya ngayon, ipinakikiusap ko sa lahat ng Pilipinong nagmamahal sa kalayaan — huwag nating sayangin ang ating ginugol upang maibalik ang demokrasya. Huwag nating lusta-yin ang mga natamo nating biyaya.

Ang mga makasarili, masakim at mapagmataas ay mata-tagpuan sa lahat ng dako. Kailangan ko po kayo, ang mga mamamayan, upang labanan ang mga ito. Kayo po ang aking inaasahan at mapapagkatiwalaan. Sama-sama nating sugpuin ang kasinungalingan sa pamamagitan ng katotohanan, karahasan sa pamamagitan ng pwersang legal, ang mga taong walang kakayahan sa pamamagitan ng kanilang pagtitiwalag, ang mga katiwalian sa pamamagitan ng paggamit ng buong bisa at lakas ng batas.

Ang katuparan ng kalayaan ay nasa atin . . . sa ating pag-sisikap at sa ating pagkakaisa.

Sa susunod na taon, nais ko pong tumayo muli dito at ipahayag na natapos na natin ang ating sinimulang gawain sa kapakanan ng kalayaan. Nais kong ipatalos sa ating mga kababayan lalong-lalo na sa mga naghihikahos na tayo ay masiglang patungo na sa kaunlaran at kasaganaan. Ang kahihayan ay nasa nakaraan. Tanging karangalan at kapurihan ang nalalabi – karangalan sa ating nagawa, karangalan sa ating sariling kakayahan, karangalan sa ating katapatan, at higit sa lahat, karangalan bilang Pilipino.

Mabuhay ang Pilipino.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 1989 National Convention of the Municipal Mayor's League of the Philippines

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the 1989 National Convention of the Municipal Mayor's League of the Philippines**

[Delivered at the Folk Arts Theater, June 16, 1989]

**ACCELERATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT
THROUGH DECENTRALIZATION**

The President commends several municipalities for the outstanding performance of their respective People's Economic Councils (PECs). Since the mayors are the leaders representing the countryside, the President urges them to develop the countryside and be accountable for the delivery of basic services and facilities in their areas. She stresses that the increase in their authority would require improved performance and greater accountability to their constituents.

When we met a little over a year ago, I proclaimed that your election had completed the structure of our democratic system. Then I said . . . "Now, let's get down to business." Today, I would like to commend those of you who really did so.

Last October, during the National Convention of the People's Economic Councils (PECs), I personally commended the municipalities of Alfonso (Cavite), Porac (Pampanga), Rodriguez (Rizal), Tarlac (Tarlac) and Tiboli (South Cotabato) for the outstanding performance of their respective PECs. Likewise, I would like to laud the municipalities of the National Capital Region for exhibiting an 80.69% over-all tax collection efficiency. You have done well indeed!

Today, we meet again to strengthen our resolve to achieve our common vision: develop our country by developing your areas – the countryside – where most of our people live.

The program that heralds this is clear: *Accelerated Rural Development*. If we are to reduce underemployment and unemployment and distribute our gains to the greatest number, we must push for social and economic development in all our towns. The rural masses should not wait any longer for the gains of urban development to trickle down to them. No, the process must be renewed and we must act swiftly and with firmer resolve than before.

Here is where each of you plays a crucial role in this priority program. You are in the forefront of government's fight to conquer poverty. For you are the leaders representing the countryside. You have been elected to provide your respective constituencies with better roads, adequate water supply and power, basic health and educational services and facilities, ample livelihood opportunities, and easy access to other basic services. You are, therefore, accountable for the delivery of these basic services and facilities.

I am aware that for so long, much has been asked of you but so little has been given in terms of authority and resources to enable you to carry out your programs. Let me make it clear to all of you this morning that I do not intend to ask you to help fight poverty and insurgency without giving you the wherewithal to achieve them. I am convinced that if this country is to move forward, to grow at a rate and pace consistent with the aspirations of our people, we have to decentralize much of that authority wielded by the national government. And your national government is taking steps to remedy the overly-centralized system we inherited from the past regime.

If you recall, the last time we met, I promised you that the national government shall strive to provide "a wide channel for two-way traffic in ideas and feedback between the people and the government." This past year, you saw

a real grassroots presidency at work. I have directly consulted the local governments through my regional and provincial visits as well as during my regular meetings with the Regional Development Council Chairmen, Provincial Governors and City Mayors. Just recently, another link has been established between the national and local leaderships – the Presidential Action Line System (PALS). The PALS is designed to provide immediate and expeditious response to the requests and concerns of local government units which are sent to the Office of the President. Under this system, senior officials are designated as action officers to directly act on local requests in behalf of their respective departments. Thus, you can now be assured of faster reaction time from the national government with regard to your letters.

However, that singularly difficult task of greater devolution and deconcentration still eludes us. We must continuously move towards making every municipality a self-reliant community with the local Chief Executive empowered and provided with enough resources to truly manage on his own. To this end, I have filed and will be filing vital legislation which will bring about genuine decentralization.

A little over a month ago, I submitted to Congress a legislation which will increase your share in the Gross National Internal Revenue collections. Specifically, the bill provides that local governments will get 20% of the total Internal Revenue collections. On top of this, an additional 5% is set aside as incentive to local government units that can demonstrably increase their Real Estate Tax collection efficiency. The Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) will be distributed and *automatically released* within the first 10 days of the month, as follows:

- 30% to provinces
- 25% to cities
- 35% to municipalities
- 10% to barangays

The municipalities will get the biggest share of the IRA. In fact, when your share is added up to that of the barangays, this adds up to a full 45% of the total Internal Revenue allotted to local government units.

The same Bill abolishes the mandatory contributions which eat up much of your limited funds and which you have always been asking to be rescinded. The proposed Bill abolishes the 18% contribution to the PC/INP and the 7% contribution to hospitals, and to the Mayors of Metro Manila, the tax accruing to the Metropolitan Manila Commission under PD No. 921.

The Special Education Fund Tax is converted into a purely local tax, the proceeds of which shall accrue entirely to local government units, and divided as follows:

- 50% for the local School Board
- 50% for the local General and/or Infrastructure Fund

What do all these mean in terms of additional revenues to you?

When the Bill is approved by Congress and implemented by January 1990, and I have high hopes that this Bill will be approved this year, you may expect an increase, as your share of the IRA, of at least 100% over what you have received this year. For some of the local government units, the increase could be as high as 200%.

In absolute terms, for 1989, the budget for IRA and LGRSF/STA is P5.42 billion. For 1990, the budget for IRA is P13 billion, an increase of P7.58 billion or 140%. The share of the municipalities is P4.55 billion while the barangays is P1.30 billion.

Adding that part of your budget which used to be released to the PC/INP and to hospitals, you will have substantive increases in your budget which will be at your disposal.

I would also like to inform you that all of the abovementioned provisions relative to the IRA of LGUs have also been incorporated in the CY 1990 Budget which I will soon transmit to Congress.

Therefore, we will soon have two mechanisms in which to achieve our mutual goal of providing greater national revenue shares to local units.

The revenues you need are provided for in this legislation as well as in others, like the legislation increasing your share of the fees imposed on the exploitation of natural resources. But increasing revenues is not enough. You also need the authority to effectively and efficiently carry out your programs, as you have cited in the resolutions you submitted to me this morning. In response to some of these resolutions, I will be endorsing the proposed Local Government Code as an administration measure. In this connection, I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Senator Aquilino Pimentel, whose Bill, S.B. 155, was the source of many provisions of the proposed Code.

Three of your Resolutions are already addressed in the proposed Local Government Code, namely:

- * The Omnibus Resolution containing specific requests for greater devolution of powers to local units;
- * Second, requesting for certification of a proposed Local Autonomy Act; and,
- * Third, regarding the Philippine Constabulary and the Integrated National Police.

I shall deal with the rest of the Resolutions later.

Meanwhile, let me cite to you other features of the proposed Code:

- * The National Police personnel assigned to your municipalities shall be under your operational supervision and direction;
- * You shall have appointing power over all local government personnel whose salaries or whose operating expenses are mainly paid from local funds, except for treasurers and assessors who will be appointed by the Department of Finance from a list of eligibles nominated by the Local Chief concerned;
- * You shall exercise administrative supervision over field personnel of the Executive Departments involved in the delivery of basic services. Moreover, within 18 months from the effectivity of the Code, said Executive Departments shall transfer the corresponding appropriations and funds (other than those from programs and projects) to the local government unit concerned;
- * You, as members of the local Prequalification Bids and Awards Committee, shall have an active part in the construction, operation and maintenance of projects which are funded locally and/or receive funding or financial counterpart assistance from the National Executive Department, subject to the specifications, cost standards, and performance audit as may be prescribed by said National Executive Department;
- * The Local Tax Code has been updated to allow local government units to have more discretion in deciding as to the subject of local taxes and the amount of such taxes. Specifically, the Local Tax Code has set only tax floors in order to allow your respective municipalities to decide the appropriate amount to impose for your own needs.

These last three address portions of your Omnibus Resolution for increased authority at the local level.

The other major provisions in the proposed Local Government Code will empower you – as political leaders and as Area Development Managers – to perform your duties smoothly. But, as your authority and resources increase, so does your accountability to your constituents. Hence, we have in the Code provisions on Initiative and Referendum on Legislative Matters and the recall of elective officials. Just as your authority is increased, so will I exact

improved performance from each of you. I will not hear of the highest town official utilizing his powers to benefit a few favored men. And I will expect that this devolution of powers will be felt immediately and equally by all.

I have been told, that some, if not most, of local officials are not ready and prepared to assume greater responsibilities. But if we do not implement decentralization now, then when will we do it?

I am convinced that only through decentralization can we truly achieve peace and progress. The over-centralization of powers in the government during the past regime was prompted by the craving for power and the material greed of those in the central government then. My administration has wisely learned from the past, and now foresees a stronger and more effective management of government services that will truly reach the grassroots.

I will now respond to your other requests:

I shall refer your requests for the adoption of local government innovations, as well as the allocation of P40 million for the construction of a Mayors' Center, to the concerned Departments for serious study and consideration.

On your proposal for the removal of Congressional Privilege of Realigning Government Projects, let me clarify that this provision in the General Appropriations Act (GAA) does not in any way diminish the authority of the Executive Branch to plan and implement projects, both at the national and local levels. A provision in the GAA provides that any realignment should be made within 30 days.

Regarding the proposed amendments to existing laws on the implementation of Barangay Road Projects, this matter is still being studied by the Department of Public Works and Highways.

The standardization of mayors' salaries, as well as those of other local government executives, is already included in the proposed Standardization Bill now pending in Congress.

On your request for a 30% discount on plane fares and preferential accommodation treatment with discounted rates in Hotels, I must tell you that I cannot grant such a request. I have repeatedly assured our people that no one serving the people under my administration will be granted special favors or privileges that will set them apart from everybody else.

Finally, regarding your request for quarterly meetings with me, I think you all know that I am regularly meeting the Provincial Governors – once every quarter – and the City Mayors – once every four months. I am extending my invitation to the officers of your League to attend my meetings with the City Mayors. The next meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, June 27, 1989.

Allow me now to reiterate my determination to continue adopting measures to increase your powers. This commitment to decentralize is also an unequivocal expression of my confidence in your ability to be my partners in steering the country towards a better future. Our people have great expectations. And I share the expectations of our people. You will fulfill our hopes for a better life.

We have the policies and structures in place. Let me now end by saying . . . “Let’s get moving – and fast!”

Thank you and Good Morning.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Coalition for Transparency Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Coalition for Transparency**

[Delivered on June 19, 1989]

WEEDING OUT CORRUPTION

The President reacts to the critics of this government. She cites the consequences of the past administration's thievery in the foreign debt, the poorly-planned and bankrupt industries and the corruption that was institutionalized in every local government, civilians and military. With the help of the Coalition and its proposals to combat corruption, together with a long and meaningful cooperation between those who share the same spirit of service to the nation, she hopes the country will be able to attain its goals.

I will go straight to the point.

Many of those who are gathered here represent the spirit that believed it had put hope into power in 1986. You are gathered again because disenchantment has started to set in. And you wonder if 1986 was worth it.

Whether it was worth it or not, whether our freedom with the uncertainty it has brought is better or worse than the certitude of slavery, I leave for you to answer. The answer to that question I will leave to you. No one can tell you to think anything but what your honest thoughts and feelings dictate. Yet I believe I owe it to you to personally answer some of my critics.

Being who they were under Marcos, it would insult the spirit of this assembly and the memory of the Philippine struggle for freedom, to answer them directly. But you, who care for this country, deserve to hear the answers.

You have heard it all: the incompetence and corruption of this government, the violation of human rights that were the core of its political commitments, the sorry state of the economy.

Where these critics get the face to criticize on these points is beyond me.

They ask why have we come only this far in our economic recovery? I will tell you why. Because it has taken this long to just get out of the black hole they dug in our pockets when they were in power.

When I came to power, we wrote off P130 billion in bad loans to those who held positions of power and conflicting interest under Marcos in just two financial institutions: PNB and DBP.

Let me give you a few examples:

CDCP alone, over P10 billion lost;

Cresta Monte companies, over P2 billion lost – and taken by those who wax so indignant over corruption today.

I directed the Tanodbayan to prosecute these cases and expressed the hope that the Sandiganbayan would give them first priority. It was imperative that Philippine creditworthiness be re-established by the timely prosecution of defaulters.

To date, not a single case has advanced beyond the preliminary stage. It is said that this too is the Executive's fault.

No, it is not. If I intervened in the judicial process, I would be accused of political vendetta. I have therefore left the law to take its course alone and the courts to face the judgement of the people. To that end, I have directed the PNB, the DBP, and other government financial institutions to release the complete and detailed list of all behest loans so that the people will understand the pernicious delay in the prosecution of those who plundered our country. The time-honored and constitutional protection of judicial independence is no excuse for inaction.

It is said that we must stop using Marcos as an excuse for the Aquino administration's shortcomings. No, we cannot. The truth has rights that political convenience and the opposition's desire for national amnesia cannot compromise. Justice, not amnesia, is not what we had in mind when we called for reconciliation.

Marcos and his cronies are not just symbols of the past, but the reality of the present.

We live and suffer the consequences of their thievery in the foreign debt which we are striving to pay without starving our children and choking our progress;

We live and suffer the consequences of their thievery in the poorly-planned and bankrupt industries that we can neither dispose of nor re-active without losing more money;

We live and suffer the consequences of the corruption that Marcos institutionalized in every level of government, civilian and military;

We live and suffer the legacy of our loudest critics.

Those who finished off the Philippine economy are the loudest in decrying the slowness of the recovery even they cannot deny because they are cashing in on it.

With strength borrowed from the money they stole, they have turned their weapons to reopen the wounds they inflicted on the body of our country when they were in power – poverty, insurgency, and debt.

Some will say that it is not who says it that is important, but what he says. No, it is important. Because the minute we allow the guilty to instruct the innocent on morals, all morality loses its force.

My critics have assailed the so-called corruption of my government, but these critics, not I, have the hidden wealth to conceal.

My critics call my government weak, but it is they and not I who spend their waking moments weaving plot after failed plot to overturn the government.

Yet, despite the fact that I have never imprisoned any political opponent nor ordered any ward leader to manufacture falsified election returns, there has been greater stability in the land than in the last five years of a dictatorship that stopped at nothing, not even murder, to impose it.

What is galling is not what these critics say, but that they dare to say it. That thieves should preach honesty. That the untruthful should counsel truth. That the ignorant should lecture on policy.

And that those who connived in the plunder of our country should prescribe the manner of its revival in their hands.

The future will not take instruction from yesterday's men. Nor shall we take the truth from those who made a good living from lying. The spring cannot rise higher, nor be cleaner than its source.

That said, unquestionably something has gone wrong. Corruption has returned, if not in the same scale certainly with equal shamelessness.

This cannot be. It is not our intention to appear honest and competent only in comparison to our enemies.

We must – and I will – wage a relentless effort to weed out the corruption that has resurfaced in our midst. The campaign must spare no one – neither friends who helped in the campaign nor the enemies who abetted the dictatorship; neither those who drop our names nor those who malign them. No one will be spared.

The war on graft and corruption must be matched by a war on slack and indecision in government, on those whose reckless conduct has called the honor of this government into question. No one is indispensable. I intend to address not only the people's dismay over corruption but their despair over inaction. Too much depends on the success of this venture. For what is at stake here is the people's continuing faith in democracy, in the force of moral values and law.

I am aware that the values we seek to bring about through democratic method and honest example cannot produce overnight results. Yet, let there be no mistake on the score: we shall not lose by inaction and default what we have painfully gained by the most deliberate and strenuous efforts:

What we have won, we shall keep. And on what we have accomplished, we shall build higher. Yet the manner of building cannot be like EDSA. Not in a flash, but by unerring steps shall we build the future.

I am heartened that this is also how the Coalition intends to proceed: To build a moral order stone by honest stone, by the living example of each and every person converted to its vision of morality in government, in the community, in the family, and in himself.

Breaking down the task to manageable portions is how I like to proceed. When I called for a boycott, I targetted only a softdrink to test whether the will and means to accomplish little was there, before I made commitments to do more.

In the same vein, the Coalition for Transparency looks first to the moral renewal of its individual members before calling for the reformation of society and government. Before a man can preach, he must ask himself has he paid his correct taxes. Before a man can inveigh against influence-peddling, he must consider if he does not have a pending favor with any public official. Before a man demands transparency, he must be certain that he too can stand without fear in the light.

As a first step, I target the customs and importation. We made significant progress in facilitating exports, but the bottleneck in importation remains and smuggling has become so rampant that the labor-intensive textile industry's very survival is in question.

First let me make it clear to quell all speculation. Customs Commissioner Mison is staying and has my full backing in any measures he cares to take, particularly those he has proposed to the Coalition, such as the non-stop processing in the release of shipments; and the organization of the Customs-Industry Consultative Council to bring in the private sector in the formulation of Customs policies and procedures.

I look forward to receiving specific proposals from the Coalition on the means to combat corruption. This meeting heralds, I hope, a long and meaningful cooperation between those who share the same spirit of service to the nation.

The path you and I shall take will not be easy. Friends will be lost and enemies will grow desperate. The reward for our efforts will not be praise but more villification from those who see no place in our tomorrow.

Our reward must come mainly from each other: in the confidence of our common sincerity, in the gradual attainment of our goals, and in the spirit of a shared enterprise for the common good such as we have not enjoyed since EDSA. Let the spirit of service return. The campaign against corruption will succeed only when society, moved to its moral core, will no longer have anything to do with it, and when wealth by itself can no longer buy our respect or a welcome in our homes. It is here, in this fundamental task, that you have the major role to play. With God's help we can only prevail.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Navy Day

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Navy Day

[Delivered on June 23, 1989]

THE NAVY'S VIGILANCE

The first duty of an armed forces is the defense of its country's boundaries and the first line of national defense is in its surrounding waters. This is the duty of the Navy, to secure the nation from internal and external threats. The President pledges full support for the modernization of the navy, to build a strong force outfitted to discharge their mission.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines has had the longest fighting experience of any military force in the Region outside Vietnam. And it has fought against the most tenacious enemy since that famous conflict. By and large, the Armed Forces has carried out its mission well. While this is Navy Day, however, I cannot help but comment first upon a matter that touches us all — Commander-in-Chief and Armed Forces.

I refer to the sorry image of the profession of arms at this time. Soldiering has become identified not with the noblest calling of man, but with the most sordid activities of the criminal syndicates. I grieve for the Armed Forces, at the injustice it is suffering.

I grieve for the tens of thousands who gave their lives to preserve the territorial integrity of the Republic and to keep the communist foe from turning our free country into a slave state. The shameful actuations of a few have insulted the vast majority of our fighting men who are, even at this moment, turning fields of fire into fields of honor.

What a few have done to the proud institution of the Armed Forces is beyond sympathy and forgiveness. Punishment commensurate with the damage done to the honor of the Armed Forces must be dealt out. We must restore the shine to the sword of state and make it again a trusted weapon for the national defense and for the advancement of the nation's honor and destiny.

Our most potent weapon is not the rifle nor the artillery so much as the superior example of our forces over those of the enemies we fight. The scalawags in carnappings and holdups have left us weaponless in the most important battle of the rebellion — the battle for the hearts and minds, the trust and respect of our people.

I have directed the Secretary of Justice to apply the full force of the law so that the stain on the shield of the Republic will be wiped off by the severity of the justice that is done.

That said, I turn to the Philippine Navy and proudly salute it on its 91st anniversary.

The existence and pre-eminent role of a navy in a country such as ours is self-evident. The first duty of an armed force is the defense of its country's boundaries. It goes without saying that, for an archipelago, the first line of national defense must be drawn in its surrounding waters. That line is drawn and held by the Philippine Navy.

With the inadequate equipment at hand, the Philippine Navy has nonetheless discharged its mission well. The contingency most feared by our strategists has to date been prevented — massive arms landing that will give a quantum leap to the insurgency threat. For this we must thank the vigilance of the Navy.

We have this also to thank the Navy for. Its readiness to challenge any state that trenches upon our territories. That readiness has kept open our maritime options for economic development in such key areas as fishery, offshore oil, and submarine mining.

We need every resource at hand to meet the challenges to our country: the challenge of poverty, the challenge of development and progress for a fast growing population, and the challenge of our destiny to become what we once were: the freest, most progressive state in Asia.

Our fishery resources are being depleted and destroyed at an alarming rate by foreign fishing concerns. As a country equally comprising land and water, this is equivalent to the foreign seizure of our entire industrial capacity.

The Navy has done quite well with very little, and much of that little is obsolete. Yet great dangers threaten from overseas. It behooves us therefore to build a navy equal to those threats. We have therefore embarked upon the long overdue modernization of the navy. We need a navy that can move fast and with the power to impress upon intruders the substance of our commitment and oath:

To uphold the Constitution that defines the historic boundaries of our state;

To see to the faithful execution of the laws that preserve the national patrimony for Filipinos, maintain the order of society, and advance the economic welfare of our people;

And to proclaim to all and sundry the pride of our name and the reputation of our arms.

You and I share a commitment and a vision. Part of that vision of a strong country, impervious to threat, calls for a strong navy. I pledge to you my full support to build a navy outfitted to discharge the mission we have outlined in our oath.

Mabuhay ang Hukbong Dagat ng Pilipinas!

Mabuhay ang Filipino!

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Air Force Day Founding Anniversary

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Air Force Day Founding Anniversary**

[Delivered on July 1, 1989]

OUTDO YOURSELF AIR FORCE

The Air Force plays a critical role both in war and in peace: as a major support to ground units battling against enemies of the state and as transporter of medicine, relief goods, and medical workers to disaster-stricken areas here and overseas. With a new fleet of jet aircraft and helicopters, and with a renewed sense of duty, the Air Force is expected to outdo itself.

Men and women of the Air Force, today is a landmark in your history. This is the first time we celebrate this day as your founding anniversary. I signed Proclamation No. 397 on April 3, 1989, changing your May 2nd anniversary date to July 1st in keeping with the nationalist spirit of our Armed Forces. On this day, in 1947, the Air Force attained the status of a distinct service command of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

There is yet another reason to celebrate. Today we welcome 45 graduates of the Philippine Air Force Flying School into the PAF. Now you are one with the pride of our skies. You are to enter an unbroken tradition of heroism from the action taken by Captain Jesus Villamor and his men in 1941 in meeting the Japanese foe to the noble decision of Colonel Sotelo and his men in joining the struggle against the dictatorship. Rest assured, there will be no shortage of opportunities for heroism in the future.

We are engaged in a bitter struggle that will decide whether Filipinos shall live free or die, whether what our people have built by sacrifice these past three years shall be the spoils of our enemies' victories or the foundation of a future of freedom, justice, and progress for our children.

Let me impress upon you the critical nature of your role in the present war against the insurgency. The air support you provide to our ground forces have oftentimes spelled victory or defeat. The timely arrival of the Air Force has been known to turn a massacre of our boys into a rout of the enemy. The Air Force has logged 642 flying hours in 592 sorties in combat operations to support our ground units.

Men of the Air Force, I salute your accomplishments.

Yet the work of the Air Force is not confined to combat. First in war, first in peace, the Air Force has been in the forefront of relief missions not only in calamity-struck areas of our country but even in foreign lands. Last year alone, you flew 22,129 hours on disaster relief operations, transported 35,000 pounds of medicine to Bangladesh, and airlifted over 6,000 military and civilian patients to medical aid centers. You repatriated 97 Filipino workers from Singapore. You have shown that the Filipino need not wait upon war to declare himself totally for country.

We note your distinguished performance against the backdrop of the Air Force's urgent need to modernize. The Air Force must be strengthened for the challenges still before us. To that end, we are upgrading the weapons systems of the Air Force with the purchase of a new fleet of jet aircraft and helicopters. We are assured of the first delivery sometime at the end of this year.

We must be able to reach those who threaten and kill the innocent – the elderly and children regardless – wherever they cower in malice and fear. The arms of the Republic must be able to reach everywhere to protect all its people and punish and repel all their enemies, domestic and foreign.

In congratulating the Air Force for its performance, I say also, “Outdo Yourself Air Force.” We expect more from you next year, with the advent of new weaponry and the renewed sense of duty that we celebrate today.

Thank you and Good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino during the Toast-Lunch of Berlin Mayor Walter Momper

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the Toast-Lunch of Berlin Mayor Walter Momper**

[Delivered at Berlin, Vibrant Center of German Culture on July 9, 1989]

Many admire the city of Berlin as a testimony to the German people's resilience and energy. Berlin, the heart of the German nation, inspires Filipinos today.

I am pleased and honored to be in Berlin. The beauty and power of this great city testifies to the resilience of the German people and to the tremendous energy that has distinguished modern Germany. A single nation divided, creates two energetic states. A city isolated yet becomes a vigorous metropolis, a vibrant center of German culture, and a strong economy in its own right.

Berlin today attests to the fact that whatever the Germans set their hands to will work. We are inspired by this city, which will always be – the accidents of history notwithstanding – the heart of the German nation.

I would like to thank the Mayor of Berlin for the warm reception he has accorded me and my delegation. I would like to propose a toast: To the continuing prosperity of Berlin and to the success and good health of Mayor Walter Momper. To them I extend the good wishes and thanks of my people. Mabuhay!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

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Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Filipino Community in Berlin

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Filipino Community in Berlin**

[Delivered on July 9, 1989]

KATUGUNAN SA MGA KATANUNGAN AT KAHILINGAN

Ipinaabot ni Pangulong Aquino sa mga Pilipinong nasa Alemanya na maraming programa ang ipinatutupad ng gobyerno para sa kabutihan ng lahat. Kabilang na rito ang repormang pansakahan, karapatang pantao, Code of Ethics, at marami pang iba. Pinag-aaralan din ng pamahalaan na maisakatuparan ang nais ng ating mga kababayan na nasa ibang bayan na makalahok sa mga halalang gaganapin sa ating bayan, at tugunan ang mga katanungan hinggil sa buwis at visa. Inaanyayahan sila ng Pangulo na tumulong sa pamamagitan ng pagbibigay ng puhunan para sa maliliit at katamtamang negosyo.

Mga minamahal kong kababayan,

Nasisiyahan ako dahil sa pagkakataong itong makasama kayo sa aking pagdalaw dito sa Pederal na Republika ng Alemanya. Ikinagagalak kong makilala ang mga bayani ng kabuhayan ng Pilipinas na tumutulong sa pag-unlad ng ekonomiya ng ating bayan.

Nababakas ko ang inyong mga pag-aalala sa kapakanan ng inyong mga mahal sa buhay, kaibigan, at ng buong sambayanang Pilipino. Nagagalak din ako at kayo ay nakikibahagi sa mga suliranin na hinaharap ng ating bansa sa kasalukuyan.

Maraming salamat sa inyong pangako na itataguyod at pag-ibayuhin ang pagkakaibigan ng bansang Pilipinas at Alemanya.

At bilang tugon sa inyong mga katanungan at kahilingan, nais kong iparating sa inyo ang mga sumusunod:

Sinisikap kong mabilis na ipatupad ang repormang pansakahan. Naibalita na rin sa inyo ang pagbabago sa pamumuno ng Kagawaran na namamahala sa programang ito. Kayo ay manalig na ipapatupad ang mga angkop na hakbang upang maiwasan ang anumang katiwalian lalung-lalo na sa pagbili ng lupa. Pinasimulan ko na rin ang pag-uusig sa mga nagkamali.

Ang ating Kongreso ay kasalukuyang pinag-aaralan ang mga batas sa Reporma sa Lupa para sa anumang kinakailangang pagbabago sa mga batas na ito.

Ang pangako ng ating pamahalaan sa mga karapatang pantao o “human rights” ay nakadambana sa ating Sahgang Batas.

Pinag-iibayo ng ating pamahalaan ang lubos na pag-galang sa mga karapatang ito.

Mayroon tayong Komisyon sa mga Karapatang Pantao o “Commission on Human Rights” na tumitiyak sa pangangalaga ng mga karapatan ng lahat ng Pilipino. Ito rin ang sumusuri at nagsisiyasat sa pagtupad ng mga obligasyon ng Pilipinas ayon sa mga pandaigdig na kasunduan tungkol sa karapatang pantao.

At sa mga nababalitang “human rights violations” sa ating bansa, ang United Nations Committee on Human Rights ayon sa kanilang tagapangulo, Ginoong Rajsoomer Lallah, ay nagpahayag na:

“You will have noticed that there is no one in the Committee who has any doubt of the commitment of your government to fulfill properly the undertaking that you have made under the Covenant (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) and I would wish you on behalf of the Committee to take to your President and through her, to the Government and people of the Philippines, our best wishes for the fulfillment of your undertakings under the Covenant.”

Binibigyan ko po ng diin na ang ating pamahalaan ay hindi tinatangkilik ang anumang paglabag ng karapatang pantao.

Tuluyan din nating sinusugpo ang nababalitang pagnanakaw at katiwalian sa pamahalaan. May pananagutan ang lahat na mga pinuno at empleyado ng pamahalaan sa kanilang tungkulin. At mayroong mga takdang parusa para sa kanilang mga katiwalian. Nais ko pong ipaalam sa inyo na ipinagtibay ngayong taong ito ang isang mahigpit na batas na pinamagatang: “Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.” Nilalaman po dito ang mga patakarang dapat tupdin ng lahat na nanunungkulan sa ating pamahalaan.

Inuulit ko, sa aking pamahalaan, ay walang tanging pribelehiyo o pagkiling kanino man. Walang espesyal na konsiderasyon o pagsasang-galang na ipagkakaloob sa aking mga kamag-anak o mga kaibigan kung mapapatunayan na sila ay lumabag sa batas. Kung ang aking pamahalaan ay may itinatangi at kinikilingan man, ito po ay ang mga maralita.

Upang umunlad ang kabuhayan ng Pilipinas, kailangan natin ang mga daan, daungan, tulay, patubig at iba pa. Ang lahat na ito ay binibigyan ng kaukulang pansin lalung-lalo na sa mga lalawigan na nangangailangan ng mga ito, upang lumuwag ang mga lungsod at maparating ang mga biyaya ng kaunlaran sa ating mga kababayan sa kabukiran.

Ang ating mga kagawaran at tanggapan sa kalusugan, edukasyon, at paglilingkod ay nagsisikap na ipaabot sa lahat ng sulok ng ating bayan ang mga gawaing panlipunan.

Kasama ng pagpapaunlad ng ating kabuhayan ang pangangalaga ng ating kapaligiran.

Ang pangangalaga ng ating mga likas na yaman kagaya ng mga dagat at gubat ay isa sa mga tulong na nais kong hilingin sa ating mga kaibigan dito sa Alemanya.

Ang ating “Department of Environment and Natural Resources” ay nagtatag ng mga programang pambansa upang mapanumbalik o kaya’y mapayaman pa lalo ang ating kalikasan. Tumutulong sa kagawaran na ito ang mga pribadong samahan sa mga programang tulad ng pagtatanim ng mga puno at paglilinis ng ating mga ilog at dagat.

Pinag-aaralan na po ang mga paraang magpapasatupad ng inyong hangaring makalahok sa darating na halalan sa ating bayan.

Ipanatag ninyo ang inyong kalooban na ang ating pamahalaan ay ginagawa ang lahat para sa inyong ikabubuti. Pinagaaralan at pinaghahandaan ng mga kinauukulang tanggapan ng pamahalaan ang inyong mga mungkahi na may kaugnayan sa buwis at “Visa” para sa madali at maluwag na paglalakbay, pagtira o pagtatrabaho ng mga Pilipino dito sa Europa.

Kayo ay nakikipagsapalaran, nagtitiis, at nagmamalasakit para sa ikagiginhawa ng buhay ng inyong mga pamilya. Ang karamihan sa inyo ay mapalad; ngunit, marami rin akong natatanggap na mga balita tungkol sa mga malungkot

na kapalaran ng mga ilang “mail-order brides.” Dapat nating iwasan ang kapalarang ito. Sa ngayon ay mayroong isang misyong Aleman na nakikipag-ugnay sa atin upang alamin kung papaaano sila makatutulong sa paglutas ng suliraning ito.

Sa kabilang dako, ipinagbubunyi ng ating mga kababayan ang inyong mga pagpapakasakit at pagiging ulirang manggagawa.

Inatasan ko ang ating “Department of Labor and Employment” na isama sa ating mga programang kaugnay sa mga manggagawa sa ibayong dagat, ang pagpapakilala at pagpapahalaga sa inyo na itinuturing kong mga bayani ng bayan.

Marami pa tayong dapat gawin. Mga unang hakbang pa lamang ang ating naisasagawa tungo sa pagiging isang “newly industrialized country”. Kailangan ng ating bayan ang tulong ninyo upang makabangon sa kahirapan. Kayo ay makakatulong sa pamamagitan ng pagbibigay ng puhunan sa inyong mga kamag-anak upang makapagtatag ng mga maliliit at katamtamang negosyo.

Bilang pangwakas, nais ko lang na ipaalaala sa inyo na dahil sa marami-rami na rin kayo dito sa Alemanya, nararapat na kayo ay magkaisa at magtulungan upang matamo ang ating mga layunin para sa bayan. Magsama-sama tayong lahat na buhayin at ibangon ang ating Inang Bayan.

Mabuhay!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the tearing down of the Berlin Wall

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the tearing down of the Berlin Wall**

[Delivered at Berlin City Hall, July 9, 1989]

WALLS CAN BE TORN DOWN

President Aquino urges the tearing down of walls if not from its foundation then from the hearts of Berliners.

I am familiar with walls. I say that as the widow of a political prisoner. The Filipino people have also lived with walls: the wall of political oppression and the higher walls of their own fears about their disunity and weakness in the face of overwhelming odds.

We also know that walls can be torn down:

The wall of fear when one man gave his life to breach that wall and show his people that the shortest route to freedom is courage. The wall of mistrust, when a people put their trust in the compassion of the soldiers sent out to destroy them.

This wall too will go when you uproot its foundations – not from beneath these streets of Berlin – but from your hearts.

Those who had some use for this wall are gone. The wall will eventually follow. For it seems that Europe from the Urals to the Atlantic wishes to build a common home, and this wall is getting in the way of it.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Filipino Community in Aachen

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Filipino Community in Aachen**

[Released on July 9, 1989]

MGA PAGBABAGONG BUNGA NG PEOPLE POWER

Maipagmamalaki ang patuloy na pag-iral ng demokrasya at ang pag-unlad ng ekonomiya ng Pilipinas. Dahil rito, inaanyayahan ang mga Pilipinong taga-Aachen na makilahok sa pag-unlad ng bansa, na itaguyod ang mga produktong Pilipino, na anyayahan ang mga banyagang mamasyal sa Pilipinas, at magtatag ng mga negosyo sa Pilipinas.

Nagpapasalamat ako sa inyong pagdalo sa pagtitipon na ito na nagpapakita ng inyong pakikiisa sa aming lahat.

Ang layunin ng aking pagdalaw dito sa Alemanya at sa Pransya ay upang palawakin at pagtibayin ang ating pakikipag-ugnayan sa mga dayuhang bansang ito.

Dito sa Alemanya, malaking karangalan na ako ang kauna-unahang Pangulo ng Pilipinas na makadalo dito. Itinuturing ko ang paanyaya sa akin dito na isang pahiwatig ng tuluyang paghanga at paggalang ng mga dayuhan sa ating mapayapang rebolusyon noong 1986, at sa mga pagbabago na ating ipinagtibay simula noon. Mahirap nang ulitin ang ating People Power kaya dapat pangalagaan natin ang mga layunin nito.

Magmula noong 1986, marami na pong mabuting naganap sa atin. Umiiral ang demokrasya sa ating bayan ngayon. May bago tayong Saligang Batas. Mayroon tayong malayang kataastaasang Hukuman. Ang Kongreso ay pinamumunuan at kinakatawanan ng mga taong may malaya at makabayang paninindigan. Ang ating mga institusyon na nakatalaga sa ating Saligang Batas, “Commission on Audit, Civil Service Commission, Commission on Elections, Commission on Human Rights at Ombudsman” ay malayang ginagampanan ang kanilang mga tungkulin.

Noong nakaraang taon, umunlad ng mahigit na anim na porsiyento ang ating ekonomiya na nagpapatunay na bumubuti na ang ating kabuhayan. Ngunit hindi pa rin ito sapat. Marami pa sa atin ang naghihirap. Dahil dito, inaanyayahan ko kayong lumahok sa dakilang layunin pagpapaunlad ng ating bansa. Umaasa din kami na sa inyong sariling pamamaraan, tutulungan ninyo kaming itaguyod ang ating mga sariling produkto. Nawa’y tulungan din ninyo kaming mag-anyaya na mamasyal ang mga banyaga sa ating bayan upang matuklasan nila ang likas na ganda ng Pilipinas at ang yaman ng ating kultura. Balakin po ninyo at inyong mga kamag-anak na magtatag ng mga negosyo sa ating bayan, maliit man o katamtaman lamang.

Sa inyong pagbalik sa Pilipinas, umaasa din kami na sa pamamagitan ng pakikipagtulungan ninyo at ng mga ibang bansa tulad ng Alemanya, makaka-uwi kayo sa isang maunlad na bansa.

Kilala ang Pilipino sa buong mundo sa kaniyang kahusayan at kasipagan. Paninindigan natin ang magandang pangalan natin. Kayo ang mga kinatawan ng ating bansa dito sa Alemanya. Anuman ang inyong gawa ay nagpapakilala sa mga dayuhan sa pagkatao ng mga Pilipino.

Kayo ay Pilipino. Sana'y huwag ninyong kalimutan ang ating mga magagandang kaugalian, tradisyon, at higit sa lahat, ang inyong pagkakaisa.

Magsama-sama tayong lahat para sa ating Inang Bayan.

Maraming salamat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Federal Republic of Germany

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Federal Republic of Germany**

[Delivered on July 10, 1989]

AN INVITATION TO GERMAN INVESTORS

The Philippine economy has displayed great vigor, achieving growth while meeting tremendous debt obligations. Such an economy is worthy of investment confidence. With monopolies abolished and the economy deregulated, the Philippines is conducive to capital, creativity, and wholesome competition. Moreover, the Philippines is wealthy with natural resources, a skilled and industrious people, and a strong recovery. Thus, German entrepreneurs are invited to come to the Philippines, to grow, and to profit there.

I know that it is not easy to take you away from your summer vacation. I am therefore honored and deeply grateful for the attendance this afternoon. We think it will have been worth your while attending.

The Philippines is not unknown to Germany. For example, it is no stranger to German liberality. The Philippines gets an annual commitment of DM40 million in soft loans and DM23 million in technical aid. And DM20 million grants to nongovernmental organizations or NGOs. Since January of this year, German ODA loans to the Philippines have been extended for 40 years with a grace period of 10 years, and a lower interest rate of 0.75%.

What the Philippines needs is to get as much German interest in Philippine opportunities as it has thankfully shown in Philippine socio-economic problems. Such an interest would be justified on the part of German business on the basis of the Philippine recovery alone.

Thus, as of February 28, 1989, the Philippine debt stock stood at \$28 billion. This is projected to increase to \$29B by the end of the year. Try to understand that most of this debt is not represented by thriving industries or existing infrastructure. Quite a bit of it was in fact stolen by the previous government. So you might say that the Philippines was in the position of a country after a foreign war – its economy was devastated.

Yet, despite continuing political problems in the first two years of democratic restoration, the Philippines turned a negative growth rate of over 10% in 1984 and 1985 – two years before the end of the dictatorship – to a positive 2% in 1986 in the first year of the democratic restoration, to 6.7% in 1988.

Exports increased by 46% from 1986 to 1988, and registered investments rose from a level of \$128 million in 1985 to \$1.5 billion in 1988. The first five months of 1989 registered \$2 billion.

Now that isn't bad, when you consider that the Philippines continued to meet its tremendous debt obligations at the same time. The Philippines has been paying annually more than 40% of its budget to debt service or 7.7% of GNP. In the next five years, we estimate net payment to creditors of \$12 billion. The Philippines is expected by the international financial community to generate this amount internally. This is a backhanded compliment to the strength of the Philippine economy, to the prudence of its fiscal policies, and to the industry and patience of its people.

This is one compliment, however, that we would rather do without. Yet, unquestionably, the Philippine recovery reflects an inherently strong economy worthy of investor confidence.

We have tried, by sound fiscal policies, not to purchase recovery at the price of inflation, nor debt relief at the price of the national honor. We have paid as careful attention to the consequences of runaway inflation and devaluation, as Germany in the light of her own experiences between the wars. A review of Philippine economic policy in the past three years will show the same determination as Germany to rely on private enterprise to engineer and fuel its economic recovery.

What we need to complete the equation are two elements essential to the German recovery — debt relief and investments.

We think that, given greater control and conservation of our internal resources through debt relief, and with greater access to capital, we can achieve some measure of the progress you achieved under the same conditions.

To attract investments, we have set the stage for partnerships with those who have something to teach us about development.

We abolished monopolies and other privileges that the previous government gave its special friends, and pledged that there shall be no more fears or favors to anyone in business, but equal opportunities for all.

We de-regulated the economy in a major way, and made the environment conducive to capital, creativity, and competition.

Some measure of protectionism remains to nurse weak but essential sectors of the economy to health and condition it gradually to wholesome competition.

Some measure of regulation remains — not to condone unnecessary government interference in business — but to inject a measure of rationality in the developmental efforts of a country that cannot afford to make any more mistakes.

But, by and large, as the delegation from the Department of Trade and Industry and the Philippine private sector will explain at greater length, the Philippine economy is an open invitation to responsible partnership and profit.

But the best teacher is experience. We therefore invite German business to come to the Philippines, set up enterprises there, and grow and profit with us. The best way to learn the German way is to make it a part of ourselves.

Our trade with Germany is still too small. It is worth noting that the problem is not access to the German market but our present inability to supply the desired volumes. This by itself is an invitation to German investments in the German market, at the very least, and in fast-growing Philippine and Asian markets.

So it seems that distance cannot be the reason, because Germany's relatively small investment in the Philippines is the exception to the generally expansive German initiatives in other parts of Asia. We invite you therefore to take a closer look at our country.

Even as Europe consolidates as a single economy, it must recognize that its entire future cannot lie wholly within itself. Europe must reach outwards, to markets and opportunities beyond — in the rest of the world, in Asia and the Pacific.

We invite you to consider the natural wealth of the Philippines; the industry and skill of its people; the strength of its recovery; and, last but not least, the virtues of its geography as well.

We have no common borders with countries in turmoil. And despite the bad publicity we get, democracy is firmly rooted, the government is stable, the economy is moving, and there is no serious challenge to the free enterprise system. Let me put it this way – no one will take power in my country by whistling or shouting in Europe. We are far from trouble yet well positioned to take signal advantage of the wealth of opportunities that are opening up in the century of the Pacific. We invite Germany to position itself with us. The elements of a greater German-Philippine partnership in the Philippines and the Pacific are there. It needs only your decision to make it happen. Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino in Bonn, Germany Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
In Bonn, Germany**

[Delivered on July 10, 1989]

A SYMBOL FOR THE NEW GERMANY

Bonn, as the provisional capital of the Federal Republic, symbolizes the progress, prosperity, and ethical vision of the new Germany.

It is indeed a great pleasure to be here in this beautiful city of Bonn. While we have had occasion to say that history accords to another great city the distinction of being the birthplace of the modern German nation, unquestionably Bonn symbolizes the remarkable progress and prosperity, and the ethical vision of the new Germany.

The choice of Bonn, a beautiful and quiet university town, as the provisional capital of the Federal Republic must have been carefully made. I think there was no question in anyone's mind that the indefatigable industry of the German people would resurrect a strong Germany in a very short time. It was therefore imperative to show the world that the resurgent power of Germany would be wedded — not to passion — but to the gentle reason and tolerance that marks the longer tradition of German culture. There are parts of the German tradition that are distinctly for Germans, but Bonn is that larger part of Germany that is for the world.

I am honored to be here, and grateful for the warm hospitality you have given me and my delegation. I want to thank you also for the kind words of welcome that you have expressed.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Arrival Speech of President Corazon Aquino at Paris Orly Airport

**Arrival speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At Paris Orly Airport**

[Delivered on July 11, 1989]

A TRIBUTE TO THE INSPIRATION OF REVOLUTIONS

In France during the celebration of the Bicentennial of the French revolution, the President says that it is worth remembering the Philippines' own kind of revolution. Both had shared the same impulse: respect for the dignity of man.

I have come to France to celebrate with the French the Bicentennial of their revolution. I have also come to celebrate with all mankind the 200-year old struggle to secure for humanity the rights of man. The Philippines comes to this occasion as the symbol of one kind of revolution, to pay tribute to another—itself the inspiration of the First Philippine Revolution and the unchanging pattern of revolutions until the present. In so doing, both attest to the common impulse that makes revolutions of any kind: Respect for the dignity of man.

I have come to France also to celebrate a small occasion relative to the one that holds these days the attention of the world. We are here to affirm Franco-Philippine Friendship and to declare the desire of both countries to cooperate in Europe and in Asia for their mutual advantage. Already, the honor bestowed on my country by this invitation binds yet more firmly an old friendship. Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

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Message of President Corazon Aquino on a luncheon with Chancellor Helmut Kohl

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On a luncheon with Chancellor Helmut Kohl**

[Delivered on July 11, 1989]

GERMANY: A FRIEND AND AN ALLY

Germany is both a model and a friend of the Philippines. From Germany came Radio Veritas, the voice of the Philippine revolution and of freedom. From German businessmen came lessons in efficiency, integrity, and commitment. From Germany came the endorsement of a Multilateral Aid Program for the Philippines. Germany has become indispensable to Philippine recovery.

Herr Chancellor, we are encouraged by your perceptive and generous views. They confirm our conviction that in Germany we have found, not only the proper model of our efforts and national ambitions, but a true friend to help us attain them.

The future, we hope, will prove that the newly restored Philippine democracy has taken root not just in the will of one President but firmer yet in the heart of our race. Where other nations have found music or architecture as the most expressive symbols of their spirit, democracy alone is the most adequate expression of our own nation. The Filipino is free or nothing.

The Philippines has shared a parallel role in the East as the Federal Republic of Germany in the West. Since the end of the Second World War, Germany and the Philippines have been the edge of the Western alliance. The Philippines has indeed played a critical role for stability and security not only in Southeast Asia but throughout East Asia. The life-line from the Persian Gulf to the sea of Japan has, for 40 years, been anchored in the Philippines.

It is against that background also, and against the new developments in Europe coming from the East, that we shall be reviewing our role in Asia.

Herr Chancellor, our relationship with the German people has indeed been a long and fruitful one for us. We have imbibed from German nuns, a measure of the discipline that has made you great, and the common faith that gives us a spiritual home in Germany.

The German commitment to democracy, made strong by the experience of tyranny and war, has been a second bond of understanding and support. We should have been first in pointing out gratefully that it was Germany that gave the Philippine Revolution a voice that could carry its message to every corner of the country, and to virtually every home in Europe and America. Radio Veritas was not just the voice of truth, but the voice of freedom. And you gave it to us.

Yesterday we said that having taken Germany as the model of our development, it was our strong desire to forge more extensive trade and industrial relations with German business. There is no better way to learn from another

than to work together. The Philippine experience with German business has been an unqualified admiration for their efficiency and integrity, and for their long-term commitment to the host country's development.

We indeed hope that when Germany joins the rest of Western Europe in the progressive consolidation into an integrated economy, she will not turn her back to the opportunities that she herself has discovered in Asia and, most especially, in the Philippines.

German liberality expressed itself again at the World Bank consultative meeting in Tokyo last week, where it was obvious that Germany, among other European countries, had studied deeply the Philippine situation, and prepared to respond sufficiently to the country's special need. The German views were appreciated for their candor and deep insight. As one of the leading economies in Europe, and as a highly respected voice in its counsels, Germany's endorsement of a Multilateral Aid Program for the Philippines will indeed carry great weight

This aid program is very important to the Philippines for we wish to rise above our present role of regional stabilizer to our former position as the leading economy in the region. As such, we shall be better positioned and inclined to continue our leading role in ASEAN and to further encourage the new link that has been established between two regional organizations at both ends of the world.

The Philippines has indeed come a long way in a short time. Yet we cannot stop to catch our breath, for the distance yet to be covered is very long. Dictatorship was as ruinous to us as it was to your country. And we build from a greater ruin, for unlike Germany we were only starting the modernization of our economy. So we lost not only what we had only started to build, but much valuable time that we cannot recover. The technical assistance and the investments of Germany, we believe, will be indispensable to the double-time recovery we have set as our aim.

At the end of a truly stimulating visit to a great country, we stand and I ask you to join me in a toast.

To Chancellor Helmut Kohl, good health, a long life, and most importantly, continuing success in politics, and to German-Philippine friendship. Mabuhay! (Toast for German-Philippine friendship)

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Toast of President Corazon Aquino in Honor of Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita

**Toast
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
In Honor of Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita**

[Held at Malacañang, May 6, 1989]

SPECIAL FRIEND BRINGS HOPE

The President is grateful for the critical role of His Excellency, Noboru Takeshita in shaping a new order in Asia. As the Philippines rose from economic and democratic devastation brought by the last regime, the clearest and most encouraging, answer came from Japan in the form of concrete measures of economic relief under His Excellency's tenure. For this, the country is deeply grateful.

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome Your Excellency and Mrs. Noboru Takeshita once again. We in the Philippines consider you to be a good and true friend – sympathetic to us in our present situation and most helpful in the search for solutions to our problems.

As heads of our respective Governments, we have met on two different occasions in the past, first at the ASEAN Summit Meeting in December 1987 in Manila and then during the state funeral of His Majesty Emperor Showa last February in Tokyo. During those meetings I was impressed by your warm sincerity as a neighbor and a staunch ally.

Your present visit in the region provides another proof of the importance and high regard you attach to the countries of ASEAN as Japan's partners in the search for political stability and economic progress in this part of the world. During your tenure as Prime Minister you have always paid sympathetic attention to ASEAN concerns and problems. For this we are extremely grateful.

Because of our long history as neighbors, the relations between the Philippines and Japan have always been close. We have shared the same ideals of democracy, peace and freedom as members of the Free World. We subscribe to the same political and economic principles in our search for prosperity and the well-being of our respective peoples. We bear true faith and allegiance to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Since I assumed office, the Japanese Government has shown strong support for my Administration in the urgent task of restoring democratic institutions, rehabilitating our economy and promoting economic growth. The generous assistance that Japan has extended during the past three years has been invaluable in enabling us to achieve the progress that we have so far made. During Your Excellency's tenure, the level and scope of Japanese assistance have steadily increased.

Your Excellency will be best remembered by the Filipino people for your enthusiastic response from the very start of the Multilateral Aid Initiative proposed in early 1988 to promote economic growth and strengthen democracy in the Philippines. We are highly appreciative of your unwavering support for the Philippines expressed on many occasions – during the G-7 Summit Meeting in Toronto in mid-1988, at your last conference with President Reagan in Washington in January of this year, at your first meeting with President Bush last February, and at our meeting in Tokyo.

To highlight your support, Japan has kindly offered to host an enlarged Consultative Group meeting on MAI and the Philippine Assistance Program in Tokyo. During your meetings with President Reagan and more recently with President Bush, the necessity of launching PAP this year was stressed. The meeting in Tokyo will serve as the forum for this project which is of paramount importance to the Filipino people.

I will not deal with the details of PAP tonight. Suffice it for me to say that it offers a unique opportunity for the Philippines to unshackle itself from the bonds of poverty and join the long march towards progress and development. PAP will trigger a social and economic process that should enable us to share in the rich promise of a coming Age of the Pacific, as we stand on the threshold of the 21st century. And it is, therefore, the fondest hope of our people that this Program be launched at the soonest possible time.

We are thus deeply pleased and honored to welcome Your Excellency, Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita. For you have led in the shaping of a new order in Asia and of a new role for Japan in the world.

And closer to home, you have with singular attention focused on the cause of Philippine recovery and progress in the great councils of economic powers. As we looked for a sympathetic response to the necessity for economic relief to assure the survival of Philippine democracy, we found the clearest and most encouraging answer from Japan.

Through personal efforts and supportive policies, Your Excellency has applied Japan's enormous influence to initiate the significant and concrete measures of economic relief for the Philippines. Your action showed a rare perception of the linkage between the material well-being of peoples and the harmony of nations, the prospect of enduring peace and continued progress throughout the world.

May I now express our deepest appreciation to Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita, whom history will mark as the first of the leaders of the new Japan, and whom we shall gratefully remember for all time as a special friend of our country.

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I ask you to join me in a toast to the continued good health, long life and happiness of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan. Mabuhay!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the First Asian Conference on Street Children

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the First Asian Conference on Street Children**

[Delivered at the Heroes Hall, Malacañang, May 8, 1989]

NEW HOPE FOR STREET CHILDREN

The President thanks the organizers of this conference for holding this first conference in the Philippines and for raising public awareness on the plight of children who work and live on the streets. She announces the creation of the Fund for Street Children to be used solely for the welfare of the street children.

I am glad to be with you today for this first Regional Conference on Street Children in Asia. Both as President, and as a mother, I share your view that there is an urgent need to help the most underprivileged of children in the world – the street children.

I would like to thank the organizers of this conference – UNICEF, CHILDHOPE, the National Council of Social Development Foundation of the Philippines, Inc., and all other organizations of participating Asian countries, for the decision to hold this first conference in the Philippines. This must be in recognition of our country's having pioneered in a nation-wide program in 16 cities to respond to the needs of street children.

As I welcome all foreign participants of this conference to the Philippines, so do I give the assurance that we stand ready to share with them the country's experience and frustrations in implementing the various programs to help the street children of the Philippines.

I laud CHILDHOPE and its collaborating agencies for raising public awareness internationally on the plight of children who work and live on the streets. Also, for providing an international network of technical and material linkages for projects on street children.

It cannot be denied that the world's future is in our children. Indeed, "The Child is Father to the Man." So, what kind of world will the future hold if the child of today who will become the man of tomorrow, is an abused, uncared for child?

No single age group requires more of our attention than the children's group. And there is no single children's group that now deserves our collective concern more than these children under 15 years of age who are threatened by exploitation, abuse, neglect and abandonment – the street children.

The term "street children" may be newly-coined, but the problem itself is as old as poverty, and as menacing as death itself. The street children of today are the same children that Dickens and Dostoyevsky wrote about centuries ago. Our street children are the Oliver Twists of the Twentieth Century.

They are an offshoot of burgeoning cities that breed growing slums, the ultimate product of an upsurge of rural-to-urban migration that has sent millions of families to the metropolis in search of hope and a share of the city's prosperity. Nowhere is this phenomenon more bitterly felt than in Third World countries which many of us in this hall represent.

A recent study on Philippine street children shows this profile. More than 85% of them have parents of low education levels who are jobless, or self-employed as laborers, street vendors and scavengers. They usually come from large families. Many are from broken homes, where either or both parents live with other men or women. This heart-

breaking portrait shows a breakdown in the moral fiber of their origins – their homes – such that they finally choose to separate from the harsh realities in their dwellings only to find harsher realities in the streets.

Most abandoned children earn a living vending cigarettes, flowers or candies, while many survive by scavenging, begging, and indulging in criminal activities as prostitution or pickpocketing. In their early age, they learn that survival is the ultimate name of the game. Thus, they grow up battered physically and psychologically, hardened by their constant brushes with rejection and exploitation. Theirs is the grim picture of a future of unceasing ignorance, poverty and hopelessness.

Having recognized this growing problem in the Philippines many years ago, our Department of Social Welfare and Development started a pilot project in 1983 to identify and assist street children in major cities throughout the country. Since then, the concern for street children has been shared by other Departments of our government such as the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, the Department of Justice, the military, particularly our National Police and the Philippine Constabulary and our Department of Tourism. From several non-government agencies such as civic and the religious groups, sprang the National Council of Social Development Foundation of the Philippines, and umbrella organization of government agencies and NGOs and a member of CHILDHOPE.

Our government's commitment to the goals of child survival and development is but in response to our state policy enunciated in the Constitution that "The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well-being." Implementing this mandate are our Family Code, the Child and Youth Welfare Code and several other statutes and administrative rules and regulations.

In keeping with the government's commitment to improve the lot of our street children, I would like to announce the creation of the Fund for Street Children under the President's Social Fund. We are allocating P20 million for this fund, to be managed by the Presidential Management Staff. The fund shall be used solely for the purpose of expanding the capabilities of existing programs of member organizations of the Council for the Welfare of Children, the National Council of Social Development and other independent NGOs.

Street children are a perennial presence in growing cities. Experts say that if the trend of rural-to-urban migration continues, by the year 2000, more children will be growing up in urban areas than in rural villages.

Now we are the first to recognize that the program we have launched for our street children is mainly for rehabilitation; for cure rather than prevention. But if we must totally eradicate this blight in our national lives, we must address our efforts to the roots of the problem – the structures of poverty dependency and underdevelopment. This is particularly true for us in Asia. Unless we can stamp out these causes, we shall only live along the fringes of development, continuously suffering from the vicious cycle of poverty that breeds ignorance and injustice.

I know you share my vision for a better tomorrow for this country and for the world. That is why you are here today. So let us all join hands in moving the rest of the world into acknowledging the problems of the street children, and finally doing something about it – all in the spirit of the Lord and Master when He enjoined one and all to "Suffer the little children and forbid them not to come unto me for of such is the Kingdom of God."

I wish you all a fruitful conference and a good day.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Welcome Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Keidanren Mission

Welcome Message of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines To the Keidanren Mission

[Released on May 18, 1989]

A MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS PARTNERSHIP

The President welcomes the Keidanren Mission whom she expects to see enough of the country to form a sound judgment in committing Japanese industry to participate in the new development and progress of the Philippines. She enjoins the technological and financial power of Japan in developing riches of our country and bringing a measure of prosperity to the Filipino people.

May I extend to the Keidanren Mission a warm welcome and may I express our deep appreciation for the effort they have made to see our country for themselves. The schedule of the Mission is rather tight, yet I hope they will see enough to form a sound judgment committing Japanese industry to a larger participation in the development and progress of the Philippines.

The Keidanren Mission comes to us with impressive credentials going by its distinguished membership alone. Yet it comes as well with the highest endorsement of the Government of Japan.

We reviewed with your Prime Minister the status of our countries' economic partnership, and the tremendous potential for mutual advantage that yet remains to be tapped. We hope at this meeting to impress upon this Mission the same sense of promise with which your Prime Minister came away from our meeting.

We have made tremendous progress in this country. I will say with the same confidence that we have made tremendous progress in absolute terms. We have achieved this progress hand-in-hand with the restoration of democratic institutions and guarantees, and without derogating in the smallest particular from our international obligations. Indeed, we have bought our recovery and progress only with our own determination, dedication, and industry, and with the assistance extended to us by such friends as Japan.

We hope that this assistance will be increased, for there is a great deal more to do before our economy is fully recovered and set on a steady course of progress. But we hope even more that this assistance will take the form of mutually advantageous investments made by Japanese business in the future of the Philippines. For our faith in private enterprise is boundless. And in none more so than in Japanese private enterprise which has raised Japan to unparalleled economic power.

We should like you to join us in focusing some of the technological and financial power of Japan on developing the riches of our country and bringing a measure of your prosperity to the Filipino people. We extend this invitation towards a greater partnership in terms that will be mutually advantageous.

Many of your colleagues have preceded you. Japanese industry and trade have long been significant factors in Philippine economic growth. Our country is not new and unknown to our Japanese friends. The only thing new is a government committed to make the greater partnership we offer work better than it has in the past.

As Japan rises to still greater heights of technology and economic progress, it behooves her to spread the foundation of her progress to the rest of Asia – particularly to nations critical to the security of key sources of energy and raw materials such as the Philippines. More importantly, the spread of material prosperity to new countries like the

Philippines – the opening of new markets, the spread and enhancement of purchasing power to newly developed nations – can only redound to the even greater prosperity of Japan.

This part of the world is coming closer in a tighter weave, and our fortunes are more and more tied to each other. I ask you to accept the offer of greater partnership that we hereby extend for the development of the Philippines, to the mutual advantage of our two peoples. Welcome and may your Mission be a great success.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 72nd anniversary of the Department of Agriculture

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 72nd anniversary of the Department of Agriculture**

[Delivered on May 26, 1989]

BACKBONE OF THE NATION

On the 72nd Anniversary of the Department of Agriculture, the President honors and congratulates our farmers and fishermen who form the backbone of our nation. Her dream is to see the farmer and the fisherman standing proud and secure in the thought that the government as their partner is continually creating an environment conducive to agricultural growth.

First, I would like to greet all the Filipino farmers and fishermen today. Mabuhay kayong lahat, mga kababayan kong magsasaka at mangingisda!

As we celebrate the Department of Agriculture's 72nd Anniversary, we honor once again our farmers and fishermen who form the backbone of our nation. This is the least that a grateful people can do for the agriculture sector, which comprises 70% of the population and employs half of our labor force. For our farmers and fishermen not only feed the nation, they contribute approximately one-third of our Gross National Product and nearly one-third of our export earnings. Who is to dispute that indeed, they are the salt of the earth?

I am also happy to welcome our Asean neighbors who have come to celebrate with us the first ever Asean Farmers Week. Their presence adds significance to this year's celebration. They likewise prove again that the commitment towards Asean cooperation forged here during the 3rd Asean Summit remains just as strong.

We in this region have been blest with long coastlines and peninsulas crisscrossed by bodies of water. It follows, therefore, that fishing, long before other industries were developed, was the mainstay of the very early inhabitants of our countries, our forefathers.

Having been so lavishly endowed by Nature, it is but our duty to cherish our waters and its marine life. Unfortunately, modern technology has brought about despoliation of our natural resources. Industrial toxic wastes pollute the waters, thus poisoning all forms of life that abound therein.

If only to preserve mankind, all of us are called upon to make common cause with fishermen and farmers to arrest the wanton destruction of what is both our staple food and principal means of livelihood.

Today, as we celebrate, we give due recognition to this year's outstanding agricultural workers and organizations for what they were able to achieve, thus providing models that the rest can well emulate. I, therefore, congratulate all our awardees for surpassing themselves. While I urge you winners and all past awardees to make striving for excellence a habit, I also ask you to share your techniques with your neighbors, in true Asean spirit.

This year's theme – "*Higit sa Isang Butil ang Hangad at Handog ng Magsasaka*" – is an apt choice. For despite the tremendous contribution of the farmer and the fisherman to the nation's economy, they have received so little in return. As an agricultural nation like most of Asean, the Philippines is expected to give its farmers and fishermen a better deal than what they have now. Benefits for them have been long overdue.

This government has, therefore, taken steps to improve the conditions of those who toil in the farms that there may be adequate food on their tables. We are pump-priming rural economy through support programs to enable our

farmers to lessen production cost and correspondingly increase their profits. These programs are what we can now share with our Asean friends.

In November 1987, the Department of Agriculture launched the Rice Productivity and Enhancement Program (RPEP) that provided farmers with subsidized fertilizer through a “buy-two, take-two” scheme. The program covered 624,000 hectares in 70 provinces, and by April 1988 had distributed fertilizers to more than 400,000 farmer – beneficiaries, increasing harvest by 8.78% cavans per hectare.

Encouraged by last year’s success, we will soon implement an expanded version of RPEP, involving not only fertilizer subsidies, but also funds for other production and marketing needs.

And then, we take pride in being the first country to adopt Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as a national crop protection policy. That was in 1986. Since then, IPM has significantly increased farmers’ profits, reduced health hazards and decreased pest outbreaks.

To encourage lending to our credit-starved farmers, we have launched the Livelihood Enhancement for Agricultural Development (LEAD) program last year.

Under LEAD’s bank-assisted program, loans provided by banks to farmers’ groups are backed by government guarantee mechanisms which assume up to 85 percent of the risks involved.

Our programs have delivered results even in the short haul. Our agricultural exports earned a total of US\$1.7 billion in 1988, indicating a growth of 13% over the previous years’ exports. Worthy of particular mention is the phenomenal growth of the local prawn industry from an inconsequential rank to the 3rd ranking export as of last year, bringing in around US\$250 million. On the local front, average farmgate prices of principal agricultural commodities have risen steadily since 1986, gaining for our farmers additional gross revenues of P8.86 billion. Hence, I also congratulate the officials and all employees of the Department of Agriculture for giving importance to what our farmers and fishermen have been doing to help increase productivity.

This government, as you can see, is committed to give the millions of farmers and fishermen in the countryside their just share in the process and benefits of development. I am confident that with closer coordination between government agencies and the people’s full cooperation and support, agricultural development will proceed despite difficulties.

We, members of Asean, all aspire to be among the newly industrialized countries in the 20th century. Three years ago, I made a commitment to place agriculture and the farmer at the center of the nation’s recovery program. There is no contradiction in these two statements. For, as the Philippines slowly veers towards industrialization, it continues to anchor itself on agricultural production.

For such is my vision of the farmer and the fisherman – standing proud and secure in the thought that the government as their partner is continually creating an environment conducive to agricultural growth. This is how we can give to the millions of farmers and fishermen in the countryside their just share in the benefits of development.

Here is where I find parallels between the Philippines and the other Asean countries. Being similarly-situated and having almost similar economic levels, with few exceptions, our countries have similar agricultural-related problems. It is to our common benefit that we share our experiences and adaptive technologies with each other.

For Asean is friendship. Asean is sharing. And as we share our strengths as well as our woes, we can develop together in a manner that none of us could achieve singly.

Finally, I congratulate again all the awardees for agriculture. And to the Department of Agriculture as well as the organizers of the Agri-Aqua Fair, my felicitations for work well done.

Magandang araw sa inyong lahat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the Integrated Bar of the Philippines

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the Integrated Bar of the Philippines**

[Delivered at the PICC Meeting Room, June 3, 1989]

**VIGILANCE
AND CORRUPTION**

AGAINST

GRAFT

The President calls on private organizations such as the IBP to help in assuring the most efficient use of the country's resources and to call our attention not only to outright graft but also to bureaucratic mismanagement and delay. She looks to the lawyers as the strongest arm in the fight for honesty and adds that their first obligation is to do justice to their country and to give their client the best defense under the law, not outside the law.

I welcome this opportunity to address the members of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines and its distinguished guests. The three branches of government are well represented here by some of their top officials. We have as well the heads of the IBP's 78 chapters throughout the country. The country's legal lights shine nowhere more brightly than here.

But for a call of the heart that I could not deny, I would include myself among you. I was a pretty good law student when I got married. As it is, I stand with Magsaysay outside the tradition of lawyer-presidents. Only history will tell whether the country was better for having lawyers for presidents.

The legal minds of our country are here gathered in answer to the call that has been sounded by a nation conscious of the weakness it inherited from the past, and eager to go forward:

The bickering must stop, the waste must end, and the graft that yet remains must be uncovered and punished. Our limited time and resources must be more strictly conserved for the task that yet remains: The long-delayed fulfillment of our people's age-old dream of freedom, justice, and progress.

Even as you enter into yet another political exercise, this time for your own sector, we are heartened by the simultaneous assertion that this will not be just another political exercise, but an occasion for high moral commitment: The commitment to take a stronger hold on the elusive goal of honesty, in the public service and throughout our society.

That corruption exists in the public and private sectors is admitted by the decision of the Integrated Bar to establish anti-graft bodies in each of its chapters.

Corruption must be stopped not only where it ultimately cashes in — at the disbursement offices of the government — but before it gets started: in board rooms, in law offices, and in the backrooms of government departments and agencies.

The Judiciary has made several initiatives to speed up the administration of justice on the theory that justice delayed is not only justice denied but a clear invitation to corruption.

The Judiciary is trying to re-instill in lawyers on the bench and across the bar a compelling sense of the high mission with which they have been trusted: the delivery of the highest service of the State — justice to one and all. There is a note of urgency in this effort, for at no time is society more in danger than when people finally despair of getting justice.

The new order in our country came to power on the crest of moral outrage over some of the worst examples of official corruption and private greed in the history of mankind. No small part of that corruption was prepared by lawyers and validated by judges from the legalization of dictatorship to the systematic plunder of the national patrimony. As one constitutional expert observed, while dictatorship was set up by one man, it was legally constituted by a majority of the Supreme Court in 1973 over the vigorous and admirable dissent of a valiant few.

Worse than usurpation and graft, is the legalization of crimes by the artifices of a corrupt justice system. It is lawyers in the end who make this possible. The fruits of official crime cannot be enjoyed until they are “legalized” and I put that in quotation marks — with the help, among others, of lawyers.

The commitment herein made by the Integrated Bar evinces a determination of the Philippine legal profession to prevent yet another travesty of its noble mission, and to lend its considerable expertise to the prevention, detection, and the punishment of graft and corruption.

In that mission, the help of the common citizenry is indispensable. Temptation is everywhere, and weakness is in us all. It behooves us to exercise a wide and unrelenting vigilance. We need every pair of eyes, here and abroad, to alert us against the resurrection of the past. That is how the corruption of the previous regime was uncovered. It is the prying eyes of Filipinos at home and abroad that will expose the houses of corrupt officials in California, New York, and New Jersey.

We are encouraged by the linkage that the IBP has established with various private sector initiatives for transparency in all transactions, in government and in business.

We have to lick this problem, on which the credibility of our national effort of recovery and progress depends.

In this regard, I repeat my warning: Nobody is above the law.

In fairness, we should not condemn officials before the evidence is in; yet for the common safety, we cannot delay the investigation and punishment of official crimes.

Even in the face of public criticism, we shall always be fair to officials who are recklessly accused of crimes, yet we shall never relent in our resolve to maintain the highest integrity and competence of government.

I call on the private sector, on organizations such as the IBP, to help us in assuring the most efficient use of our resources. We ask you to call our attention not only to outright graft but also to bureaucratic mismanagement and delay.

But laudable as these initiatives are of people-powered vigilance against graft and corruption, the real battle must be fought within each of us. No one in government will receive bribes, if no one in the private sector will give them.

I look to you, the men and women of the law, to be among the first to win this battle in your hearts. Over and above being counsel and defender of your clients, you are officers of the court, charged equally with judge and prosecutor to pursue justice for all. Your duty is to give your clients the best defense under the law, not outside the law. As lawyers, your first obligation is to do justice to your country.

Our country looks to you therefore as its strongest arm in the fight for honesty. We are confident that you will come through for us, for the Filipino people.

On that note of confidence, I wish you a successful convention. Good day and thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 88th anniversary of the Supreme Court

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 88th anniversary of the Supreme Court**

[Delivered on June 9, 1989]

IMPROVING THE JUDICIAL PROCESS

As men and women of the highest integrity, intelligence and wisdom and with a new Code of Judicial Conduct, the President believes that proper deportment of judges in the disposition of justice may reflect more honor on the Bench and generate a greater respect for the law throughout our society.

According to a constitutional law expert, the President – equally with the Court – may interpret the Constitution in her own lights as part of her duty to uphold and defend it. The Court owes her interpretation the deference due to a co-equal and preeminent political body. Naturally I am extremely pleased with this reasoning, but I am not kidding myself. The last word in the Constitution and the laws is still the Court's.

The theory is that all three branches are equal. The reality is that one is more equal than the others when it comes to the Constitution. Therefore, from an equal to one who is more, may I as President extend to the Supreme Court my best wishes and our country's congratulations on its 88th anniversary.

It is not meet for me to lecture the Court and the vast judicial system on duties it knows far better than I. Yet it behooves me at this juncture to express to you the growing concern of our people over the deterioration of the image, not to say the substance, of Philippine justice.

The greatest peril we face is not in the economy nor from any external threat, but in the disenchantment of a people with their own society when that society denies them justice.

We are troubled to hear it said in this country justice cannot be had, unless it is bought. That, as usual, is an exaggeration. Yet it proves the case that the just and honorable work done by the vast majority of our judges is easily undone by the handful of exceptions to the general integrity and competence of the courts. Yet this false but spreading view of a corrupt justice system, may spell the end of the democratic faith that was born with our freedom three years ago.

I would not raise this problem publicly for it reflects sadly on us all. Yet, standing before men and women of the highest integrity, intelligence, and wisdom in our country, I must raise it. For I believe that you, if anyone, can do the most about it.

The value of assets immobilized in litigation is already beyond estimation. The insecurity of property rights because of judicial delay has had a far more chilling effect on further investments in our economy than the insurgency. We are distressed to hear people say that if they cannot get justice from the government, they will take it into their own hands.

The spread of common crimes undermines our sense of security at home and in the streets. The failure to punish corporate crimes undermines our faith in economic opportunities and in the general fairness of our society and government.

The structural weakness of our economy, the legacy of debt, the corrupt values that linger from the past regime, all these continue to take a terrible toll on our country. Yet the heaviest toll is exacted by one simple act repeated again and again throughout our society: a man is denied justice, not in the streets, but in the courts.

We—the Court and the Executive—share the primary responsibility of doing justice to the people. Equally, I might add. The new Constitution gives the Judiciary the fiscal and administrative independence to pursue its mandate free from any influence, other than that which the judges invite. The Court has used this independence and discretion most widely towards the solution of the problems of our justice system.

The problem of delay has been seriously tackled by the Court. The judges have been put on notice to dispose of cases within defined periods. The judges, I understand, would like to serve the same notice on the Supreme Court.

A new Code of Judicial Conduct has set forth in unmistakable terms the proper deportment of judges in the dispensation of justice, so that their work may reflect more honor on the Bench and generate a greater respect for the law throughout our society.

We hope that the Executive has done its part to help. We have tried to speed up budgetary allocations for court house construction and for the relocation of the high Court to premises commensurate with its high dignity and vastly expanded responsibilities. The help comes late, but better than never. For too long, the temples of Philippine justice—our courthouses—have reflected the shameful neglect that justice has suffered in our country. We hope that the new allocations and constructions will reflect the first priority we have put on justice.

Infrastructure is basic. We must show towards the work of justice the respect it deserves. Yet a more difficult job remains: improving the judicial process and the men who run it so that justice may come through more easily.

This is largely the work and responsibility of the Honorable Court. The best that I can offer would be, not suggestions, but rather this commitment: I stand foursquare behind your efforts and will do all I can as Chief Executive to make them succeed. Give the word and it shall be done, if it lies in my power. The fate of the nation hangs on your success. That is the sum of what I have tried to say in these remarks.

Congratulations and thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino upon signing of Wage Bill Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Upon signing of Wage Bill**

[Delivered on June 9, 1989]

NEW LAW FOR WORKERS

With the signing of the Wage Rationalization Act, the President believes that the wage increase under this law will be sufficient to cushion the impact of price increases. She adds that management and Government should work together to maintain industrial peace essential for the improvement of productivity and investor confidence.

We have just signed into law Republic Act No. 6727 known as the Wage Rationalization Act. In signing this, the following points must be stressed:

First, we believe that even with the expected increase in power rates and prices of petroleum products and other selected goods and services, the P25 – P20 – P15 wage increases provided for under this law will be sufficient to cushion the impact of said price increases.

Second, labor, management and Government should now work together to soften the inflationary impact of the wage increase on our people, particularly on the unemployed. Productivity at the enterprise level should now be improved in order that the added labor cost brought about by this wage increase need not be passed on to the consumers. I have instructed the Department of Labor and Employment to give priority to the establishment of productivity improvement schemes, to be undertaken with the active participation of employers and organized labor. At the same time, I consider it essential to the improvement of productivity and investor confidence that industrial peace at the workplace be maintained.

Third, labor and management should strive to improve and strengthen further the collective bargaining process so that in the future, wage-fixing and the determination of other terms and conditions of employment shall be in their hands.

And finally, with the creation of the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards, the authority to fix wages is now devolved to such bodies, and henceforth, there shall be no need for Congress to intervene in wage fixing. We concur with the policy stated in this law that such Boards are in the best position to determine the appropriate wage rates, taking into account regional socio-economic differences and industry peculiarities.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino upon signing of Private Education Assistance Bill Speech
of**

Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino

President of the Philippines

Upon signing of Private Education Assistance Bill

[Delivered on June 10, 1989]

A WORTHWHILE INVESTMENT

Education has always been the top priority of this government. This is the reason why the government is providing substantial assistance to private education. The President is positive that the Department of Education, Culture and Sports will work towards the smooth and speedy implementation of this law.

It is with a very special sense of pride and satisfaction that we sign into law this bill providing government assistance to students and teachers in private education, since we are aware that this represents in many different ways, truly landmark legislation.

It is in the first place a bold step forward into government providing substantial assistance to private education. This bill makes real in a very decisive manner the constitutional mandate for the integration of the public and private school systems, and recognizes what we have all known and taken for granted: that private schools serve as partners of government in delivering to our citizenry the public service of education.

This bill also represents perhaps the widest coverage of direct individual assistance to our citizens. When school opens this Tuesday, more than 1.7 million out of our country's 2.5 million private high school and college students will get some form of individual assistance from government, in tuition supplements, textbooks subsidies, scholarships, and allowances. The impact of such concrete help to millions of families in an area as important to them as education will be felt throughout the whole country for a long time to come.

Finally, we are proud of this landmark piece of legislation, not just because of the product, but also because of the process. We know that the final shape of this bill was forged at the anvil of public scrutiny, with constant inputs in public hearings, media, and other venues from students, parents, faculty, administrators, and other concerned publics. We know it was forged in an atmosphere of sustained collaborative consultation, not just between both houses of Congress, not just among the different executive departments, but also between the legislative and executive branches as well, with technical groups working collaboratively and jointly to see that deliberations in different fora were proceeding within a common framework and objectives.

As we sign this bill into law today, we are aware that while it represents a meaningful first step to assist private education, much remains to be done. It is therefore not a panacea that will solve all problems, and not all will be happy. Schools will want larger increases, teachers will want greater protection, students will want wider coverage of tuition subsidies. But this represents the best and most realistic response to the present situation, and it now remains for the Department of Education to work towards the smooth and speedy implementation of this law, and for the beneficiaries to cooperate with this implementation positively and wholeheartedly.

Education has always been the top priority of this government. In the first budget approved by this administration, education was immediately restored to its primacy as the sector with the largest budget. The following year, legislation was enacted making public high school education free of tuition for its two million students, for the first time in Philippine history. This year, we are now assisting 1.7 million private high school students with close to one billion pesos. Unlike most other forms of government expenditures, the commitment of resources to the education sector does not produce instant results. But we are confident that when this commitment eventually bears fruit in the better educated generations to come, it will be vindicated as ultimately the wisest use of our resources.

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Vin D'Honneur Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Philippine Independence Day

Vin D'Honneur Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On Philippine Independence Day

[Delivered on June 12, 1989]

We celebrate the 91st anniversary of Philippine Independence in a different light than last year's. Then it seemed that peace was breaking out all over. That the divisions among the great powers had healed along the lines of a shared concern for the common survival in the nuclear age. And that warring states had seen the folly of wasting more in lives and treasure than they would ever acquire in victory.

The compassionate road to freedom first mapped out in this country three years ago seemed capable of limitless extension. The gentle flame of our example ignited similar freedom movements in other countries, where freedom made major strides. And if freedom has yet to reach its final goal in all the countries concerned, one could still say that the process was irreversible.

Irreversible because, freedom once tasted, cannot be forgotten. And because, at a certain point, a contagion of courage can never be contained.

It seemed last year that the world was becoming a common country, as governments reached avidly for peace and peoples marched resolutely towards freedom. In such a world, the measure of nationalist distrust that is indispensable to a nation's safety must yield to an unguarded optimism about the possibilities of international cooperation and sharing.

Recent events prove that the declared aspirations of statesmen, the declared policies of great powers, even the noble dreams of men of good will must yield before realities. The reality of powers, institutions, and forces long established by history. And of the inability of men to see except through the prism of their fears.

Recent events teach us that we must fall back upon true nationalism as the first strategy for the national safety and for international order. That we must indeed, as I said last year, burn with a forward ambition to be strong at home before we trust our national security and economic progress to forces abroad.

So last year I said, let us make a start in true nationalism. Let government and people join in winning a more meaningful independence – of states from external influence; of people from fear, poverty and injustice.

In so doing, we are not turning our backs on the goals of international security, stability, cooperation, and friendship but rather contributing more meaningfully to those goals.

There are only two superpowers and their desistance from destroying each other and the rest of the world along with themselves is sufficient to establish the peace. But for the multitude of small powers, our best contribution to international peace and security is the political stability of our societies and the material progress and well-being of our peoples.

The enduring pact of international concord and peace will not be written on paper by the leaders of great powers but in the hearts of men satisfied with the country that they, and no one else, has built in freedom and dignity.

By looking each to his own country's safety and to his own people's progress, we can all look forward with more assurance to a world of enduring peace.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast:

To the progress of each of our countries so that together we can achieve peace in the world.

To my countrymen, I would like to propose a special toast. Let us toast those whose defiance in the face of certain defeat, and whose courage in the face of death must remind us of the degree of commitment necessary to achieve the goal we have set: a strong and truly independent Philippines. We had a measure of it once when we struggled to be free. We must have it yet again to be strong as a nation. Mabuhay!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Independence Day [Filipino] Talumpati
ng
Kagalang-galang Corazon C. Aquino
Pangulo ng Pilipinas
Sa Araw ng Kalayaan**

[Ipinahayag noong ika 12 ng Hunyo, 1989]

KARANGALAN AT KAPURIHAN

Sa pagdiriwang natin ng ika-91 anibersaryo ng ating kalayaan ay muling sinariwa ng Pangulo ang ating nakaraang pakikibaka sa EDSA upang muling maibalik ang ating demokrasya na matagal ding nawala dahil sa isang diktador. Ang pakiusap niya sa lahat ng Pilipinong nagmamahal sa kalayaan ay huwag sayangin ang ating ginugol upang maibalik ang demokrasya. Mag-sikap tayo at magkaisa patungo sa kaunlaran at kasaganaan.

Ngayong araw na ito ay ipinagdiriwang natin ang siyam-napu't-isang anibersaryo ng ating kalayaan. Siyamnapu't isang taon na ang nakalipas ngunit noong nakaraang tatlong taon lamang tayo napansin at pinagmasdang mabuti ng buong mundo. Sa pamamagitan ng telebisyon, nalaman ng lahat, na dito sa dako ng mundo, ay may isang lahi na marunong ipaglaban ang kalayaan sa pamamaraang mapayapa. Ang nagawa natin noong Pebrero 1986 ay hinangaan ng buong mundo at ibig tularan ng ibang mga bansa. Nakita ng mga dayuhan sa kanilang mga telebisyon ang "People Power" sa EDSA. Nakita nila ang mapayapang pag-aalsa ng mamamayang Pilipino. Nakita nila ang mga madre at pare na nagdarasal ng rosario. Nakita nila ang katakut-takot na tao, mga matanda at bata, mga babae at lalake, na sama-samang ipinaglalaban ang demokrasya. At pagkatapos ng apat na araw, nagulat sila nang makita nila ang pagtatagumpay ng "People Power". Napaalis ang diktador at ang inyong abang lingkod, na dinaya sa halalan ay naging pangulo sa pamamagitan ng "People Power".

Dahil sa nakita nila sa telebisyon, inakala ng mga dayuhan na napakadali ng ating rebolusyon. Akala ng iba ay naganap ang pagpapaalis ng diktador at pagbabalik ng demokrasya sa loob lang ng apat na araw. Ngunit kayo, mga minamahal kong mga kababayan at ako, alam natin ang tunay na kasaysayan ng pagbabalik ng ating kalayaan. Pahintulutan po ninyo na sariwain ko sa inyong isipan ang totoong pangyayari.

Noong nagdeklara si Marcos ng "Martial law" noong Setyembre 23, 1972, iniutos niya ang pag-aaresto at pagkukulong ng daan-daang tao. Ang unang mga nakulong ay ang aking asawa, si Ninoy Aquino, kasama sila Pepe Diokno, Chino Roces, Monching Mitra, Soc Rodrigo, Max Soliven, Jose Mari Velez, Nap Rama, Teodoro Locsin Sr., Joe Concepcion, Bren Guiao, Amando Doronila at marami pang iba.

At hindi lamang nawalan ng kalayaan ang marami nating kababayan- nawala rin ang tinatawag nating "freedom of the press". Ang pahayagan, ang radio at ang TV ay inilagay sa kamay ng diktador. Ang ating tinatanggap na balita noon ay censored ng diktador. Ang katotohanan ay ipinaglihim sa atin. Iyon lamang gusto ng diktador ang lumalabas sa pahayagan at nakikita sa telebisyon at naririnig sa radyo. Parami nang parami ang ikinulong noong panahon ng "Martial law". Talagang sinindak ng diktador ang mga tao. At dahil sa takot marami ang nagsawalang kibo na lang.

Salamat na lamang at may mga magigiting pa ring mga Pilipino. Sila ang unti-unting gumawa ng paraan upang gisingin ang kapwa nila. Nagising muli ang mamamayang Pilipino noong 1978 noong halalan para sa Interim Batasang Pambansa. Iyon din ang pagsilang ng Partidong LAB AN. Dalawampu't-isang kandidato ng LABAN ang humarap sa mga kandidato ng KBL dito sa Metro Manila.

Noong April 6, 1978 ginanap ang "Noise Barrage". Marahil natatandaan pa ninyo na parang bagong taon ang nangyari noong April 6. Halos lahat dito sa Metro Manila ay nag-ingay upang ipahiwatig nila sa bayan na panig sila kay Ninoy at sa mga kandidato ng LABAN. Ito ang unang pag-kakataon na nalaman ng mamamayang Pilipino na marami palang ayaw na kay Marcos at maraming ibig bumoto para sa mga kandidato ng LABAN.

Nagulat si Marcos at upang sugpuin itong nagising na pagpupunyagi ng mamamayang Pilipino, dinaya niya ang halalan at natalo ang lahat ng kandidato ng LABAN. Hindi pa nasiyahan si Marcos sa pagdaraya. Pinaaresto niya ang mga kandidato at opisyal ng LABAN at ikinulong. Kasama rito si Senador Lorenzo Tanada, Soc Rodrigo, Nene Pimentel, Tito Guingona at marami pang iba. Nung ikinulong itong mga lider na ito, medyo bumaba ang “morale” ng mga na sa oposisyon. Ngunit tuloy pa rin ang pagmimiting nila at pagpaplano kung papaanong maaakit ang kanilang mga nakararaming mga kababayan upang tumulong sa paglaban sa diktador.

Ilang taon pa ang dumaan. Noong ika-dalawampu’t isa ng Agosto 1983, bumalik si Ninoy sa Pilipinas mula sa Amerika. Bumalik siya upang makiusap kay Marcos na isauli ang demokrasya. Binaril siya sa paliparan. At ang pag-aalay ni Ninoy ng kaniyang buhay ang naging Simula ng pagbabago ng maraming Pilipino. Nawala ang kanilang takot. Dalawang milyon ang nakiramay at nakipaglibing. Ipinakita nila na nakikiisa sila kay Ninoy. Ipinakita nila na nakikiisa sila sa mamamayang Pilipino na ayaw ang diktador. Nag-umpisa na ang “rally” at mga demonstrasyon pagkatapos ng libing. Nagkaroon tayo ng halalan ng Batasan noong 1984. Lumaban ang oposisyon at sa tulong ng mga mamamayang Pilipino, halos tatlungpung porsyento ang nanalo sa mga kandidato ng oposisyon.

Sumunod ang “snap elections”. Maraming hirap at sakripisyo ang dinanas nating mga kababayan noong “snap elections”. Maraming nag-volunteer upang tumulong sa kampanya. Marami rin ang nagsanay kung papaano nilang maipagtatanggol ang mga “ballot boxes”. Marami rin ang sumali sa mga “rally” at nagpakita ng kanilang pakiki-isa sa mga lumalaban para sa demokrasya. Nakita natin kung anong pagdaraya ang ginawa ni Marcos at ang kanyang mga tauhan noong “snap elections”. Nakita rin natin ang katapangan ng ating mga kababayan na nagbantay sa mga ballot boxes. Hindi iilan sa mga tumulong sa ating kampanya ang nabaril at napatay. Isa na riyan si Evelio Javier ang dating gobernador ng Antique.

Noong iprinoklama ng batasan si Marcos raw ang nanalo sa halalan, hindi tayo pumayag. Dito mismo sa lugar na lito nagkaroon tayo ng “Tagumpay Ng Bayan Rally” na dinaluhan ng halos kalahating milyong tao. Sinimulan natin ang ating “boycott movement.” Sa halip na nawalan ng pag-asa, lalong lumakas ang paninindigan natin. Ipinagpatuloy natin ang paglaban upang ibalik ang ating demokrasya.

Kung kaya’t noong nangailangan ng “People Power” sa EDSA, maraming handa na manindigan, sapagkat marami nang mamamayang Pilipino ang matagal nang naghihintay at nagsu-sumikap upang ibalik ang ating demokrasya.

Katakut-takot na hirap, pawis, luha at dugo ang inialay natin upang ibalik ang ating kalayaan. Hindi iisang tao at hindi iilang Pilipino ang nagmalasakit upang malasap nating muli ang kalayaan. Huwag na huwag nating kakalimutan itong bagay na ito.

Kaya ngayon, ipinakiusap ko sa lahat ng Pilipinong nagmamahal sa kalayaan — huwag nating sayangin ang ating ginugol upang maibalik ang demokrasya. Huwag nating lusta-yin ang mga natamo nating biyaya.

Ang mga makasarili, masakim at mapagmataas ay mata-tagpuan sa lahat ng dako. Kailangan ko po kayo, ang mga mamamayan, upang labanan ang mga ito. Kayo po ang aking inaasahan at mapapagkatiwalaan. Sama-sama nating sugpuin ang kasinungalingan sa pamamagitan ng katotohanan, karahasan sa pamamagitan ng pwersang legal, ang mga taong walang kakayahan sa pamamagitan ng kanilang pagtitiwalag, ang mga katiwalian sa pamamagitan ng paggamit ng buong bisa at lakas ng batas.

Ang katuparan ng kalayaan ay nasa atin . . . sa ating pag-sisikap at sa ating pagkakaisa.

Sa susunod na taon, nais ko pong tumayo muli dito at ipahayag na natapos na natin ang ating sinimulang gawain sa kapakanan ng kalayaan. Nais kong ipatalos sa ating mga kababayan lalung-lalo na sa mga naghihikahos na tayo ay masiglang patungo na sa kaunlaran at kasaganaan. Ang kahihuyan ay nasa nakaraan. Tanging karangalan at kapurihan ang nalalabi – karangalan sa ating nagawa, karangalan sa ating sariling kakayahan, karangalan sa ating katapatan, at higit sa lahat, karangalan bilang Pilipino.

Mabuhay ang Pilipino.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 1989 National Convention of the Municipal Mayor's League of the Philippines

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the 1989 National Convention of the Municipal Mayor's League of the Philippines**

[Delivered at the Folk Arts Theater, June 16, 1989]

**ACCELERATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT
THROUGH DECENTRALIZATION**

The President commends several municipalities for the outstanding performance of their respective People's Economic Councils (PECs). Since the mayors are the leaders representing the countryside, the President urges them to develop the countryside and be accountable for the delivery of basic services and facilities in their areas. She stresses that the increase in their authority would require improved performance and greater accountability to their constituents.

When we met a little over a year ago, I proclaimed that your election had completed the structure of our democratic system. Then I said . . . "Now, let's get down to business." Today, I would like to commend those of you who really did so.

Last October, during the National Convention of the People's Economic Councils (PECs), I personally commended the municipalities of Alfonso (Cavite), Porac (Pampanga), Rodriguez (Rizal), Tarlac (Tarlac) and Tiboli (South Cotabato) for the outstanding performance of their respective PECs. Likewise, I would like to laud the municipalities of the National Capital Region for exhibiting an 80.69% over-all tax collection efficiency. You have done well indeed!

Today, we meet again to strengthen our resolve to achieve our common vision: develop our country by developing your areas – the countryside – where most of our people live.

The program that heralds this is clear: *Accelerated Rural Development*. If we are to reduce underemployment and unemployment and distribute our gains to the greatest number, we must push for social and economic development in all our towns. The rural masses should not wait any longer for the gains of urban development to trickle down to them. No, the process must be renewed and we must act swiftly and with firmer resolve than before.

Here is where each of you plays a crucial role in this priority program. You are in the forefront of government's fight to conquer poverty. For you are the leaders representing the countryside. You have been elected to provide your respective constituencies with better roads, adequate water supply and power, basic health and educational services and facilities, ample livelihood opportunities, and easy access to other basic services. You are, therefore, accountable for the delivery of these basic services and facilities.

I am aware that for so long, much has been asked of you but so little has been given in terms of authority and resources to enable you to carry out your programs. Let me make it clear to all of you this morning that I do not intend to ask you to help fight poverty and insurgency without giving you the wherewithal to achieve them. I am convinced that if this country is to move forward, to grow at a rate and pace consistent with the aspirations of our people, we have to decentralize much of that authority wielded by the national government. And your national government is taking steps to remedy the overly-centralized system we inherited from the past regime.

If you recall, the last time we met, I promised you that the national government shall strive to provide "a wide channel for two-way traffic in ideas and feedback between the people and the government." This past year, you saw

a real grassroots presidency at work. I have directly consulted the local governments through my regional and provincial visits as well as during my regular meetings with the Regional Development Council Chairmen, Provincial Governors and City Mayors. Just recently, another link has been established between the national and local leaderships – the Presidential Action Line System (PALS). The PALS is designed to provide immediate and expeditious response to the requests and concerns of local government units which are sent to the Office of the President. Under this system, senior officials are designated as action officers to directly act on local requests in behalf of their respective departments. Thus, you can now be assured of faster reaction time from the national government with regard to your letters.

However, that singularly difficult task of greater devolution and deconcentration still eludes us. We must continuously move towards making every municipality a self-reliant community with the local Chief Executive empowered and provided with enough resources to truly manage on his own. To this end, I have filed and will be filing vital legislation which will bring about genuine decentralization.

A little over a month ago, I submitted to Congress a legislation which will increase your share in the Gross National Internal Revenue collections. Specifically, the bill provides that local governments will get 20% of the total Internal Revenue collections. On top of this, an additional 5% is set aside as incentive to local government units that can demonstrably increase their Real Estate Tax collection efficiency. The Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) will be distributed and *automatically released* within the first 10 days of the month, as follows:

- 30% to provinces
- 25% to cities
- 35% to municipalities
- 10% to barangays

The municipalities will get the biggest share of the IRA. In fact, when your share is added up to that of the barangays, this adds up to a full 45% of the total Internal Revenue allotted to local government units.

The same Bill abolishes the mandatory contributions which eat up much of your limited funds and which you have always been asking to be rescinded. The proposed Bill abolishes the 18% contribution to the PC/INP and the 7% contribution to hospitals, and to the Mayors of Metro Manila, the tax accruing to the Metropolitan Manila Commission under PD No. 921.

The Special Education Fund Tax is converted into a purely local tax, the proceeds of which shall accrue entirely to local government units, and divided as follows:

- 50% for the local School Board
- 50% for the local General and/or Infrastructure Fund

What do all these mean in terms of additional revenues to you?

When the Bill is approved by Congress and implemented by January 1990, and I have high hopes that this Bill will be approved this year, you may expect an increase, as your share of the IRA, of at least 100% over what you have received this year. For some of the local government units, the increase could be as high as 200%.

In absolute terms, for 1989, the budget for IRA and LGRSF/STA is P5.42 billion. For 1990, the budget for IRA is P13 billion, an increase of P7.58 billion or 140%. The share of the municipalities is P4.55 billion while the barangays is P1.30 billion.

Adding that part of your budget which used to be released to the PC/INP and to hospitals, you will have substantive increases in your budget which will be at your disposal.

I would also like to inform you that all of the abovementioned provisions relative to the IRA of LGUs have also been incorporated in the CY 1990 Budget which I will soon transmit to Congress.

Therefore, we will soon have two mechanisms in which to achieve our mutual goal of providing greater national revenue shares to local units.

The revenues you need are provided for in this legislation as well as in others, like the legislation increasing your share of the fees imposed on the exploitation of natural resources. But increasing revenues is not enough. You also need the authority to effectively and efficiently carry out your programs, as you have cited in the resolutions you submitted to me this morning. In response to some of these resolutions, I will be endorsing the proposed Local Government Code as an administration measure. In this connection, I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Senator Aquilino Pimentel, whose Bill, S.B. 155, was the source of many provisions of the proposed Code.

Three of your Resolutions are already addressed in the proposed Local Government Code, namely:

- * The Omnibus Resolution containing specific requests for greater devolution of powers to local units;
- * Second, requesting for certification of a proposed Local Autonomy Act; and,
- * Third, regarding the Philippine Constabulary and the Integrated National Police.

I shall deal with the rest of the Resolutions later.

Meanwhile, let me cite to you other features of the proposed Code:

- * The National Police personnel assigned to your municipalities shall be under your operational supervision and direction;
- * You shall have appointing power over all local government personnel whose salaries or whose operating expenses are mainly paid from local funds, except for treasurers and assessors who will be appointed by the Department of Finance from a list of eligibles nominated by the Local Chief concerned;
- * You shall exercise administrative supervision over field personnel of the Executive Departments involved in the delivery of basic services. Moreover, within 18 months from the effectivity of the Code, said Executive Departments shall transfer the corresponding appropriations and funds (other than those from programs and projects) to the local government unit concerned;
- * You, as members of the local Prequalification Bids and Awards Committee, shall have an active part in the construction, operation and maintenance of projects which are funded locally and/or receive funding or financial counterpart assistance from the National Executive Department, subject to the specifications, cost standards, and performance audit as may be prescribed by said National Executive Department;
- * The Local Tax Code has been updated to allow local government units to have more discretion in deciding as to the subject of local taxes and the amount of such taxes. Specifically, the Local Tax Code has set only tax floors in order to allow your respective municipalities to decide the appropriate amount to impose for your own needs.

These last three address portions of your Omnibus Resolution for increased authority at the local level.

The other major provisions in the proposed Local Government Code will empower you – as political leaders and as Area Development Managers – to perform your duties smoothly. But, as your authority and resources increase, so does your accountability to your constituents. Hence, we have in the Code provisions on Initiative and Referendum on Legislative Matters and the recall of elective officials. Just as your authority is increased, so will I exact

improved performance from each of you. I will not hear of the highest town official utilizing his powers to benefit a few favored men. And I will expect that this devolution of powers will be felt immediately and equally by all.

I have been told, that some, if not most, of local officials are not ready and prepared to assume greater responsibilities. But if we do not implement decentralization now, then when will we do it?

I am convinced that only through decentralization can we truly achieve peace and progress. The over-centralization of powers in the government during the past regime was prompted by the craving for power and the material greed of those in the central government then. My administration has wisely learned from the past, and now foresees a stronger and more effective management of government services that will truly reach the grassroots.

I will now respond to your other requests:

I shall refer your requests for the adoption of local government innovations, as well as the allocation of P40 million for the construction of a Mayors' Center, to the concerned Departments for serious study and consideration.

On your proposal for the removal of Congressional Privilege of Realigning Government Projects, let me clarify that this provision in the General Appropriations Act (GAA) does not in any way diminish the authority of the Executive Branch to plan and implement projects, both at the national and local levels. A provision in the GAA provides that any realignment should be made within 30 days.

Regarding the proposed amendments to existing laws on the implementation of Barangay Road Projects, this matter is still being studied by the Department of Public Works and Highways.

The standardization of mayors' salaries, as well as those of other local government executives, is already included in the proposed Standardization Bill now pending in Congress.

On your request for a 30% discount on plane fares and preferential accommodation treatment with discounted rates in Hotels, I must tell you that I cannot grant such a request. I have repeatedly assured our people that no one serving the people under my administration will be granted special favors or privileges that will set them apart from everybody else.

Finally, regarding your request for quarterly meetings with me, I think you all know that I am regularly meeting the Provincial Governors – once every quarter – and the City Mayors – once every four months. I am extending my invitation to the officers of your League to attend my meetings with the City Mayors. The next meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, June 27, 1989.

Allow me now to reiterate my determination to continue adopting measures to increase your powers. This commitment to decentralize is also an unequivocal expression of my confidence in your ability to be my partners in steering the country towards a better future. Our people have great expectations. And I share the expectations of our people. You will fulfill our hopes for a better life.

We have the policies and structures in place. Let me now end by saying . . . “Let’s get moving – and fast!”

Thank you and Good Morning.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

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OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

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**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Coalition for Transparency

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Coalition for Transparency**

[Delivered on June 19, 1989]

WEEDING OUT CORRUPTION

The President reacts to the critics of this government. She cites the consequences of the past administration's thievery in the foreign debt, the poorly-planned and bankrupt industries and the corruption that was institutionalized in every local government, civilians and military. With the help of the Coalition and its proposals to combat corruption, together with a long and meaningful cooperation between those who share the same spirit of service to the nation, she hopes the country will be able to attain its goals.

I will go straight to the point.

Many of those who are gathered here represent the spirit that believed it had put hope into power in 1986. You are gathered again because disenchantment has started to set in. And you wonder if 1986 was worth it.

Whether it was worth it or not, whether our freedom with the uncertainty it has brought is better or worse than the certitude of slavery, I leave for you to answer. The answer to that question I will leave to you. No one can tell you to think anything but what your honest thoughts and feelings dictate. Yet I believe I owe it to you to personally answer some of my critics.

Being who they were under Marcos, it would insult the spirit of this assembly and the memory of the Philippine struggle for freedom, to answer them directly. But you, who care for this country, deserve to hear the answers.

You have heard it all: the incompetence and corruption of this government, the violation of human rights that were the core of its political commitments, the sorry state of the economy.

Where these critics get the face to criticize on these points is beyond me.

They ask why have we come only this far in our economic recovery? I will tell you why. Because it has taken this long to just get out of the black hole they dug in our pockets when they were in power.

When I came to power, we wrote off P130 billion in bad loans to those who held positions of power and conflicting interest under Marcos in just two financial institutions: PNB and DBP.

Let me give you a few examples:

CDCP alone, over P10 billion lost;

Cresta Monte companies, over P2 billion lost – and taken by those who wax so indignant over corruption today.

I directed the Tanodbayan to prosecute these cases and expressed the hope that the Sandiganbayan would give them first priority. It was imperative that Philippine creditworthiness be re-established by the timely prosecution of defaulters.

To date, not a single case has advanced beyond the preliminary stage. It is said that this too is the Executive's fault.

No, it is not. If I intervened in the judicial process, I would be accused of political vendetta. I have therefore left the law to take its course alone and the courts to face the judgement of the people. To that end, I have directed the PNB, the DBP, and other government financial institutions to release the complete and detailed list of all behest loans so that the people will understand the pernicious delay in the prosecution of those who plundered our country. The time-honored and constitutional protection of judicial independence is no excuse for inaction.

It is said that we must stop using Marcos as an excuse for the Aquino administration's shortcomings. No, we cannot. The truth has rights that political convenience and the opposition's desire for national amnesia cannot compromise. Justice, not amnesia, is not what we had in mind when we called for reconciliation.

Marcos and his cronies are not just symbols of the past, but the reality of the present.

We live and suffer the consequences of their thievery in the foreign debt which we are striving to pay without starving our children and choking our progress;

We live and suffer the consequences of their thievery in the poorly-planned and bankrupt industries that we can neither dispose of nor re-active without losing more money;

We live and suffer the consequences of the corruption that Marcos institutionalized in every level of government, civilian and military;

We live and suffer the legacy of our loudest critics.

Those who finished off the Philippine economy are the loudest in decrying the slowness of the recovery even they cannot deny because they are cashing in on it.

With strength borrowed from the money they stole, they have turned their weapons to reopen the wounds they inflicted on the body of our country when they were in power – poverty, insurgency, and debt.

Some will say that it is not who says it that is important, but what he says. No, it is important. Because the minute we allow the guilty to instruct the innocent on morals, all morality loses its force.

My critics have assailed the so-called corruption of my government, but these critics, not I, have the hidden wealth to conceal.

My critics call my government weak, but it is they and not I who spend their waking moments weaving plot after failed plot to overturn the government.

Yet, despite the fact that I have never imprisoned any political opponent nor ordered any ward leader to manufacture falsified election returns, there has been greater stability in the land than in the last five years of a dictatorship that stopped at nothing, not even murder, to impose it.

What is galling is not what these critics say, but that they dare to say it. That thieves should preach honesty. That the untruthful should counsel truth. That the ignorant should lecture on policy.

And that those who connived in the plunder of our country should prescribe the manner of its revival in their hands.

The future will not take instruction from yesterday's men. Nor shall we take the truth from those who made a good living from lying. The spring cannot rise higher, nor be cleaner than its source.

That said, unquestionably something has gone wrong. Corruption has returned, if not in the same scale certainly with equal shamelessness.

This cannot be. It is not our intention to appear honest and competent only in comparison to our enemies.

We must – and I will – wage a relentless effort to weed out the corruption that has resurfaced in our midst. The campaign must spare no one – neither friends who helped in the campaign nor the enemies who abetted the dictatorship; neither those who drop our names nor those who malign them. No one will be spared.

The war on graft and corruption must be matched by a war on slack and indecision in government, on those whose reckless conduct has called the honor of this government into question. No one is indispensable. I intend to address not only the people's dismay over corruption but their despair over inaction. Too much depends on the success of this venture. For what is at stake here is the people's continuing faith in democracy, in the force of moral values and law.

I am aware that the values we seek to bring about through democratic method and honest example cannot produce overnight results. Yet, let there be no mistake on the score: we shall not lose by inaction and default what we have painfully gained by the most deliberate and strenuous efforts:

What we have won, we shall keep. And on what we have accomplished, we shall build higher. Yet the manner of building cannot be like EDSA. Not in a flash, but by unerring steps shall we build the future.

I am heartened that this is also how the Coalition intends to proceed: To build a moral order stone by honest stone, by the living example of each and every person converted to its vision of morality in government, in the community, in the family, and in himself.

Breaking down the task to manageable portions is how I like to proceed. When I called for a boycott, I targetted only a softdrink to test whether the will and means to accomplish little was there, before I made commitments to do more.

In the same vein, the Coalition for Transparency looks first to the moral renewal of its individual members before calling for the reformation of society and government. Before a man can preach, he must ask himself has he paid his correct taxes. Before a man can inveigh against influence-peddling, he must consider if he does not have a pending favor with any public official. Before a man demands transparency, he must be certain that he too can stand without fear in the light.

As a first step, I target the customs and importation. We made significant progress in facilitating exports, but the bottleneck in importation remains and smuggling has become so rampant that the labor-intensive textile industry's very survival is in question.

First let me make it clear to quell all speculation. Customs Commissioner Mison is staying and has my full backing in any measures he cares to take, particularly those he has proposed to the Coalition, such as the non-stop processing in the release of shipments; and the organization of the Customs-Industry Consultative Council to bring in the private sector in the formulation of Customs policies and procedures.

I look forward to receiving specific proposals from the Coalition on the means to combat corruption. This meeting heralds, I hope, a long and meaningful cooperation between those who share the same spirit of service to the nation.

The path you and I shall take will not be easy. Friends will be lost and enemies will grow desperate. The reward for our efforts will not be praise but more villification from those who see no place in our tomorrow.

Our reward must come mainly from each other: in the confidence of our common sincerity, in the gradual attainment of our goals, and in the spirit of a shared enterprise for the common good such as we have not enjoyed since EDSA. Let the spirit of service return. The campaign against corruption will succeed only when society, moved to its moral core, will no longer have anything to do with it, and when wealth by itself can no longer buy our respect or a welcome in our homes. It is here, in this fundamental task, that you have the major role to play. With God's help we can only prevail.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Navy Day Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Navy Day**

[Delivered on June 23, 1989]

THE NAVY'S VIGILANCE

The first duty of an armed forces is the defense of its country's boundaries and the first line of national defense is in its surrounding waters. This is the duty of the Navy, to secure the nation from internal and external threats. The President pledges full support for the modernization of the navy, to build a strong force outfitted to discharge their mission.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines has had the longest fighting experience of any military force in the Region outside Vietnam. And it has fought against the most tenacious enemy since that famous conflict. By and large, the Armed Forces has carried out its mission well. While this is Navy Day, however, I cannot help but comment first upon a matter that touches us all — Commander-in-Chief and Armed Forces.

I refer to the sorry image of the profession of arms at this time. Soldiering has become identified not with the noblest calling of man, but with the most sordid activities of the criminal syndicates. I grieve for the Armed Forces, at the injustice it is suffering.

I grieve for the tens of thousands who gave their lives to preserve the territorial integrity of the Republic and to keep the communist foe from turning our free country into a slave state. The shameful actuations of a few have insulted the vast majority of our fighting men who are, even at this moment, turning fields of fire into fields of honor.

What a few have done to the proud institution of the Armed Forces is beyond sympathy and forgiveness. Punishment commensurate with the damage done to the honor of the Armed Forces must be dealt out. We must restore the shine to the sword of state and make it again a trusted weapon for the national defense and for the advancement of the nation's honor and destiny.

Our most potent weapon is not the rifle nor the artillery so much as the superior example of our forces over those of the enemies we fight. The scalawags in carnappings and holdups have left us weaponless in the most important battle of the rebellion — the battle for the hearts and minds, the trust and respect of our people.

I have directed the Secretary of Justice to apply the full force of the law so that the stain on the shield of the Republic will be wiped off by the severity of the justice that is done.

That said, I turn to the Philippine Navy and proudly salute it on its 91st anniversary.

The existence and pre-eminent role of a navy in a country such as ours is self-evident. The first duty of an armed force is the defense of its country's boundaries. It goes without saying that, for an archipelago, the first line of national defense must be drawn in its surrounding waters. That line is drawn and held by the Philippine Navy.

With the inadequate equipment at hand, the Philippine Navy has nonetheless discharged its mission well. The contingency most feared by our strategists has to date been prevented — massive arms landing that will give a quantum leap to the insurgency threat. For this we must thank the vigilance of the Navy.

We have this also to thank the Navy for. Its readiness to challenge any state that trenches upon our territories. That readiness has kept open our maritime options for economic development in such key areas as fishery, offshore oil, and submarine mining.

We need every resource at hand to meet the challenges to our country: the challenge of poverty, the challenge of development and progress for a fast growing population, and the challenge of our destiny to become what we once were: the freest, most progressive state in Asia.

Our fishery resources are being depleted and destroyed at an alarming rate by foreign fishing concerns. As a country equally comprising land and water, this is equivalent to the foreign seizure of our entire industrial capacity.

The Navy has done quite well with very little, and much of that little is obsolete. Yet great dangers threaten from overseas. It behooves us therefore to build a navy equal to those threats. We have therefore embarked upon the long overdue modernization of the navy. We need a navy that can move fast and with the power to impress upon intruders the substance of our commitment and oath:

To uphold the Constitution that defines the historic boundaries of our state;

To see to the faithful execution of the laws that preserve the national patrimony for Filipinos, maintain the order of society, and advance the economic welfare of our people;

And to proclaim to all and sundry the pride of our name and the reputation of our arms.

You and I share a commitment and a vision. Part of that vision of a strong country, impervious to threat, calls for a strong navy. I pledge to you my full support to build a navy outfitted to discharge the mission we have outlined in our oath.

Mabuhay ang Hukbong Dagat ng Pilipinas!

Mabuhay ang Filipino!

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Air Force Day Founding Anniversary Speech
of**

**Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Air Force Day Founding Anniversary**

[Delivered on July 1, 1989]

OUTDO YOURSELF AIR FORCE

The Air Force plays a critical role both in war and in peace: as a major support to ground units battling against enemies of the state and as transporter of medicine, relief goods, and medical workers to disaster-stricken areas here and overseas. With a new fleet of jet aircraft and helicopters, and with a renewed sense of duty, the Air Force is expected to outdo itself.

Men and women of the Air Force, today is a landmark in your history. This is the first time we celebrate this day as your founding anniversary. I signed Proclamation No. 397 on April 3, 1989, changing your May 2nd anniversary date to July 1st in keeping with the nationalist spirit of our Armed Forces. On this day, in 1947, the Air Force attained the status of a distinct service command of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

There is yet another reason to celebrate. Today we welcome 45 graduates of the Philippine Air Force Flying School into the PAF. Now you are one with the pride of our skies. You are to enter an unbroken tradition of heroism from the action taken by Captain Jesus Villamor and his men in 1941 in meeting the Japanese foe to the noble decision of Colonel Sotelo and his men in joining the struggle against the dictatorship. Rest assured, there will be no shortage of opportunities for heroism in the future.

We are engaged in a bitter struggle that will decide whether Filipinos shall live free or die, whether what our people have built by sacrifice these past three years shall be the spoils of our enemies' victories or the foundation of a future of freedom, justice, and progress for our children.

Let me impress upon you the critical nature of your role in the present war against the insurgency. The air support you provide to our ground forces have oftentimes spelled victory or defeat. The timely arrival of the Air Force has been known to turn a massacre of our boys into a rout of the enemy. The Air Force has logged 642 flying hours in 592 sorties in combat operations to support our ground units.

Men of the Air Force, I salute your accomplishments.

Yet the work of the Air Force is not confined to combat. First in war, first in peace, the Air Force has been in the forefront of relief missions not only in calamity-struck areas of our country but even in foreign lands. Last year alone, you flew 22,129 hours on disaster relief operations, transported 35,000 pounds of medicine to Bangladesh, and airlifted over 6,000 military and civilian patients to medical aid centers. You repatriated 97 Filipino workers from Singapore. You have shown that the Filipino need not wait upon war to declare himself totally for country.

We note your distinguished performance against the backdrop of the Air Force's urgent need to modernize. The Air Force must be strengthened for the challenges still before us. To that end, we are upgrading the weapons systems of the Air Force with the purchase of a new fleet of jet aircraft and helicopters. We are assured of the first delivery sometime at the end of this year.

We must be able to reach those who threaten and kill the innocent – the elderly and children regardless – wherever they cower in malice and fear. The arms of the Republic must be able to reach everywhere to protect all its people and punish and repel all their enemies, domestic and foreign.

In congratulating the Air Force for its performance, I say also, “Outdo Yourself Air Force.” We expect more from you next year, with the advent of new weaponry and the renewed sense of duty that we celebrate today.

Thank you and Good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino during the Toast-Lunch of Berlin Mayor Walter Momper

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the Toast-Lunch of Berlin Mayor Walter Momper**

[Delivered at Berlin, Vibrant Center of German Culture on July 9, 1989]

Many admire the city of Berlin as a testimony to the German people's resilience and energy. Berlin, the heart of the German nation, inspires Filipinos today.

I am pleased and honored to be in Berlin. The beauty and power of this great city testifies to the resilience of the German people and to the tremendous energy that has distinguished modern Germany. A single nation divided, creates two energetic states. A city isolated yet becomes a vigorous metropolis, a vibrant center of German culture, and a strong economy in its own right.

Berlin today attests to the fact that whatever the Germans set their hands to will work. We are inspired by this city, which will always be – the accidents of history notwithstanding – the heart of the German nation.

I would like to thank the Mayor of Berlin for the warm reception he has accorded me and my delegation. I would like to propose a toast: To the continuing prosperity of Berlin and to the success and good health of Mayor Walter Momper. To them I extend the good wishes and thanks of my people. Mabuhay!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Filipino Community in Berlin

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Filipino Community in Berlin**

[Delivered on July 9, 1989]

KATUGUNAN SA MGA KATANUNGAN AT KAHILINGAN

Ipinaabot ni Pangulong Aquino sa mga Pilipinong nasa Alemanya na maraming programa ang ipinatutupad ng gobyerno para sa kabutihan ng lahat. Kabilang na rito ang repormang pansakahan, karapatang pantao, Code of Ethics, at marami pang iba. Pinag-aaralan din ng pamahalaan na maisakatuparan ang nais ng ating mga kababayan na nasa ibang bayan na makalahok sa mga halalang gaganapin sa ating bayan, at tugunan ang mga katanungan hinggil sa buwis at visa. Inaanyayahan sila ng Pangulo na tumulong sa pamamagitan ng pagbibigay ng puhunan para sa maliliit at katamtamang negosyo.

Mga minamahal kong kababayan,

Nasisiyahan ako dahil sa pagkakataong itong makasama kayo sa aking pagdalaw dito sa Pederal na Republika ng Alemanya. Ikinagagalak kong makilala ang mga bayani ng kabuhayan ng Pilipinas na tumutulong sa pag-unlad ng ekonomiya ng ating bayan.

Nababakas ko ang inyong mga pag-aalala sa kapakanan ng inyong mga mahal sa buhay, kaibigan, at ng buong sambayanang Pilipino. Nagagalak din ako at kayo ay nakikibahagi sa mga suliranin na hinaharap ng ating bansa sa kasalukuyan.

Maraming salamat sa inyong pangako na itataguyod at pag-ibayuhin ang pagkakaibigan ng bansang Pilipinas at Alemanya.

At bilang tugon sa inyong mga katanungan at kahilingan, nais kong iparating sa inyo ang mga sumusunod:

Sinisikap kong mabilis na ipatupad ang repormang pansakahan. Naibalita na rin sa inyo ang pagbabago sa pamumuno ng Kagawaran na namamahala sa programang ito. Kayo ay manalig na ipapatupad ang mga angkop na hakbang upang maiwasan ang anumang katiwalian lalung-lalo na sa pagbili ng lupa. Pinasimulan ko na rin ang pag-uusig sa mga nagkamali.

Ang ating Kongreso ay kasalukuyang pinag-aaralan ang mga batas sa Reporma sa Lupa para sa anumang kinakailangang pagbabago sa mga batas na ito.

Ang pangako ng ating pamahalaan sa mga karapatang pantao o “human rights” ay nakadambana sa ating Sahgang Batas.

Pinag-iibayo ng ating pamahalaan ang lubos na pag-galang sa mga karapatang ito.

Mayroon tayong Komisyon sa mga Karapatang Pantao o “Commission on Human Rights” na tumitiyak sa panganglaga ng mga karapatan ng lahat ng Pilipino. Ito rin ang sumusuri at nagsisiyasat sa pagtupad ng mga obligasyon ng Pilipinas ayon sa mga pandaigdig na kasunduan tungkol sa karapatang pantao.

At sa mga nababalitang “human rights violations” sa ating bansa, ang United Nations Committee on Human Rights ayon sa kanilang tagapangulo, Ginoong Rajsoomer Lallah, ay nagpahayag na:

“You will have noticed that there is no one in the Committee who has any doubt of the commitment of your government to fulfill properly the undertaking that you have made under the Covenant (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) and I would wish you on behalf of the Committee to take to your President and through her, to the Government and people of the Philippines, our best wishes for the fulfillment of your undertakings under the Covenant.”

Binibigyan ko po ng diin na ang ating pamahalaan ay hindi tinatangkilik ang anumang paglabag ng karapatang pantao.

Tuluyan din nating sinusugpo ang nababalitang pagnanakaw at katiwalian sa pamahalaan. May pananagutan ang lahat na mga pinuno at empleyado ng pamahalaan sa kanilang tungkulin. At mayroong mga takdang parusa para sa kanilang mga katiwalian. Nais ko pong ipaalam sa inyo na ipinagtibay ngayong taong ito ang isang mahigpit na batas na pinamagatang: “Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.” Nilalaman po dito ang mga patakarang dapat tupdin ng lahat na nanunungkulan sa ating pamahalaan.

Inuulit ko, sa aking pamahalaan, ay walang tanging pribelehiyo o pagkiling kanino man. Walang espesyal na konsiderasyon o pagsasang-galang na ipagkakaloob sa aking mga kamag-anak o mga kaibigan kung mapapatunayan na sila ay lumabag sa batas. Kung ang aking pamahalaan ay may itinatangi at kinikilingan man, ito po ay ang mga maralita.

Upang umunlad ang kabuhayan ng Pilipinas, kailangan natin ang mga daan, daungan, tulay, patubig at iba pa. Ang lahat na ito ay binibigyan ng kaukulang pansin lalong-lalo na sa mga lalawigan na nangangailangan ng mga ito, upang lumuwag ang mga lungsod at maparating ang mga biyaya ng kaunlaran sa ating mga kababayan sa kabukiran.

Ang ating mga kagawaran at tanggapan sa kalusugan, edukasyon, at paglilingkod ay nagsisikap na ipaabot sa lahat ng sulok ng ating bayan ang mga gawaing panlipunan.

Kasama ng pagpapaunlad ng ating kabuhayan ang pangangalaga ng ating kapaligiran.

Ang pangangalaga ng ating mga likas na yaman kagaya ng mga dagat at gubat ay isa sa mga tulong na nais kong hilingin sa ating mga kaibigan dito sa Alemanya.

Ang ating “Department of Environment and Natural Resources” ay nagtatag ng mga programang pambansa upang mapanumbalik o kaya’y mapayaman pa lalo ang ating kalikasan. Tumutulong sa kagawaran na ito ang mga pribadong samahan sa mga programang tulad ng pagtatanim ng mga puno at paglilinis ng ating mga ilog at dagat.

Pinag-aaralan na po ang mga paraang magpapasatupad ng inyong hangaring makalahok sa darating na halalan sa ating bayan.

Ipanatag ninyo ang inyong kalooban na ang ating pamahalaan ay ginagawa ang lahat para sa inyong ikabubuti. Pinagaaralan at pinaghahandaan ng mga kinauukulang tanggapan ng pamahalaan ang inyong mga mungkahi na may kaugnayan sa buwis at ‘Visa’ para sa madali at maluwag na paglalakbay, pagtira o pagtatrabaho ng mga Pilipino dito sa Europa.

Kayo ay nakikipagsapalaran, nagtititiis, at nagmamalasakit para sa ikagiginhawa ng buhay ng inyong mga pamilya. Ang karamihan sa inyo ay mapalad; ngunit, marami rin akong natatanggap na mga balita tungkol sa mga malungkot na kapalaran ng mga ilang “mail-order brides.” Dapat nating iwasan ang kapalarang ito. Sa ngayon ay mayroong isang misyong Aleman na nakikipag-ugnay sa atin upang alamin kung papaaano sila makatutulong sa paglutas ng suliraning ito.

Sa kabilang dako, ipinagbubunyi ng ating mga kababayan ang inyong mga pagpapakasakit at pagiging ulirang manggagawa.

Inatasan ko ang ating “Department of Labor and Employment” na isama sa ating mga programang kaugnay sa mga manggagawa sa ibayong dagat, ang pagpapakilala at pagpapahalaga sa inyo na itinuturing kong mga bayani ng bayan.

Marami pa tayong dapat gawin. Mga unang hakbang pa lamang ang ating naisasagawa tungo sa pagiging isang “newly industrialized country”. Kailangan ng ating bayan ang tulong ninyo upang makabangon sa kahirapan. Kayo ay makakatulong sa pamamagitan ng pagbibigay ng puhunan sa inyong mga kamag-anak upang makapagtatag ng mga maliliit at katamtamang negosyo.

Bilang pangwakas, nais ko lang na ipaalaala sa inyo na dahil sa marami-rami na rin kayo dito sa Alemanya, nararapat na kayo ay magkaisa at magtulungan upang matamo ang ating mga layunin para sa bayan. Magsama-sama tayong lahat na buhayin at ibangon ang ating Inang Bayan.

Mabuhay!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the tearing down of the Berlin Wall

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the tearing down of the Berlin Wall**

[Delivered at Berlin City Hall, July 9, 1989]

WALLS CAN BE TORN DOWN

President Aquino urges the tearing down of walls if not from its foundation then from the hearts of Berliners.

I am familiar with walls. I say that as the widow of a political prisoner. The Filipino people have also lived with walls: the wall of political oppression and the higher walls of their own fears about their disunity and weakness in the face of overwhelming odds.

We also know that walls can be torn down:

The wall of fear when one man gave his life to breach that wall and show his people that the shortest route to freedom is courage. The wall of mistrust, when a people put their trust in the compassion of the soldiers sent out to destroy them.

This wall too will go when you uproot its foundations – not from beneath these streets of Berlin – but from your hearts.

Those who had some use for this wall are gone. The wall will eventually follow. For it seems that Europe from the Urals to the Atlantic wishes to build a common home, and this wall is getting in the way of it.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Filipino Community in Aachen

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Filipino Community in Aachen**

[Released on July 9, 1989]

MGA PAGBABAGONG BUNGA NG PEOPLE POWER

Maipagmamalaki ang patuloy na pag-iral ng demokrasya at ang pag-unlad ng ekonomiya ng Pilipinas. Dahil rito, inaanyayahan ang mga Pilipinong taga-Aachen na makilahok sa pag-unlad ng bansa, na itaguyod ang mga produktong Pilipino, na anyayahan ang mga banyagang mamasyal sa Pilipinas, at magtatag ng mga negosyo sa Pilipinas.

Nagpapasalamat ako sa inyong pagdalo sa pagtitipon na ito na nagpapakita ng inyong pakikiisa sa aming lahat.

Ang layunin ng aking pagdalaw dito sa Alemanya at sa Pransya ay upang palawakin at pagtibayin ang ating pakikipag-ugnayan sa mga dayuhang bansang ito.

Dito sa Alemanya, malaking karangalan na ako ang kauna-unahang Pangulo ng Pilipinas na makadalo dito. Itinuturing ko ang paanyaya sa akin dito na isang pahiwatig ng tuluyang paghanga at paggalang ng mga dayuhan sa ating mapayapang rebolusyon noong 1986, at sa mga pagbabago na ating ipinagtibay simula noon. Mahirap nang ulitin ang ating People Power kaya dapat pangalagaan natin ang mga layunin nito.

Magmula noong 1986, marami na pong mabuting naganap sa atin. Umiiral ang demokrasya sa ating bayan ngayon. May bago tayong Saligang Batas. Mayroon tayong malayang kataastaasang Hukuman. Ang Kongreso ay pinamumunuan at kinakatawanan ng mga taong may malaya at makabayang paninindigan. Ang ating mga institusyon na nakatalaga sa ating Saligang Batas, "Commission on Audit, Civil Service Commission, Commission on Elections, Commission on Human Rights at Ombudsman" ay malayang ginagampanan ang kanilang mga tungkulin.

Noong nakaraang taon, umunlad ng mahigit na anim na porsiyento ang ating ekonomiya na nagpapatunay na bumubuti na ang ating kabuhayan. Ngunit hindi pa rin ito sapat. Marami pa sa atin ang naghihirap. Dahil dito, inaanyayahan ko kayong lumahok sa dakilang layunin pagpapaunlad ng ating bansa. Umaasa din kami na sa inyong sariling pamamaraan, tutulungan ninyo kaming itaguyod ang ating mga sariling produkto. Nawa'y tulungan din ninyo kaming mag-anyaya na mamasyal ang mga banyaga sa ating bayan upang matuklasan nila ang likas na ganda ng Pilipinas at ang yaman ng ating kultura. Balakin po ninyo at inyong mga kamag-anak na magtatag ng mga negosyo sa ating bayan, maliit man o katamtaman lamang.

Sa inyong pagbalik sa Pilipinas, umaasa din kami na sa pamamagitan ng pakikipagtulungan ninyo at ng mga ibang bansa tulad ng Alemanya, makaka-uwì kayo sa isang maunlad na bansa.

Kilala ang Pilipino sa buong mundo sa kaniyang kahusayan at kasipagan. Paninindigan natin ang magandang pangalan natin. Kayo ang mga kinatawan ng ating bansa dito sa Alemanya. Anuman ang inyong gawa ay nagpapakilala sa mga dayuhan sa pagkatao ng mga Pilipino.

Kayo ay Pilipino. Sana'y huwag ninyong kalimutan ang ating mga magagandang kaugalian, tradisyon, at higit sa lahat, ang inyong pagkakaisa.

Magsama-sama tayong lahat para sa ating Inang Bayan.

Maraming salamat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Federal Republic of Germany

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Federal Republic of Germany**

[Delivered on July 10, 1989]

AN INVITATION TO GERMAN INVESTORS

The Philippine economy has displayed great vigor, achieving growth while meeting tremendous debt obligations. Such an economy is worthy of investment confidence. With monopolies abolished and the economy deregulated, the Philippines is conducive to capital, creativity, and wholesome competition. Moreover, the Philippines is wealthy with natural resources, a skilled and industrious people, and a strong recovery. Thus, German entrepreneurs are invited to come to the Philippines, to grow, and to profit there.

I know that it is not easy to take you away from your summer vacation. I am therefore honored and deeply grateful for the attendance this afternoon. We think it will have been worth your while attending.

The Philippines is not unknown to Germany. For example, it is no stranger to German liberality. The Philippines gets an annual commitment of DM40 million in soft loans and DM23 million in technical aid. And DM20 million grants to nongovernmental organizations or NGOs. Since January of this year, German ODA loans to the Philippines have been extended for 40 years with a grace period of 10 years, and a lower interest rate of 0.75%.

What the Philippines needs is to get as much German interest in Philippine opportunities as it has thankfully shown in Philippine socio-economic problems. Such an interest would be justified on the part of German business on the basis of the Philippine recovery alone.

Thus, as of February 28, 1989, the Philippine debt stock stood at \$28 billion. This is projected to increase to \$29B by the end of the year. Try to understand that most of this debt is not represented by thriving industries or existing infrastructure. Quite a bit of it was in fact stolen by the previous government. So you might say that the Philippines was in the position of a country after a foreign war – its economy was devastated.

Yet, despite continuing political problems in the first two years of democratic restoration, the Philippines turned a negative growth rate of over 10% in 1984 and 1985 – two years before the end of the dictatorship – to a positive 2% in 1986 in the first year of the democratic restoration, to 6.7% in 1988.

Exports increased by 46% from 1986 to 1988, and registered investments rose from a level of \$128 million in 1985 to \$1.5 billion in 1988. The first five months of 1989 registered \$2 billion.

Now that isn't bad, when you consider that the Philippines continued to meet its tremendous debt obligations at the same time. The Philippines has been paying annually more than 40% of its budget to debt service or 7.7% of GNP. In the next five years, we estimate net payment to creditors of \$12 billion. The Philippines is expected by the international financial community to generate this amount internally. This is a backhanded compliment to the strength of the Philippine economy, to the prudence of its fiscal policies, and to the industry and patience of its people.

This is one compliment, however, that we would rather do without. Yet, unquestionably, the Philippine recovery reflects an inherently strong economy worthy of investor confidence.

We have tried, by sound fiscal policies, not to purchase recovery at the price of inflation, nor debt relief at the price of the national honor. We have paid as careful attention to the consequences of runaway inflation and devaluation, as Germany in the light of her own experiences between the wars. A review of Philippine economic policy in the past three years will show the same determination as Germany to rely on private enterprise to engineer and fuel its economic recovery.

What we need to complete the equation are two elements essential to the German recovery — debt relief and investments.

We think that, given greater control and conservation of our internal resources through debt relief, and with greater access to capital, we can achieve some measure of the progress you achieved under the same conditions.

To attract investments, we have set the stage for partnerships with those who have something to teach us about development.

We abolished monopolies and other privileges that the previous government gave its special friends, and pledged that there shall be no more fears or favors to anyone in business, but equal opportunities for all.

We de-regulated the economy in a major way, and made the environment conducive to capital, creativity, and competition.

Some measure of protectionism remains to nurse weak but essential sectors of the economy to health and condition it gradually to wholesome competition.

Some measure of regulation remains — not to condone unnecessary government interference in business — but to inject a measure of rationality in the developmental efforts of a country that cannot afford to make any more mistakes.

But, by and large, as the delegation from the Department of Trade and Industry and the Philippine private sector will explain at greater length, the Philippine economy is an open invitation to responsible partnership and profit.

But the best teacher is experience. We therefore invite German business to come to the Philippines, set up enterprises there, and grow and profit with us. The best way to learn the German way is to make it a part of ourselves.

Our trade with Germany is still too small. It is worth noting that the problem is not access to the German market but our present inability to supply the desired volumes. This by itself is an invitation to German investments in the German market, at the very least, and in fast-growing Philippine and Asian markets.

So it seems that distance cannot be the reason, because Germany's relatively small investment in the Philippines is the exception to the generally expansive German initiatives in other parts of Asia. We invite you therefore to take a closer look at our country.

Even as Europe consolidates as a single economy, it must recognize that its entire future cannot lie wholly within itself. Europe must reach outwards, to markets and opportunities beyond — in the rest of the world, in Asia and the Pacific.

We invite you to consider the natural wealth of the Philippines; the industry and skill of its people; the strength of its recovery; and, last but not least, the virtues of its geography as well.

We have no common borders with countries in turmoil. And despite the bad publicity we get, democracy is firmly rooted, the government is stable, the economy is moving, and there is no serious challenge to the free enterprise system. Let me put it this way — no one will take power in my country by whistling or shouting in Europe. We are

far from trouble yet well positioned to take signal advantage of the wealth of opportunities that are opening up in the century of the Pacific. We invite Germany to position itself with us. The elements of a greater German-Philippine partnership in the Philippines and the Pacific are there. It needs only your decision to make it happen. Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino in Bonn, Germany

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines In Bonn, Germany

[Delivered on July 10, 1989]

A SYMBOL FOR THE NEW GERMANY

Bonn, as the provisional capital of the Federal Republic, symbolizes the progress, prosperity, and ethical vision of the new Germany.

It is indeed a great pleasure to be here in this beautiful city of Bonn. While we have had occasion to say that history accords to another great city the distinction of being the birthplace of the modern German nation, unquestionably Bonn symbolizes the remarkable progress and prosperity, and the ethical vision of the new Germany.

The choice of Bonn, a beautiful and quiet university town, as the provisional capital of the Federal Republic must have been carefully made. I think there was no question in anyone's mind that the indefatigable industry of the German people would resurrect a strong Germany in a very short time. It was therefore imperative to show the world that the resurgent power of Germany would be wedded — not to passion — but to the gentle reason and tolerance that marks the longer tradition of German culture. There are parts of the German tradition that are distinctly for Germans, but Bonn is that larger part of Germany that is for the world.

I am honored to be here, and grateful for the warm hospitality you have given me and my delegation. I want to thank you also for the kind words of welcome that you have expressed.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Arrival Speech of President Corazon Aquino at Paris Orly Airport

**Arrival speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At Paris Orly Airport**

[Delivered on July 11, 1989]

A TRIBUTE TO THE INSPIRATION OF REVOLUTIONS

In France during the celebration of the Bicentennial of the French revolution, the President says that it is worth remembering the Philippines' own kind of revolution. Both had shared the same impulse: respect for the dignity of man.

I have come to France to celebrate with the French the Bicentennial of their revolution. I have also come to celebrate with all mankind the 200-year old struggle to secure for humanity the rights of man. The Philippines comes to this occasion as the symbol of one kind of revolution, to pay tribute to another—itself the inspiration of the First Philippine Revolution and the unchanging pattern of revolutions until the present. In so doing, both attest to the common impulse that makes revolutions of any kind: Respect for the dignity of man.

I have come to France also to celebrate a small occasion relative to the one that holds these days the attention of the world. We are here to affirm Franco-Philippine Friendship and to declare the desire of both countries to cooperate in Europe and in Asia for their mutual advantage. Already, the honor bestowed on my country by this invitation binds yet more firmly an old friendship. Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino on a luncheon with Chancellor Helmut Kohl

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On a luncheon with Chancellor Helmut Kohl**

[Delivered on July 11, 1989]

GERMANY: A FRIEND AND AN ALLY

Germany is both a model and a friend of the Philippines. From Germany came Radio Veritas, the voice of the Philippine revolution and of freedom. From German businessmen came lessons in efficiency, integrity, and commitment. From Germany came the endorsement of a Multilateral Aid Program for the Philippines. Germany has become indispensable to Philippine recovery.

Herr Chancellor, we are encouraged by your perceptive and generous views. They confirm our conviction that in Germany we have found, not only the proper model of our efforts and national ambitions, but a true friend to help us attain them.

The future, we hope, will prove that the newly restored Philippine democracy has taken root not just in the will of one President but firmer yet in the heart of our race. Where other nations have found music or architecture as the most expressive symbols of their spirit, democracy alone is the most adequate expression of our own nation. The Filipino is free or nothing.

The Philippines has shared a parallel role in the East as the Federal Republic of Germany in the West. Since the end of the Second World War, Germany and the Philippines have been the edge of the Western alliance. The Philippines has indeed played a critical role for stability and security not only in Southeast Asia but throughout East Asia. The life-line from the Persian Gulf to the sea of Japan has, for 40 years, been anchored in the Philippines.

It is against that background also, and against the new developments in Europe coming from the East, that we shall be reviewing our role in Asia.

Herr Chancellor, our relationship with the German people has indeed been a long and fruitful one for us. We have imbibed from German nuns, a measure of the discipline that has made you great, and the common faith that gives us a spiritual home in Germany.

The German commitment to democracy, made strong by the experience of tyranny and war, has been a second bond of understanding and support. We should have been first in pointing out gratefully that it was Germany that gave the Philippine Revolution a voice that could carry its message to every corner of the country, and to virtually every home in Europe and America. Radio Veritas was not just the voice of truth, but the voice of freedom. And you gave it to us.

Yesterday we said that having taken Germany as the model of our development, it was our strong desire to forge more extensive trade and industrial relations with German business. There is no better way to learn from another than to work together. The Philippine experience with German business has been an unqualified admiration for their efficiency and integrity, and for their long-term commitment to the host country's development.

We indeed hope that when Germany joins the rest of Western Europe in the progressive consolidation into an integrated economy, she will not turn her back to the opportunities that she herself has discovered in Asia and, most especially, in the Philippines.

German liberality expressed itself again at the World Bank consultative meeting in Tokyo last week, where it was obvious that Germany, among other European countries, had studied deeply the Philippine situation, and prepared to respond sufficiently to the country's special need. The German views were appreciated for their candor and deep insight. As one of the leading economies in Europe, and as a highly respected voice in its counsels, Germany's endorsement of a Multilateral Aid Program for the Philippines will indeed carry great weight

This aid program is very important to the Philippines for we wish to rise above our present role of regional stabilizer to our former position as the leading economy in the region. As such, we shall be better positioned and inclined to continue our leading role in ASEAN and to further encourage the new link that has been established between two regional organizations at both ends of the world.

The Philippines has indeed come a long way in a short time. Yet we cannot stop to catch our breath, for the distance yet to be covered is very long. Dictatorship was as ruinous to us as it was to your country. And we build from a greater ruin, for unlike Germany we were only starting the modernization of our economy. So we lost not only what we had only started to build, but much valuable time that we cannot recover. The technical assistance and the investments of Germany, we believe, will be indispensable to the double-time recovery we have set as our aim.

At the end of a truly stimulating visit to a great country, we stand and I ask you to join me in a toast.

To Chancellor Helmut Kohl, good health, a long life, and most importantly, continuing success in politics, and to German-Philippine friendship. Mabuhay! (Toast for German-Philippine friendship)

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to President François Mitterrand of France — a State Banquet at Palais de L'Elysees

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To President François Mitterrand of France — a State Banquet at Palais de L'Elysees**

[Delivered on July 11, 1989]

GENTLENESS WILL TURN AWAY WRATH

Uniquely characterized by a courageous people and a compassionate army, the Philippine Revolution of 1986 nevertheless shares with the French revolution the “sudden popularity of self-sacrifice, the astonishing ordinariness of courage, and the solemn commitment to uphold at any cost the dignity and the rights of man.”

Monsieur le President, rest assured that I shall spare you another parallelism between our revolution and that of your forebears whose bi-centennial we celebrate. Perhaps, if the French Revolution had occurred three years earlier 200 years ago, such a comparison would have been irresistible, and the earlier revolution, inevitably, would not have come off too well against “the cheapest revolution ever” – a quick and bloodless revolution that stormed no citadel but simply walked away with freedom down a road.

After the Revolution of 1986, it seemed that something new had taken place, unprecedented in politics: revolutions had developed to the point of acquiring good manners. We still think so. But we cannot think anymore that thenceforth, tyranny in any country might be shown the door and freedom as quietly ushered in.

Recent events have shown that a rifle in the hands of a Filipino soldier facing his brother is a much less lethal weapon than a knife in a Central American election. And that tank commanders in my country respect the disparity between flesh and armor.

We see now that the bloodless character of the Philippine Revolution resulted from the interaction of a people with the sudden courage to stand their ground for freedom, and of an army with the unexpected compassion to yield its positions to a higher patriotism.

We see now that the wisdom of Solomon – that gentleness will turn away wrath – waited two thousand years to prove itself: but once only, in one revolution in a single country in Asia.

We see now that people will adopt the technique of liberation best suited to the temper of the times, to the weapons at hand, and to the nature of their adversary. And that the only things that successful revolutions have in common are the sudden popularity of self-sacrifice, the astonishing ordinariness of courage, and the solemn commitment to uphold at any cost the dignity and the rights of man.

It is these elements that liken a sansculotte picking up a cobblestone in this city two centuries ago to a sister kneeling on a highway in the shadow of a tank — in a distant Asian land, just yesterday.

What we shall honor on the 14th of July is not the victory of these values but merely the first affirmation of their centrality in our lives. For self-regard has proved more persistent than self-sacrifice; courage is unbearable for too long periods of time; and human rights must share the vulnerability of those who are the perennial victims of their violation — the poor, the weak, the people.

Speaking of my own country, the restoration of democracy has sharply curtailed, if it has not erased, the violations of human rights by the military. I cannot say the same for the heightened brutality exhibited by those who propose

yet another revolution towards old people, women and children, and even to their kind. In mentioning two infamies of vastly differing magnitudes in the same breath, we do not suggest striking an accounting balance of respective responsibility. Yet it bears noting that the systematic use of terror as an instrument of policy has passed from a state that is now democratic to a cause that is indistinguishable from crime.

Yet, neither violation absolves or diminishes the other. We would do well to avoid the cynical dialectic that sets one wrong against another, in a spiral of accusations in which, as Camus said, “une seule chose ne change pas, la victime, toujours la meme..”

It is not a debate that the victims would enjoy. What should concern us is not the measure of blame on either side but how to stop it altogether on both. Certainly, our side has tried for a peaceful settlement of the insurgency on terms other than the surrender of our society to a movement that cannot distinguish between the battlefield and human communities.

Revolution and democracy have yet to correct the fallibility of human judgment and the weakness of the human character for taking advantage of fellow human beings. And so those who make revolutions must return to the fountainhead of the revolutionary enterprise — to France, to the event that proclaimed not just liberty and equality but the principle that gives them life: the recognition by all men of their essential fraternity.

May I propose a toast: to the French Revolution and to the people of France who gave us the dream and the impulse of human freedom. May I toast as well to the good health and continuing success of the President of France and of Madame Mitterrand, who perhaps understands better than anyone what liberation demands: the individual commitment of each and every one of us.

Mabuhay!

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Hotel de Ville

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines At the Hotel de Ville

[Delivered on July 12, 1989]

THE PHILIPPINES NEEDS FRANCE IN PRESERVING DEMOCRACY

The Filipino people's support is the force behind President Aquino's endurance against numerous attempts to topple her government. Her commitment to democratic and peaceful means has made her loved by many.

I was very happy to hear the very sympathetic words of the mayor and here is a man who understands the problems of a new democracy. While it is true we have restored our democracy in the Philippines during the past three years inspite of enormous difficulties facing us, I need the cooperation of countries like France to help us strengthen and preserve this democracy.

As the mayor had said, I was a woman of very little experience. It was my husband who was in politics. But because of the tremendous support of the Filipino people who loves freedom, I have been able to govern in my country inspite of the coup attempts, inspite of the other attempts to destabilize my government.

I am very glad that the mayor quoted Mahatma Gandhi because my husband, in offering his life for our people, presented the best weapon against tyranny. And this was confirmed at his funeral, when around two million people joined us to bury my husband.

I have always believed in peaceful measures. Sometimes I am accused by my critics that I am too good that I should be more forceful and I should punish my enemies. But I believe a democracy means observing due process and giving to every citizen his right according to the law.

Some people say that in comparing me to my predecessor, that in the Philippines, nobody is afraid of Cory Aquino. But many people love Cory Aquino. My successor was feared, and people were doing things simply because they were afraid of him. But I believe it is better to be loved than to be feared.

I want to thank you again for the very warm reception that you have given me and in parting let me say (speaks in French).

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino to Michel Rocard

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To Michel Rocard**

[Delivered on July 12, 1989]

MICHEL ROCARD

J'attendais cette visite avec beaucoup d'intérêt. Je puis vous dire que l'accueil qui m'a été réservé va bien au-delà de nos espérances. L'attention particulière que la France a portée à mon pays pour cette occasion historique et profondément symbolique renforcera davantage encore les liens de l'amitié franco-philippine, qui toutefois auraient à peine besoin d'être renforcées, s'ils tenaient uniquement à la bonne volonté du peuple philippin.

Le nombre de hautes personnalités qui, depuis la restauration de la démocratie, ont visité les Philippines illustre bien le vif intérêt et la sympathie du peuple français. Il convient néanmoins de rappeler que ce soutien a toujours existé et qu'il s'est révélé courageux au moment où les Philippines connurent l'épisode le plus critique de leur combat pour la liberté. La France fut parmi les premiers pays à se mettre en avant en reconnaissant le nouveau Gouvernement démocratique, avant même qu'une révolution ne le porte au Pouvoir. Ce fut un choix périlleux, mais furent périlleuses également les journées qui virent se révéler le meilleur de chacun d'entre nous.

Immédiatement après la révolution d'EDSA, l'Assemblée Nationale française reactiva le groupe d'amitié franco-philippin. De même que les amis de la liberté, de l'Amérique à l'Afrique, assistèrent il y a deux cents ans à la naissance de la liberté, de même la France avec d'autres nations éprises de liberté, fut le témoin de la renaissance de la démocratie philippine, depuis la révolution jusqu'à l'inauguration du Congrès de la République des Philippines, en passant par l'adoption d'une nouvelle constitution. La France demeura à nos côtés, nous rappelant d'où provenait la liberté que nous revendiquions pour nous-mêmes. Les Français étaient avec nous, parce que partout, la liberté, comme le courage, est une seconde patrie pour ceux qui sont libres et valeureux.

En 1987, la France a repris son assistance au développement de façon significative. Les deux accords de coopération, culturelle d'une part, scientifique et technique d'une autre, nous ont permis de réunir la commission mixte en 1988. La France nous a également apporté une aide, généreuse et opportune, à la suite de catastrophes naturelles qui ont frappé mon pays, comme si, par moments, la nature ne collaborait pas avec Dieu pour rendre notre pays libre et heureux.

Le dernier en date des gestes de solidarité et de soutien envers les Philippines est celui du Président Mitterrand lorsque celui-ci a invité les Philippines à se joindre aux célébrations du Bicentenaire de la Révolution française. Les héritiers d'une révolution ont invité les instigateurs d'une autre, d'une nature moins radicale. J'apprécie, en outre, que l'invitation m'ait été adressée par quelqu'un qui, lui aussi, a fait à sa manière une révolution dans le domaine de la politique française.

Cependant, le plus grand cadeau que la France ait fait aux Philippines et au monde réside certainement dans les initiatives audacieuses qu'elle a prises en ce qui touche la dette du Tiers Monde. Cette dette, nombreux sont maintenant ceux qui s'en rendent compte, tient en otage l'économie internationale. Et l'accélération des progrès accomplis dans le monde illustre d'autant plus le décalage qui résulte du poids de la dette.

Bien que certains pays, dont les Philippines, aient eu le courage et l'honnêteté de respecter scrupuleusement leur engagements en matière de remboursement de la dette, au détriment de leur population, il faut le reconnaître, cette attitude n'a fait qu'aggraver le problème, et l'on peut se demander combien de temps un peuple, aussi soucieux soit-il de respecter sa parole, supportera cette injustice.

Les engagements résolus de la France en faveur de la Liberté partout dans le monde, pour mieux en assurer les assises dans votre pays ont apporté à celui-ci un prestige considérable.

C'est donc à juste titre que la France complète aujourd'hui sa démarche en se préoccupant, de la même façon, de la libération économique du Tiers-Monde, condition fondamentale de la poursuite du progrès et de la prospérité du monde développé. Les initiatives que la France a prises au sujet de la dette l'ont gratifiée de ce que je souhaiterais ainsi exprimer: l'éternelle reconnaissance de mon pays et de ceux qui partagent ce problème de la dette extérieure.

La Révolution Française a donné beaucoup de leçons, qu'elle ait appris qu'il n'y a pas de victoires définitives, et qu'on ne mène, ni ne gagne une lutte en un seul combat, ne sont pas les moindres de ces leçons.

Elle a également appris que si la liberté a des amis par-tout dans le monde, les forces de réaction et d'oppression ont à leur disposition de puissants moyens, et leur cri de ralliement est séduisant à court terme car il en appelle à l'instinct humain le plus bas, la recherche de la puissance et du gain matériel. Et c'est ainsi que la lutte ne cessera jamais et que la liberté aura besoin de tous les amis qu'elle pourra trouver.

Ainsi, la République Philippine continue, à travers de la lutte quotidienne de son peuple, à tirer le meilleur parti de ses échecs, à rattrapper la marche du progrès, à combattre les forces de la réaction et à retrouver sa place d'honneur au premier rang des nations éprises de liberté.

Je lève mon verre à l'amitié permanente entre la France et les Philippines, chacun de ces pays incarnant à sa façon une idée, une révolution, mais tous deux symboles d'une seule aspiration universelle à la liberté.

Monsieur le Premier Ministre, au Président Mitterrand, et à la France: MABUHAY!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino before the UNESCO House

Message of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines Before the UNESCO House

[Delivered on July 13, 1989]

UNESCO AND THE PHILIPPINES: BUILDING HOUSES OF DEMOCRACY

The President expresses faith that despite some drawbacks, progress is being made in man's effort towards peace, trust, and kindness. And the key to this better world is education.

Allow me to begin by thanking the Director General Mr. Federico Mayor for the invitation which he graciously extended to me during his visit to the Philippines to speak at the UNESCO House, and for the kind words with which he has welcomed me today.

The Director General calls this the "house of freedom and dialogue". There is a familiar ring to those words, for I have called what we are trying to do in my country as building the house of democracy. We are doing it in the only way such a house can be constructed: by the educated exercise of liberties, the thoughtful assertion of rights, and the free exchange of opinions, if not always of truths.

This is the mission of UNESCO, as it is one of the most important goals of our government: to educate the workers who will build and live in that house. We look to the liberating power of learning and the improving capacity of science to lead humanity to its proper home in a world of universal peace, material dignity, and individual excellence.

UNESCO has been in existence 40 years, yet its relevance has not diminished. Ignorance remains the worst enemy of progress, and tyranny has yet to find a better weapon of domination than lies.

The complexity of the modern world's problems has drawn a bewildering variety of responses. The UNESCO has opened our eyes to the uniqueness of nations and the circumstances that motivate governments to act as they do. It has impressed on everyone that no one – not even a rich country – has a monopoly of moral insight and responses. Yet it has stopped short of the moral relativism that says there is no right or wrong, but only history. For this is the death of conscience.

No, UNESCO has stood for certain absolutes, relating to the individual; absolutes that we have also stood for.

"There are many ways to run a country," I said at the United Nations, paying my respects to the diversity of its membership, "but only one way to treat people – with decency and respect for their uniqueness as individuals" and for their moral and physical integrity as members of the human race.

In a period that has seen more changes in 40 than in 400 years, the UNESCO has tried, not always with success, to adapt itself. But it has never lost the relevance that is rooted in its first article of faith: the sanctity of the individual, to whose intellectual and moral improvement it is singularly dedicated.

The UNESCO's Third Medium-Term Plan presents a clearer vision and more persuasive expression of its ambitions. The Organization is gearing itself for the challenges of a turbulent century drawing to a close. In the uncertainty about that end, however, one thing is certain: the key to a better world is the development of man's capabilities to build it. This is UNESCO's mission.

We keep hearing that the world is getting smaller, that a man on a fast plane can see the sun set twice on the same day. Yet why is it that it does not set on the past and the present in this regard but widen our attention and efforts to prepare for the higher and richer cultures to come.

The cultural heritage of the world must span not only the past but the future which surely cannot be less in its accomplishments – after we have taken in by universal education the totality of the world's population and made the whole planet the stage of our greatest achievements.

As God made man out of clay, I believe that men can remake the world in the image of their perfected hopes, when they have captured a measure of His knowledge.

This seems like a tall order and governments look like they will not change. But I have a good feeling about mankind and its possibilities. The world itself saw unexpected things happen in my country where gentleness turned away anger and force yielded to faith. Despite the occasional throwback, an inexorable progress is being made towards peace and trust and kindness. And the reason seems to be that people are being true, for once, not to their color or their creed, but to their fraternity under the skin. Men have not felt a wind as new since the French Revolution, nor one so gentle and full of hope since Jerusalem. Thank you and God bless us all.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Filipino Community at UNESCO France

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Filipino Community at UNESCO France**

[Delivered on July 13, 1989]

TULUNGAN ANG BAYAN

Naitatag na ang demokrasya sa Pilipinas at patuloy ang pag-unlad ng ekonomiya nito, ngunit marami pang dapat gawin upang ipagpatuloy ang sinimulan noong 1986. Inaanyayahan ang mga Pilipino sa Pransya na makilahok sa pagpapaunlad ng Pilipinas, at ipinaaalala sa kanila na huwag kalimutan ang mga kaugalian at tradisyong Pilipino.

Mga minamahal kong kababayan. Isang kasiyahan para sa akin ang makapiling kayo sa araw na ito. Hindi buo ang aking pagdalaw sa Pransya kung hindi tayo magkakasama.

Sa pagpunta ko dito sa Pransya dalawang paanyaya ni Presidente Mitterrand ang aking natanggap: ang una ay para mag- “state visit” at ang pangalawa ay para dumalo sa kanilang pagdiriwang ng Bicentenaire de la Revolution Francaise.

Ang “state visit” ay makakapagpalawak at makakapag-patibay ng ating relasyon sa Pransya. Makakabuti sa ating bansa ang makipagkaibigan sa marami. Kung marami ang kaibigan, mas marami ang tutulong.

Dito naman sa Bicentenaire, karangalan nating lahat na ang Pilipinas ay isa sa tatlung bansang kanilang napiling anyayahan. Ang dahilan sa palagay ko ay ang paghanga at paggalang ng Pransya sa ating sariling rebolusyon noong Pebrero 1986. Naibalik natin ang demokrasya sa isang mapayapa at di madugong paraan. Bihira sa panahong ito ang kayang tularan ang ating “People Power”.

Karamihan sa inyo ay nangibang bansa, nakipagsapalaran, nagtitiis ng lungkot at nagmamalasakit hindi para sa sarili kundi para sa kapakanan ng inyong mga minamahal sa buhay. Dahil dito at dahil rin sa naitutulong ninyo sa ating bayan sa pamamagitan ng inyong matapat, malinis at makabuluhang panunungkulan, kayo ay aking hinahangaan at pinasasalamatan,

Alam ko po na ang lupang inyong sinilangan ay nasa inyong puso at damdamin pa rin. Noong ang ating kababayan ay nasalanta ng mga sakuna, dagli ninyo silang tinulungan. Dahil dito, kami po ay nagpapasalamat sa inyo. Sa inyong kabutihang-loob, naitatag ang isang samahang tumutulong sa pagpapa-aral ng ating mahihirap na kabataan.

Malayo na po ang ating narating. May demokrasyang umiiral sa ating bayan ngayon. Malaya tayong magpahayag ng nilalaman ng ating isip. Malaya tayong pumupuna ng hindi tama. Bukas ang ating hukuman sa mga naaapi. Bumubuti na ang ating kabuhatan. Mahigit na anim na porsiyentong pag-unlad ng ating ekonomiya ang natamo natin noong nakaraang taon. Ngunit hindi pa tayo tapos sa ating mga sinimulan noong Pebrero 1986.

Marami pa ang dapat nating gawin. Sarili nating pananagutan ang pagpapaunlad ng ating bansa. Dahil ang pandaigdig na pangkabuhatan ay nagtutulungan, kailangan natin ang tulong ng mga bansang industriyal kagaya ng Pransya.

Ito pa ang ilan sa mga kasalukuyang gawaing ating binibigyan diin para sa ating ekonomiya:

— magtatag ng mga programang industrial sa ating mga lalawigan para sa maliliit na kalakalan;

- paunlarin ang kabuhayan ng ating maliliit na magsasaka at mangingisda;
- mabigyan ng hanapbuhay ang ating mga kabataang pumapasok sa mga gawain;
- dagdagan ang ating paaralang tekniko at bokasyonal.

Inaanyayahan ko kayong lumahok sa pagpapaunlad ng ating bansa. Ang inyong mga “remittances” ay malaki ang maitutulong sa kabuhayan ng ating mga mamamayan. Napalago natin ang ating “exports” nitong nakaraang dalawang taon. Ngunit upang mabayaran natin ang ating mahigit sa dalawampu’t walong bilyong dolyares na utang, kailangan nating palakihin pa ang ating “exports”. Umaasa kami na sa inyong sariling paraan, lalo na sa mga pagtitipon kasama ang mga banyaga, tutulungan ninyo kaming itaguyod ang ating mga produktong ating maipagmamalaki. Subukan din ninyong maghikayat ng mga bisita sa ating bansa upang kanilang matuklasan ang mayaman na katutubong kalinangan ng ating lahi. Ito ang magiging ilan ninyong tulong sa pag-taguyod ng pagkakaibigan at pagkakaunawaan ng mga Filipino at mga Pranses.

Umaasa rin kami na sa pamamagitan ng pakikipagtulungan ng ibang bansa tulad ng Pransya ay mararatnan ninyo ang isang mas maunlad at matatag na Pilipinas sa inyong pag-uwi ilang taon mula ngayon.

Ang kahusayan at kasipagan ng mga Pilipino ay kinikilala sa buong mundo — panindigan ninyo itong magandang reputasyon natin.

Habang malayo kayo sa inyong bayan, sana’y huwag ninyong kalimutan ang ating mga magagandang kaugalian at tradisyong Pilipino. Alalahanin ninyo na kahit saan kayo magtungo, kayo ay Pilipino. Sa inyong bawat kilos, igalang ang ating bansa kagaya ng paggalang sa inyong mga magulang. Pagsikapan na maging karapat-dapat na kinatawan ng Pilipinas.

Sama-sama tayong magpunyagi at magsumikap upang mapalago natin ang kapayapaan, katatagan at kasaganaan ng bayang ating sinilangan at kinagisnan.

Mabuhay!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 10th Anniversary of Department of Transportation and Communication

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the 10th Anniversary of Department of Transportation and Communication**

[Delivered on July 24, 1989]

MATCHING A NATION'S GROWTH

DOTC has had many achievements in the past: the construction and privatization of the Manila International Container Terminal, the organizational restructuring of DOTC, and the computerization of the issuance of drivers' licenses, among others. However, many things remain to be done by the DOTC. The transportation crisis in Metro Manila demands drastic measures. The provinces, too, need better means of transportation and communication. In spite of these difficulties, President Aquino is optimistic that the DOTC can meet what is expected of them.

Ten years are good enough a yardstick to measure a group's achievement, but certainly not long enough to determine a government organization's impact on a nation.

But then, throughout these years, you have unfailingly rendered the services expected of you. So, I join you in celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Department of Transportation and Communications. To Secretary Reyes and to all of you go my warmest felicitations.

You are now all aware that the services your department provides are crucial to our economic development. The DOTC's role was not as well-defined nor was it given its due importance in early years, perhaps because its creation was falsely perceived as an exercise in gerrymandering. The years have vindicated your department.

I am pleased to hear of your recent successes. The construction and privatization of the Manila International Container Terminal has made cargo handling more efficient and has certainly created better opportunities for Manila to become a major transshipment post of ASEAN.

I am likewise glad that you have proven that your take-over from the DPWH of transport and communications infrastructure was a wise move. I understand that you have now completed over 38% of the P700 million infrastructure projects you are handling.

I have noted that you are undergoing organizational restructuring, trimming off excess bureaucratic fat, while progressively decentralizing your field operations. Let me tell you that your decentralization dovetails with this Administration's blueprint for bringing democracy closer to the grassroots.

The profitable operation of your service agencies, particularly the Metro Manila Transit Corporation, the Philippine Ports Authority and the Manila International Airport Authority, pleases me. It proves that government's delivery of vital services can be reconciled with economic viability.

I note further that you have effectively computerized the issuance of drivers' licenses, thus cutting down red tape and potentials for corruption. And since you are for continuing past projects that have been effective, I hope you can equal, if not surpass, the speed and reliability that our postal service had earned for itself some years ago.

With regards to transportation, it is ironical that on the eve of the 10th Anniversary of DOTC, there should be this distressing accident where one of our airplanes overshot the runway, killing and maiming several people, both in and out of the aircraft. This and other recent accidents on the land, air and sea underscore the need to stress the importance of the constant maintenance of equipment and the implementation of procedures to assure the public's safety.

Let us all be reminded that public carriers, from the very nature of their business and for reasons of public policy, are required to observe, not merely ordinary diligence, but according to law, *extraordinary diligence* to assure the safety of the passengers they are transporting.

In other words, they are, and I quote, "bound to carry the passengers safely as far as human care and foresight can provide, using the utmost diligence of very cautious persons, with a due regard for all the circumstances."

It behooves the DOTC, therefore, to impose stricter standards to the end that transportation may not pose a menace to the lives and limbs of our people.

The severe transportation crisis which has hit Metro Manila recently is harming our people while robbing our economy of many precious manhours and much productivity. It distresses me to see our people waste time and take risks to crowd into inadequate and often unsafe public transport vehicles in pursuit of their livelihood and their studies in spite of the fact that the Light Rail Transit (LRT) transports some 320,000 Metro Manila commuters daily.

I am pleased to see that the DOTC is taking steps to ease this situation.

Now you also need to look into the transport needs of the provinces, where government services are acutely needed. And, if it should take multi-agency coordination to effect long-range results, I assure you that the other departments will be sensitive to your implementation concerns.

Our transportation shortage is not limited to land vehicles. We have problems in sea and air transportation as well. I have time and again said that we have to involve the private sector in solving these problems. Investment requirements in these industries are simply too costly for government alone to absorb. I have frequently called upon private investors to take advantage of the opportunities open for them here, and I am glad that they have been quite receptive.

We also need better communications facilities. Our telephone services at present can stand much improvement. I was informed that our country has the second lowest telephone density in the entire ASEAN region. Such a sorry state is discouraging investors, both foreign and local. I am, therefore, directing the DOTC to speed up the implementation of the National Telephone Program to link up the entire country through the establishment and operation of a nationwide trunk line.

Complementary to this national program is the rural telephone project which aims to install at least one telephone in every municipality. Just very recently, we announced the NEDA Board's approval of the Misamis Oriental Telephone Expansion and Modernization project based in Cagayan de Oro City in Mindanao. The MISORTELE project will be funded by the South Korean Economic Development Cooperation Fund. We should have similar provincial level expansions in the near future.

Likewise, we need to rationalize the development of the telecommunications industry, whose growth has not matched the speed of technological development of other industries.

The problem areas I have cited may appear to you as a tall order. But I am confident that you will meet, or even exceed our expectations, as you have done in the past.

As our country faces the next decade aiming for a slot among the Newly Industrialized Countries of the Asian Pacific region, I share with you my vision for a much improved transportation and communications system servicing a prosperous nation, a nation reborn, energetic, productive and ready to compete with the rest of the world. You have fared well in difficult years. Your President expects you to perform harder in these less-troubled times.

Once more, my congratulations and a very pleasant day to everyone.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the BIR Anniversary

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the BIR Anniversary

[Delivered on August 1, 1989]

THE NEW INTERNAL REVENUE

The achievement of BIR, when translated into roads, bridges, schoolhouses, hospitals, and jobs could speak well for renewed commitment to public service. However, President Aquino stresses that performance of public servants will only be as good as the public's trust and confidence in them as it would be impossible to require honesty when those in the forefront of tax collection are dishonest and corrupt.

With much pleasure, I congratulate you, the men and women who are the main conduits of the lifeblood of national development. I am aware that the BIR is responsible for collecting over one-third of the annual budgetary requirements of government. Your yearly performance, therefore, is vital to our pursuit of our development goals.

On the 85th anniversary of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), I am doubly glad to greet you now because of your excellent collection performance for the first half of this year. You not only exceeded last year's collection by 24%, you have also surpassed your 6-month goal. Your additional figure of 1.7% may appear minimal in percentage. But surely, the P654 million you collected in excess of your targets will translate into many roads, bridges, schoolhouses, hospitals and jobs that will usher in better times for the nation. My heartfelt congratulations and thanks to Commissioner Ong and to all of you for the hard work you have done.

Your achievement speaks well of renewed vigor in your individual commitment to public service and your collective high morale in the bureau. For so long, the BIR suffered a tarnished image as *Bigay Ikaw Regalo*. I was informed that you are now on your way to being renamed *Bagong Internal Revenue*, and I am glad that you have made such a turn around.

I have made it clear on many occasions that a public servant's performance will only be as good as the public's trust and confidence in him. This is especially true for you who are in the forefront of tax collection. It would be impossible to require honesty from our taxpayers when tax enforcers are dishonest and corrupt. It is imperative that you be models of what you preach. That is the essence of leadership by example, the kind of leadership that this administration wants to instill in public service.

As you have shown trustworthiness, so has the public rewarded you with renewed faith. So I laud you for effectively demonstrating what this government means in exacting sincerity and integrity from the men and women in government service.

I also take note of the various innovations that you have put in place. I understand that your Commissioner's provincial visits have greatly boosted the morale of our local tax collectors, many of whom had never seen a Commissioner before. Your door-to-door persuasion campaigns in Metro Manila to ensure that your tax targets are met have borne fruit, and I thank those who labored in this campaign.

Let me tell you that I do not allow good work to go unnoticed. I had previously requested your Commissioner to study the possibility of a scheme that would ensure that regions that meet tax targets will be prioritized in the release of allocations. I have also asked Commissioner Ong for a scheme of rewards, basically non-material, to recognize those who are outstanding in their work. I am directing the Commissioner to complete these studies soon.

Without dampening the accolades due you, let me point out that our increased collection is as much a reflection of the improved earning and thus tax-paying capability of our people, as it is a fine record of your achievements. As you all know, our economy perked up with a 6.7% GNP growth last year. For this and successive years, government needs to sustain the momentum that was started. In the same manner, it is important that you sustain the energy you showed when you exceeded your targets this year.

I had announced in my State of the Nation Address the measures we must take, among them, vigorous tax collection efforts to generate resources for domestic use. Also, I have very recently submitted to Congress our budget of P233 billion to support the projects and services we intend to complete next year. Expectedly, you will be tasked to collect more than this year's goal.

However, I will not leave you to face your tough assignment unsupported. I will repeat what I said in the State of the Nation Address: we will not tolerate tax evasion. We will relentlessly pursue these economic saboteurs until they are placed behind bars. I stand four-square behind you in this drive to punish tax evaders.

When your Commissioner and I discussed tax collection some months ago in my radio program *Magtanong sa Pangulo*, he enriched my vocabulary with the BIR twist to the meanings of: *PR*, *RP*, and *Package Deal*. I was told that *PR* stands for public relations funds or the money that flows from the taxpayer straight to the tax collector's pocket, that *RP* is what the tax payer is willing to pay as taxes to the government, and that *Package Deal* is the agreement that decides the shares for *PR* and *RP*. From your noteworthy performance this year, I would like to believe that more people now prefer to pay straight to *RP*.

So, as I commend you again for the excellent work, let me remind you that your tasks for the remaining months and for next year are the challenges that confront you. I ask you to be fortified by the thought that without your efforts, the wheels of progress will barely turn for the nation. Keep up the good work for *RP*, and let us do away completely with *PRs* and *Package Deals* in the future.

Thank you once more for the fine performance, and a very pleasant day to all.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the signing of the Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the signing of the Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao**

[Delivered on August 1, 1989]

FOR A MEANINGFUL AUTONOMY

Affirming and defining the principle that citizens must exercise their right to free choice on a fundamental political change, President Aquino establishes the need to subject the law to a plebiscite, where people can decide their future for themselves. But this exercise serves only as a gateway to the more difficult task of making the autonomy work for the benefit of the people. This is the test for our resolve and our commitment.

Nearly seventeen months have passed since the convening of the Mindanao Regional Consultative Commission. The length of time it has taken to craft the law allowing autonomy in Mindanao reflects the contentious nature of the issues both the RCC and the Congress had to grapple with. But the constitutional mandate for autonomy was clear and, in enacting the law, we have kept faith with the Constitution.

The issue of autonomy remains controversial. Some will reject the law because it does not offer enough powers to the autonomous region; others because it gives away too much.

The law acknowledges the cultural distinctiveness and the ancestral claims of the Bangsa Moro and the tribal Filipinos. But it also clearly and repeatedly defines them as constituent elements of one, indivisible sovereign nation.

Congress has recognized the need to manage the transition to a new structure of government. It has provided in the law for an Oversight Committee, composed of officials from both the Executive and Legislative branches of government, to supervise the devolution of powers and functions from the national government to the autonomous region.

Autonomy addresses the political aspirations of many Mindanao communities. But even in these communities, the people have other, perhaps more basic, concerns: potable water, health facilities, schools, livelihood opportunities. To be truly meaningful, autonomy must translate into the more effective delivery of these services. The national line agencies and the future autonomous government have a shared responsibility for moderating the disruptions inevitably resulting from change.

We have travelled a long way towards redeeming the constitutional pledge of autonomy, but still have far to go. The people in the proposed autonomous region must decide for themselves in a plebiscite whether the law meets their objectives. Because the law is complex, I have directed the relevant government agencies to mount a massive information campaign to help the voters understand the basis of the autonomy law, its content and its implications so as to give them a better foundation for making a rational decision. The people must understand not only the benefits that autonomy will bring but also the new responsibilities that they must bear.

Against those who insist that we dictate the decision on our people, we once again affirm the principle, ordained in our Constitution, that the citizens must exercise their right of free choice on a fundamental change in political arrangements. We must defend this principle as the one most consistent with the constitutional bias towards greater local autonomy and individual freedom.

Yet even the completion of the plebiscite will not mark the end of the journey. The plebiscite only serves as the gateway to a more difficult terrain. Making autonomy work for the benefit of the people will test our resolve and our commitment.

For the Muslims, the Christians and the Lumads alike, grant of regional autonomy will usher in a new era of more complex political dynamics. Learning to maneuver in this new political environment will require of them great patience, fortitude and faith. But the success of this undertaking will promote the peace and progress we all desire for our people in Mindanao and in the rest of the Philippines.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the National Scientist Conferment

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the National Scientist Conferment/Department of Science and Technology**

[Delivered on August 1, 1989]

**THE CHALLENGE OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT**

President Aquino affirms that the development of science and technology is among her highest priorities. The DOST must bring the academe, government and private sector together in promoting these twin concerns if we are to realize our national dream of being one of the newly-industrialized countries (NICs) before the year 2000.

Today, we confer the title of National Scientist on Dr. Paulo Campos for his outstanding work in medicine, particularly for his pioneering research on the genetic factor in endemic goiter which earned for him international fame and a Nobel Prize nomination. We are also honoring six outstanding young scientists for their valuable contributions to scientific and technological developments in our country; Drs. Efren Abaya for digital and data communications; Christopher Bernido for theoretical physics; Virginia Cuevas, Candida Adalla, and Alfinetta Zamora for their various researches that significantly affect agricultural processes and production; and Mary Ann Lansang for epidemiology.

To all of you, awardees, go my congratulations for your singular achievements. Your perseverance and dedication to work set you apart from your peers. Keep these traits for they are the hallmarks of the truly outstanding. Use them to advance your causes while you also help your fellowmen.

With the honor we confer on Dr. Campos and his colleagues in science, we pay homage to the scientists, science researchers and science administrators in our country. In giving due recognition to remarkable accomplishments we hope to instill in those who are in scientific and technological fields this desire to excel, that in so doing, they may propel us all to a better future.

I am aware that only a few of our countrymen are involved in science and technology, and of this few, only a handful may be deemed outstanding. This is regrettable, for our scientists and technologists are our best long-term bets for a prosperous and stable future.

I share with you the strong desire to develop science and technology. We have started to address this need. Soon after the Presidential Task Force on Science and Technology submitted its report in March of this year, I appointed Secretary Ceferino Follusco as the new Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology. Though I thwarted his desire to return to the private sector by this appointment, I am confident that he will ably meet the new challenges before him. I am telling him now to continue, and I urge all of you to join him in urging Congress and concerned agencies to cooperate with us.

Then I created the Science and Technology Coordinating Council composed of nine Cabinet men plus four members from the academe and the private sector to assist in our development goals. We will soon create regional science and technology councils to complement national efforts. Likewise, I have included the DOST Secretary in the NEDA Board to ensure that science will always be considered in national development plans. All Regional Directors of DOST are now members of the Regional Development Councils.

Moreover, I have directed the Department of Budget to increase the DOST's budget for 1990, and this has been reflected in the national budget I recently submitted to Congress Except for one foreign-funded project that has terminated this year, DOST's programs have been given increased allocations in the proposed budget.

All these support measures are part of the overall design to give preeminence to science and technology next year and the following years. For unless we do so, how can we realize our national dream of being one of the newly-industrialized countries (NICs) even before the year 2000?

In my State of the Nation Address last week, I stressed that the development of science and technology is among our highest priorities. The DOST must bring academe, government and business together in promoting these twin concerns.

But government resources alone will not suffice for the requirements of development. Industrialized countries reached advanced technological development with massive infusion of private funds. Perhaps, our private sector can do the same. Science and technology offer tremendous growth potentials which should prove attractive to investors. So, let me use this forum to invite the private sector, as well as the community-based organizations, to help in the generation, development and utilization of the fruits of science and technology.

Not only this; your government is considering measures to encourage more people, particularly the young ones, to be involved in science and technology. We are studying the expansion of the career system for scientists and researchers to include those in government service. This should result in a broader, and hopefully, a more rewarding national science career system in government. There is no reason why this should not apply equally well to those in the private sector.

Similarly, we shall have to upgrade the science curriculum in all educational levels, to make more students scientifically inclined. Science can flourish only when science components are included in all curricula – from grade school to graduate level. I urge the DOST, therefore, to monitor closely the operation of the science high schools, improve the quality of their teaching and heed their urgent requests for additional laboratory and library facilities.

I support your strategies for the modernization of all sectors of our economy, the upgrading of our Research & Development capabilities and the development of our science and technology infrastructure, including manpower training. In our quest for higher and better technologies, we must put highest consideration on the needs of the poorest of our population. They have an acute need for low and intermediate technologies to which you have the answer.

Today's awardees have an exacting role to fulfill. I challenge all of you then to contribute to the planning and programming of science projects for national development and progress. Undoubtedly, you shall continue to reap laurels for future achievements in your respective fields. It is only right and proper that the government protect your exclusive rights to your intellectual properties and creations, particularly when beneficial to the people.

Once more, my congratulations to Dr. Campos and our outstanding young scientist awardees for their shining examples. I enjoin you now to be more aggressive in leading your colleagues in our march to take our place beside the NICs of the future.

Magandang hapon sa inyong lahat.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 88th PC/14th INP Anniversary

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 88th PC/14th INP Anniversary

[Delivered on August 8, 1989]

STRENGTH OF A NATION

“Pagkalinga ng madla, lakas ng bansa”. “Support of the people, strength of the nation.” This, President Aquino states, is the strength of our victories in the past. What the past failed to achieve, we have accomplished by the intelligent use of force, and by the unfailing respect for civil and human rights. We are winning the war of democracy because we are living its promises — liberty, justice and progress.

General Dula Torres, Tell the troops *“Tikas Pahinga”*.

On this joint anniversary celebration, we have much to report—a great deal to be proud of—in the PC/INP.

It has been a year of achievements for you, achievements we have recognized in a small way today. I would like to congratulate the awardees and extend to them the thanks of our people, the gratitude of the government for the services they have rendered. Police, Constabulary and civilians have been given due honors-today. This underscores the unity of the PC/INP and the close cooperation of police and society since the EDSA revolution. This close cooperation is the theme of today’s celebration.

“Pagkalinga ng madia, lakas ng bansa” — “Support of the people, strength of the nation”.

That is the secret of our victories in the past year. What massive applications of force, general suspension of civil rights, and wanton disregard of Filipino values in the past failed to achieve — we have accomplished by the intelligent and firm use of force, and by unfailing respect for civil and human right rights. We are winning the war for democracy because we are living the promises of democracy – liberty, justice and progress.

A key element in our success has been the PC/INP under General Ramon Montano, to whom we have constantly turned to achieve the next to impossible, whether it is to track down the renegade military or to prove what we have confidently stated in our State of the Nation Address: we have turned the tide against the Communists in their war to destroy democracy.

There are figures to prove our success, but I prefer to rely on the following facts:

Fact number one: the communists have turned savagely against the people, and have embarked upon a ruthless campaign of assassination.

Fact number two: the communists recognize that our military and police forces have penetrated their defenses and infiltrated their ranks. As a result, they have turned with even greater savagery on their own people.

And, fact number three: the top leadership of the Communist movement are falling into our hands.

There is a downside to these welcome developments: the Communists will launch an even more deadly war against civil society as they try to substitute a new basis for their fading power: the fear of the people instead of their support.

In that respect, we yield to them. Let the Communists enjoy our people's fear; we shall triumph through our people's respect, affection, and all-out support.

The support is growing as a result of the accomplishments of the PC/INP.

Thus, the PC/INP took part in 477 missions this year, in addition to 835 last year. The maximum application of pressure in the Communist heartlands led to the surrender of some 1,300 of them this year, in addition to the 3,400 who turned themselves in last year.

As a result of the PC/INP's clean-up drive, civilian government services—such as health, education, and infrastructure building—can now reach outlying areas and improve the lives of our poor and neglected communities.

The measure of success, we have noted, is the increased violence of the Communist movement, and the channeling of its energies into urban terrorism. Our casualties have been great. We grieve with the families of the police, Constabulary, Marine and army casualties in the brutal war that the Communists have brought to our cities.

But this strategy of terror, for all the pain it causes our families, will be the final undoing of the Communists.

Now they have shown their hand: they have given up trying to win the hearts and minds of the people and are content to just destroy human life.

Now they have shown their true colors: red, like the blood they have spilled in our streets; black, as the sorrow they have brought to many a family.

Because of the war they now openly wage against the people, the people have made war on them. Most recently, the people turned in two top leaders of the movement. This cooperation is repeated throughout the land and accounts greatly for the success of our campaign.

Thus, in addition to the capture of Malay and Ocampo, 11 regional and provincial leaders were arrested this year, and eight central committee members, nine staff officers, and 16 regional leaders last year. The same cooperation from the people made possible the capture of military renegade Reynaldo Cabauatan earlier this year.

The PC/INP has been equally relentless in its anti-criminality campaign, although here the fight is even harder. Still, some improvement has been remarked in the crime rate, which is down by 2.6% from last year. Carnapping is down from five vehicles stolen daily last year, to less than 2 per day this year.

The PC/INP is determined to be worthy of its achievements by purging its ranks of those who are an insult to the uniform.

Last year, I ordered the slack, the incompetent, and the crooked purged from the Constabulary and police. I am happy to note the progress you have made. Since I delivered my warning last year, 1,557 PC/INP personnel have been purged.

This is only the beginning, I am sure. For as I said in my State of the Nation address, the peace and order situation remains nothing less than terrible. And what compounds it is the prominence of military and police elements in the worst criminal activities disguised, including the killing of fellow military and police. This shame will stop, for it detracts from the honor that is due our dedicated men in uniform, many of whom have met their deaths in the line of duty.

The casualties of the PC/INP, particularly in the anti-insurgency campaign, have generally been the highest among the services. This is because their mission requires them to reach out to the smallest communities, and close in with the enemy that torments them.

We note with sorrow the many who have died among your ranks; we remark with pride the heroic disregard for self that marked their service to the Republic. The achievements we salute today are further ennobled by knowing the price we had to pay in the lives of the best among us.

I urge the PC/INP to continue its good work, to pile even greater victories on the many for which it is hereby congratulated.

The government will do its part. We shall push harder in pushing logistics to the field. We shall improve communications, mobility and firepower. In particular, I expect that every police station in the country will have at least one patrol vehicle before the end of the year—with provision for fuel, of course.

The work of the police and constabulary, which will soon be formally consolidated, will never end. Insurgencies can be defeated, wars come to an end—but the work of keeping order in civil society must be the unending mission of the civilian national police that will soon be created out of the elements we have so highly commended today.

Now that Congress has come around to our views on a national police force, this will probably be the last time we shall celebrate a joint Constabulary-Police anniversary. Instead, we shall inaugurate the Philippine National Police. Let us prepare well for this event. I address these parting words to the leadership of the PC/INP today:

Don't give me laggards, cowards, carnappers, and hold-uppers — give me your best for this new force for peace and order. Give me your brave, your intelligent, your dedicated men and women in uniform. We are going to make a new start and I will accept only the finest. Congratulations on your anniversary.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the Ninoy Aquino Youth Talent Awards

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines During the Ninoy Aquino Youth Talent Awards

[Delivered on August 21, 1989]

YOUTH IN THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

President Aquino calls on the youth of the Philippines whom she regards as the real hope of the Fatherland, to help her in her own effort to build a better life for our countrymen. The Ninoy Aquino Youth Talent Awards given on the day Ninoy died is a testament of his pursuit of excellence and our recognition of the youth's important role in national development.

Today, we observe the sixth anniversary of the martyrdom of Ninoy Aquino. There is no better and more appropriate way to celebrate that historic event than by attending these, the awarding ceremonies of the NAYTA, the Ninoy Aquino Youth Talent Awards.

In this hall tonight are assembled the most talented and the most creative of our youth, boys and girls who have survived the most grueling of eliminations, young people blessed with a touch of genius in singing and dancing, in acting, in writing and in painting.

What would be more fitting, what would be more proper, than that these anointed ones should get their awards on the day that Ninoy died? On the day he laid down his life so that we may all live in a climate which would give free rein to the expression of our talents?

There is another reason why it is most appropriate that these awards should be given on this day: Ninoy's entire life was a testament, an enduring manifestation of what youth can accomplish, of how determination and perseverance can triumph over inexperience in the pursuit of excellence.

Consider these facts: at 17, Ninoy was a war correspondent, chosen over other journalists more senior than he to cover the fighting in Korea. He was 20 when he negotiated the surrender of Luis Taruc, the Huk supremo. At 23, he was the youngest mayor the country had ever seen. At 27, when the Tarlac electorate voted him into office, he was the youngest provincial vice-governor in history. Then, at 28, he assumed the governorship of Tarlac, becoming again the youngest provincial executive the country ever had.

But Ninoy was not through yet. At the age of 35, he won a seat in the Philippine Senate, making mincemeat of the vaunted Nacionalista Party machine in the process. Perhaps, if fate had been less cruel, he might have become also the youngest President this country would have had.

But that is another story.

In a very real sense, therefore, these awards are an anthem to Ninoy, a recognition of the fact that in heeding the call of public service, youth is no handicap. That it can, if the truth be known, actually be an advantage since it is invariably accompanied by enthusiasm and resiliency.

For singing this anthem to Ninoy, these youths deserve my gratitude and yours. I thank them for reminding me that in my own efforts to build a better life for our countrymen, it would do me well to call more and more on the youth of the Philippines. For they are, after all, the real hope of our Fatherland.

With all my heart, I congratulate the winners. May their victory tonight be more than just a recognition of their talent. Let it be a pledge also for them to use that talent for the development of the country.

Thank you very much. Mabuhay tayong lahat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Salary Standardization Law

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Salary Standardization Law**

[Delivered on August 21, 1989]

FOR A RENEWED SENSE OF PUBLIC SERVICE

President Aquino signs the Salary Standardization Law for workers in government as part of the continuous efforts to find effective ways of improving the living conditions of public servants. She appeals for a renewed sense of dedication to public service so that national interest will always be above personal ends.

In signing this salary standardization law for workers in government, I am fully aware that the increases it provides, while substantial, can only be part of our continuing efforts to find effective ways of improving the living conditions of public servants.

I have therefore directed that the consultations we started with representatives and organizations of government employees be accelerated so that we can search for various means of extending the incomes we can now afford to give them, by some additional cash or non-cash benefits.

At the same time, I appeal for a renewed sense of dedication to public service from all of us in government, so that we will always place the national interest above our personal ends.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization 10th General Assembly

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization 10th General Assembly**

[Delivered on August 22, 1989]

ASEAN UNITY FOR PEACE AND PROGRESS

President Aquino assures the delegates of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization that she shares their dreams of having a truly ASEAN Community with common goals of regional unity, peace, progress and prosperity. Aware that the attention of the world is focused on Asia as the next area of economic growth, she supports the possibilities of an ASEAN Trade Expansion scheme which she says would be meaningful if its benefits redound to the majority.

I am glad to extend the warm welcome of the Filipino people to all our ASEAN friends gathered here. The Philippines is truly honored to host for the third time the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization (AIPO). Thus, I bid you, delegates and observers to this Tenth General Assembly a hearty Mabuhay!

AIPO has recognized in its early years that the strength of ASEAN emanates from the collective will of its peoples. And that closer cooperation among our respective legislatures would result in greater participation by our peoples in collective ASEAN endeavors. The prompt recognition has given the organization the determination to grow in pursuit of its mission for the ASEAN people.

Since its creation in 1975 with 54 parliamentary representatives from five (5) ASEAN countries, AIPO has grown in stature and influence. Whereas in its first assembly, it declared its desire to promote closer parliamentary cooperation among ASEAN countries, it now has succeeded not only in forging closer ties among members of the parliaments of ASEAN but also in establishing links with the European, Australian and other parliaments.

I am glad that AIPO has developed along this direction. Our nations have long felt the need for regional unity. This was the compelling reason for establishing ASEAN. And ASEAN welcomes any move that promotes this idea of oneness. Beyond doubt, AIPO can contribute much to foster this spirit of regional solidarity, for its voice is highly respected, coming as it does from the collective minds of ASEAN's parliamentarians.

I am heartened to know that you have prepared for this Tenth Assembly an impressive range of issues relating to the enhancement of cooperation among our countries. For, being representatives of your respective peoples, you, delegates, are a good gauge of your people's sentiments and therefore are in a vantage position to define our similarities, thresh out our differences, and hopefully, generate solutions generally acceptable to all. Although not formally integrated into the ASEAN framework, your organization nevertheless wields a special influence among our countries. Past and present ASEAN leaders have attested to this in their messages to you.

I share your dream to have a truly ASEAN community. I have high hopes for a prosperous ASEAN developing together, with each country complementing the others' needs. The complementarity of our moves hinges on our mutual respect for each nation's sovereignty and on the strength of our beliefs in an ASEAN way of life. Thus we need the commitment of everyone from ASEAN.

Moving in accord would not be too difficult for, as neighbors, we have many things in common. We share a common Asian cultural heritage from which we derive the traits common to our peoples. We share special friendships nurtured by cultural kinship and the proximity of our territories. These bonds were tested once more

during the Third ASEAN Summit Meeting in 1987. When all your leaders came here to renew their resolve for ASEAN, despite fears about their safety in Manila, these bonds were further sealed. And most importantly, we share common goals, foremost of which are peace, progress and prosperity.

Even as we in ASEAN share common hopes, so do we have common concerns. Being Third World countries, we are faced with problems of development, and corollarily, of economics. Our countries individually face decisions which may have regional implications but must be borne singly by individual nations. Several non-ASEAN countries have expressed their own views on keeping peace in our region. But are we not the best judges of our collective destiny, just as each sovereign nation can best shape its own future?

Let us continue to use AIPO as a venue for the exchange of views on sensitive issues of mutual interest, such as regional defense. It can, indeed, be a force linking every ASEAN country to her neighbors through resolutions that may translate into significant legislation in our respective countries.

I am particularly pleased to know that you will discuss a scheme for ASEAN Trade Expansion. We are all aware that the attention of the world is riveted on the Asia Pacific Basin as the next area of economic growth. This area includes the ASEAN region, your respective countries and mine. ASEAN is now living up to this expectation. Although the pace of growth may be uneven among its member countries, the fact remains: we in ASEAN are all aiming to belong to the Newly-Industrialized Countries of the 21st Century. And this, we can achieve faster if we can put into action what we had promised ourselves to be our areas of cooperation: trade, technology, banking and finance, utilization of our natural resources, and all other aspects that affect our national economies. I urge this Assembly to explore the other areas of economic cooperation embodied in the Manila Declaration of 1987.

As we move forward to realize the ASEAN economic miracle foretold of us, it would be good to remember that an economic boom would be meaningful only if its benefits redound to the majority. Development should not merely be more food nor additional jobs. It should enhance the people's capacity to make decisions that vitally affect their lives. In this context, your organization is most relevant to the path ASEAN is taking now, for you, being members of deliberative bodies, are expected to have integrated the various viewpoints of your respective peoples on the manner of development that we should pursue.

I have noted with great interest your efforts toward common legislative programs on key ASEAN concerns. Truly, there is need to give teeth to your resolutions. I thus enjoin the leaders of the parliaments of ASEAN member countries to enact legislation corresponding with AIPO resolutions. I was informed that you will continue to discuss the viability of establishing an ASEAN parliament. It would undoubtedly be to your best interests to have a permanent AIPO Secretariat to pave the way for an ASEAN legislative body. I fully support the proposal for the creation of this permanent Secretariat.

As I thank you now for the services you are rendering to ASEAN, allow me to remind you that it would take no less than full commitment from everyone to realize our mutual goals. Let me enjoin you to continue your noble efforts for ASEAN, for only if we work concertedly can we achieve the ASEAN quest for lasting peace and well-being.

Mabuhay ang AIPO!

Mabuhay ang ASEAN!

With great pleasure, I hereby declare the Tenth General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization open.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Philippine Air Lines

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On Philippine Air Lines

[Delivered on August 24, 1989]

PROMOTER OF FRIENDSHIP AND TRADE

Noting the improved performance and quality of service of PAL and its financial turnaround toward profit, President Aquino reminds PAL personnel of their primary obligation of safety and integrity in their transactions and services, and of patriotism, where overall public interest should be above everything. She stressed the urgency of privatizing PAL to enable our people to travel safely, reliably, and efficiently. As the flag carrier, PAL should continue to be an instrument for political unity, promoter of friendship and trade with other countries, and socio-economic development.

Less than a year ago, in September 1988, I was present at the formal presentation of the Fokker 50 turboprop aircraft. Tonight, it is my pleasure anew to be here for the presentation of the Boeing 737-300 jet. Both are milestones in the development of Philippine Airline's domestic services since 1986. The Fokker 50 eventually completed the replacement of old turboprop aircraft that have been in service for 22 years. Now we have the B737 jet, which will be replacing the veteran BAC One Elevens which have been in its fleet since 1971.

When I assumed the Presidency, I directed Philippine Airlines to improve its services to customers and overcome the serious problems of flight delays and cancellations. The past many years of losses had eroded the morale of PAL personnel and led to the deterioration in the quality of their service. I further directed that priority be given to the domestic services in the modernization of the fleet, considering that since 1971 no new airplane has been acquired for the fleet.

Now, I am happy that the expansion and modernization of the domestic fleet will be completed by September 1990 when all 10 leased B737s have been delivered.

Not only have new aircraft been added to the fleet but PAL's on-time performance has, I was informed, improved and the quality of service to customers also enhanced. I note with pleasure that this had also resulted in a financial turnaround for PAL, with profits being realized in two of the past three years of my administration. I was told that the trend in the current fiscal year is towards another profit.

I congratulate everyone in PAL for these achievements. I would also like to acknowledge the support given PAL's reflecting program by the Guinness Peat Aviation Group, with the provision of the Shorts SD360, the B737 and also aircraft for the international fleet. Our thanks, too, to Boeing Commercial Airplanes Company for their help in the provision of the B737s.

There are, however, areas to which I must call attention. The first is safety. It is the primary obligation of any public carrier, especially one engaged in commercial air transportation, to assure the highest possible level of safety for its customers. A recent event underscores this obligation. I hereby direct PAL management to address this matter with full vigor.

The next is integrity. The members of the Board and management staff have a mandate from me to assure transparency in all transactions, especially where millions of dollars are involved as in the acquisition of aircraft and purchase of vital equipment and supplies. Also, we still hear about irregularities in the booking of passengers. Planes that are supposed to be fully booked yield seats, as if by magic, if the passenger, even if he is not on the waiting list,

knows how to go about it. Worse, the grateful passenger, when he boards the plane, sometimes finds that it is not really fully booked. Then there are reports that some PAL personnel are still engaged in extra-curricular activities like bringing in highly dutiable goods, if not contraband, or acting as couriers for smugglers. PAL employees are public officials. As such, they must serve with utmost integrity and act with patriotism. As I have publicly declared several times, PAL is to be privatized and the sooner the better. But it should not result in PAL becoming dedicated to profit to the exclusion of the strategic interests of the country and overall public interest.

Ownership of PAL begets the responsibility to our people to provide safe, reliable and efficient air transportation. The presence of domestic competition should not again be an alibi for the haphazard operation of schedules, the willful suspension of services and the indifferent treatment of customers.

Finally, PAL should continue to strive to be an instrument for political unity in our country and, as the flag carrier, to be an effective promoter of friendship and trade with other countries. Everyone in PAL should keep in mind that this airline has a vital role in the economic and social development of our country by transporting people, goods and mail within our archipelago and to our friends throughout the world.

This event offers me some welcome respite from the tremendous problems that confront us all. But none of these is insurmountable if all of us will address them with the same spirit that the new airplanes of PAL exemplify. We shall succeed and we shall prevail long after our enemies have fired their last futile shot and our critics have been exhausted by their carping.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Welcome Address of President Corazon Aquino during the Taiwan Trade and Investment Mission to the Philippines

**Welcome Address
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the Taiwan Trade and Investment Mission of the Philippines**

[Released on September 14, 1989]

ALTERNATIVE SITE FOR INVESTMENTS

President Aquino invites Taiwanese companies and delegates to explore alternative sites on regional industrial centers based on their specific needs and preferences. Specifically, she suggests that they take a close look at Bataan province or several sites in the northern portion of the province which could be converted into industrial estates.

First of all, let me welcome you to the Philippines. I wish to thank you for organizing this investment and trade mission and for making the Philippines a part of your itinerary.

I am pleased to note that more and more Taiwanese businessmen are investing in the country. This is the fifth group of Taiwanese investors that we have received so far this year, and I hope that this mission and other missions still to come will be very fruitful and productive.

As a manifestation of Taiwanese confidence in the Philippines as an investment opportunity area and alternative location for oversea expansion plans, our records suggest that there has been a surge of investments from Taiwan over the past three years since the start of my administration. In fact, Taiwan has become the top foreign investor in the country this year.

In 1986, Taiwanese equity investments in the Philippines approved by our Board of Investments amounted to a mere US\$354 thousand or one-half of one percent of the total foreign investments that came into the Philippines. In 1987, this increased 25-fold to US\$9 million to make up 5.4 percent of our total foreign investments. Last year, Taiwanese investments jumped 12 times to reach US\$109.3 million representing 23 percent of our total foreign investments. And in the first seven months of this year alone, Taiwanese investments at US\$ 124 million already surpassed the amount generated for the whole of 1988 and accounted for again some 23 percent of our total foreign equity investments.

This year, we hope to be able to generate US\$1 billion in total project costs of investments from Taiwan — or 50 percent higher than the actual level generated last year.

The Philippines, through Trade and Industry Secretary Jose Concepcion, has made a suggestion for some Taiwanese businessmen to consider developing Port Irene-45 minutes away by plane from Taiwan — as an industrial site for their companies to locate in and serve as manufacturing base from which to export products for their world markets, particularly in products covered by US-GSP privileges which the Philippines enjoys.

This was made in 1987. My understanding is that today, this suggestion is still being considered, while some companies have expressed some reservation regarding the ability of the existing infrastructure to meet the immediate needs of industries locating in the area in the short term.

In view of this, I would like to invite the Taiwanese companies to explore alternative sites or regional industrial centers — based on their specific needs and preferences. May I therefore suggest that you take a close look at Bataan province; either within the Bataan Export Processing Zone in Mariveles, which can immediately accept new

industries or several suitable sites in the northern portion of the province which could be converted into industrial estates.

Other alternatives in the provinces abound, Leyte, where abundant power is available from the island's geothermal fields, Cagayan de Oro — a gateway city of the South. Or General Santos City – also in the South — which will be Mindanao's agri-industrial center in the near future.

With the various industrial sectors represented here today, I am sure that there will be many exciting possibilities and opportunities that you can discuss with your Filipino counterparts in your respective workshops.

Once again, I thank you for coming to the Philippines and I hope this investment and trade mission will be a successful one.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Civil Service Week Awarding Ceremonies

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Civil Service Week Awarding Ceremonies**

[Released on September 15, 1989]

A TRIBUTE TO THE CIVIL SERVICE

President Aquino pays tribute to an 89-year old system that has stood for continuity and stability through decades of political change. This recognition is expressed in concrete measures — right to form unions and to collective bargaining; increase in salary levels four times since 1986; standardization of compensation; and many others. She remains committed to the decentralization program and devolution of authority so that services may be delivered speedily to areas where these are needed. At the same time, she intones that commitment to fighting graft and corruption has not waived as she enjoins everyone to be vanguards of moral change in their respective agencies.

My experience in the past three years has taught me that looking at government performance is always a tricky affair. What is known about it is only a small part of what really goes on. For the most part of the year, we characterize government by its exceptions: the occasional failure, the misjudgment, the difference of opinion.

One day in the year, however, we are reminded that there is more to government than bad news. Beyond the headlines, the contentious debate and the privilege speeches, government works. There are hundreds of thousands who labor daily, who work steadily and well, who contribute their own little share to helping build this country. That one day in the year is today.

Today, we honor our 1.5 million civil servants whose exemplars we have just awarded and recognized.

More importantly, we pay tribute to an 89-year old system that has stood for continuity and stability through decades of political change.

The Civil Service is far from perfect. Many of the criticisms levelled against it are true. Its shape and form, its pace, performance and values have undoubtedly been influenced by the nuances of political history. Accordingly, it is political will that we will bring to bear so that the Philippine Civil Service may get back on its proper track again.

The signals we have given are clear.

At the start of my term, I said that there will be institutional consultation and participation. For government employees, this found concrete manifestation in the 1987 Constitution which, for the first time in Philippine history, gave them the right to organize, collectively negotiate and participate in peaceful concerted activities in accordance with law. I am told that there are 116 government unions already registered, many of whom are involved in negotiations with their respective office or agency heads.

True to the Constitutional mandate that at the earliest possible time, the Government shall increase the salary scales of employees of the National Government, we have raised salary levels four times since 1986. Less than a month ago, I signed into law the “Compensation & Position Classification Act” anchored on the principle providing equal

pay for substantially equal work, and basing differences in pay upon substantive differences in duties and responsibilities – this again, in response to the Constitutional directive for Congress to provide for the standardization of compensation of government officials. From 19 different pay scales which served to exemplify the patronage and cronyism of earlier years, we have established only one pay scale for all government workers from the laborer to the President. We have even provided for merit and longevity increases so that loyalty and performance may be given their just rewards.

I have committed myself to endorsing to Congress reasonable wage extenders for government employees to help cushion whatever erosion in income may result from inflation.

I am awaiting the report of the Civil Service Commission on this following their recent workshop with unions and concerned government agencies.

A national incentives and awards program is now being discussed at the Cabinet Assistance System just as a schedule of penalties for violations of Civil Service rules has recently been promulgated. I note that the said schedule of penalties now impose dismissal for dishonesty, grave misconduct, gross incompetence and neglect of duty. I hope that our employees will take this to heart just as I hope our officials will impose these sanctions consistently and with an even hand.

I have endorsed to Congress for its action the proposed Civil Service Code which will hopefully insulate the career service from political influence, power struggles and changes in leadership.

I am committed to a program of decentralization and eventual devolution of our powers and authorities so that services may be delivered more speedily to the areas where these are needed. Additionally, I will support moves to locate more of our manpower and materials in the field instead of the traditional bias for Manila-based operations and decisions.

All these expressions of support are geared towards exacting a similar commitment from the rest of the bureaucracy towards better performance and greater productivity. Towards integrity and honesty that will restore the public's trust and the bureaucracy's credibility.

Let me dwell briefly on graft and corruption. Because we were elevated to this country's leadership on the basis of moral ascendancy, our critics have pounced on every instance of graft, real or imagined, to rake us over the coals. It is the easy way out to take offense, particularly when it is obvious that the ambitious and the opportunists among us use these to promote their own interests. I take this, however, as an opportunity to demonstrate our earnest desire to rid this country of those who will wield power for self-aggrandizement, heedless of the greater interests of the people.

I repeat:

My friends and relatives are not above the law. Should any of them show inclinations to the contrary, you have my blessings to expose their activities.

I am inviting all government employees, including government employees associations to be the vanguards of moral change in their respective agencies. Likewise, I call upon our citizens. Please report all instances of graft, corruption, incompetence, misuse of government funds and facilities so that those who have been given the prerogative to manage will realize that management requires rigorous accountability and transparency of transactions.

There are no political debts so big that they must be paid in terms of public disaffection for or mistrust of government. I have served notice to the Cabinet that they must perform, or else. Let that be notice to all, friends and foes alike, that the only yardstick for continuance in this government is performance and integrity.

Finally, on this 89th Anniversary of the Civil Service Commission, let me congratulate Chairman Patricia Sto. Tomas, Commissioner Mario Yango and Commissioner Samilo Barlongay for their singular achievement in having put together in the proposed Civil Service Code all the scattered laws and policies on public service, and also, for spearheading the revitalization of the Commission. My congratulations too, go to all the employees of the CSC, for having restored the people's faith in public service.

We cannot, however, rest on our accomplishments. There remains much to be done. Let us forget self and with renewed vigor and dedication, offer our best efforts for country and fellowmen.

To all the awardees and the respective heads of their offices, congratulations and thank you for exemplifying the best that this administration has to offer. May your numbers increase with the years.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the Veterans Foundation

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Veterans Foundation**

[Released on September 15, 1989]

FOR THE LIVING HEROES

President Aquino reiterates the Constitutional provisions specifying that the State shall provide immediate and adequate care, benefits and assistance to war veterans and their families, as an expression of the gratitude of the Filipino people for their heroism during the war, and proof of this administration's continuing concern for them. She cites concrete actions and measures taken to ease the plight of the protectors of freedom, whose sacrifices have long been unrecognized.

I am pleased to meet the defenders of our tradition of democracy – the living heroes of World War II, and all other campaigns we had involved ourselves in to defend our freedom.

Being a veteran myself, although of a more recent and non-violent fight, I know how your heart swells with pride at the mention of your hours of glory. You and the veterans of EDSA fought to defend the same cherished freedom we enjoy now. But your wars were more protracted, and therefore, riskier. You had to brave volleys of gunfire for longer periods. You suffered more physical and emotional pain in the uncertainties of your wars.

Perhaps, it was the experience of staring death in the face that had tempered you to become extremely patient in times of peace. Over these long years, you had patiently waited to receive a fragment of the rewards due you. And even when your patience was running thin as when you held a nationwide rally to dramatize your cause last year, you did so with admirable restraint and self-discipline.

You do not only have courageous hearts. You possess the virtues only true patriots have — fierce in war, gentle in peace. Such is the spirit that has made your Federation, the only one honored with a Congressional Charter under RA 2640 in 1960. It is this same spirit that has prompted the framers of the 1987 Constitution to specify in Article XVI, Section 7 that: “The State shall provide immediate and adequate care, benefits, and other forms of assistance to war veterans and veterans of military campaigns, their surviving spouses and orphans.”

Indeed, even our Constitution recognizes that giving you honor is not sufficient to express the gratitude of the Filipino people. You, who risked life and limb and whose unfortunate comrades fell in battle to preserve our freedom, should enjoy the protection of the State, at least in the twilight of your years.

I am aware that our veterans and their immediate families had not been properly attended to for so long. Benefits previously granted to you had not been adjusted to accord with the times. The veterans who fought in World War II as members of the USAFFE were granted by the Joint RP-US Veterans Commission of 1966 only six of the 12 items of their claims.

The Veterans Memorial Medical Center, the hospital created to treat you and your kin, is now short of services to accommodate the increasing number of disabled or sick veterans needing medical help. And there is a threat to diminish its services further if the U.S. Bill introduced last June by U.S. Congressman G.V. Montgomery will be

passed into law. HR 2659 of the U.S. Congress seeks, among others, to terminate in 1990 all assistance and grants for the Veterans Memorial Medical Center.

Even your bank, built with war reparations money, was taken away from you through Presidential Decree 326 issued by my predecessor. The deposed dictator, although claiming to belong to your breed, placed the Philippine Veterans Bank under receivership, purportedly due to liquidity problems.

We cannot allow your quiet suffering to continue. I understand that some of your provincial chapters have passed resolutions for your leaders to make representations with the President that they may further plead your cause. Your request has not fallen on deaf ears, as you can see. My presence here reaffirms my continuing concern for you. This administration need not produce fake medals to sympathize with you.

Your waiting will not be for long. Last year, I authorized the Department of National Defense and the Department of Foreign Affairs, under Administrative Order No. 100, to work for the furtherance of the outstanding claims of our World War II veterans. These claims had been held pending by the Joint RP-US Veterans Commission of 1966. The remaining claims were taken up as Item IV in our Memorandum of Agreement of 1988 with the U.S. government which amended the Military Bases Agreement of 1947.

In my forthcoming visit to the United States, I shall honor our RP-US World War II veterans when I lay a wreath at Arlington Cemetery on the occasion of Veterans' Day. Sad to say, despite their heroism in Bataan and Corregidor which proved crucial to American victory, their sacrifices have hardly been recognized by the U.S. government.

In keeping with the Constitutional mandate to give consideration to war veterans and veterans of other military campaigns in the disposition of public lands and the utilization of our natural resources, the Department of National Defense and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources have entered into an agreement to allow our veterans to participate in the government's forest development program and engage in livelihood projects utilizing forest by-products. Negotiations to enable landless veterans to acquire land are underway.

Likewise, last year, in response to your clamor and upon the recommendation of the Secretary of National Defense, I created a special Presidential Committee to study and review the financial condition of the Philippine Veterans Bank which suffered unmitigated plunder during the past regime. I authorized the release of P865,824.00 from the contingent fund to meet the expenses for the audit of the bank's accounts and the valuation of its assets by a professional appraiser.

Likewise, the Department of Budget and Management has increased the allocation for veterans in the proposed budget for 1990 by 11.48%. This increase will mainly go to the maintenance of the Veterans Memorial Medical Center.

Our Congress too, is doing its share to improve the lot of our veterans. The House of Representatives introduced the Veterans Benefits Bill or House Bill No. 25553 and the Veterans Code or HB 4117 while the Senate has several equivalent bills for our veterans.

I am prepared to certify a bill increasing benefits for veterans. The Department of Budget and Management has assured me that funds will be available for its implementation. If passed into law, this will standardize and upgrade a scheme for pension and other benefits to be extended to all veterans, and will include as recipients those who have rendered military service for at least five years.

As you are aware now, we have taken several steps to ease your burden. All these may seem painstakingly slow for those who have waited for almost a lifetime to receive what is due them. But you understand, of course, that instant solutions are not possible considering the constraints that obstruct the best of our intentions.

Perhaps, for this shorter waiting time, you can be sustained by the knowledge that there is no better reward for freedom fighters than to live in the freedom they had fought for. Let me use this occasion then to ask you to help us

preserve the liberty that you fought so hard to keep. For we in government will continue to see to it that your sacrifices will be justly rewarded.

As an expression of the Filipino people's gratefulness for all your sacrifices and as proof of this Administration's continuing concern for you, I have signed Proclamation No. 466 declaring April 5 to 11 of every year as Philippine Veterans Week and Proclamation No. 467 authorizing the Filipino War Veterans Foundation, Inc. (FILVETS) to conduct a year-long nationwide membership and fund campaign effective on the date of its promulgation.

Muli akong nagpupugay sa inyo. Kayo ang nagpakasakit at nagsakripisyo upang mapangalagaan ang ating kalagayan. Huwag sanang maglaho ang maalab ninyong pagmamahal sa inyong bayang tinubuan.

Magandang umaga sa inyong lahat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the 40th Session of the World Health Organization Western Pacific Regional Committee

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the 40th Session of the World Health Organization Western Pacific Regional Committee**

[Released on September 19, 1989]

MOVING FORWARD IN INTERNATIONAL HEALTH

The Philippines, like many other countries, is a partaker in the concern and progress in health. With a constitutional mandate, the administration has pursued a five-point strategy consisting of a national drug policy, development of financial and human resource base of our health system, strengthening of leadership in public health, improvement of national hospital network efficiency and increase in coverage of public health and disease control program.

I am glad to welcome you to the Philippines. Our country takes pride in hosting this 40th session of the Western Pacific Regional Committee. I sincerely hope your stay with us will be enjoyable and productive.

Disease and death are the world's common denominators. All countries bear a common concern for every person's well being, regardless of color, race or political creed. And, for neighbors and friends like us, this unity runs deeper. That the Western Pacific Regional Committee has lasted for 40 years attests to these strong bonds.

Our countries' association with the World Health Organization has resulted in tremendous progress in international health. Together, we have achieved a reduction in morbidity and mortality, the successful conquest of many diseases, an increase in life expectancies, and an overall enhancement in the quality of each person's life.

The Philippines, like many of the countries represented here today, has partaken of this progress in health. We have realized the benefits of effective interventions to control diseases. Our nation recently yielded major health gains such as dramatic declines in infant, maternal and crude death rates.

When I became President in 1986, I noted the steady advances of our health sector during the past 50 years. But I also saw that a lot more had to be done. Morbidity and mortality rates from preventable causes were still at unacceptably high rates. Infant and child mortality was still high and the more disadvantaged of our people suffered from twice to thrice the national average rates of diseases and deaths.

We recognized that the country's health problems needed to be among the highest of our priorities. This concern for public health was expressed in our new Constitution thus: "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people," and "The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development."

In the past three years, my administration has pursued a five-point strategy which continues to be implemented throughout the country. We have sought to increase the coverage and penetration of our public health and disease control programs. We are striving to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our national hospital network. Just a year ago, we started to implement a national drug policy which focused on making medicine better available to the poorer sectors of our society. We continue to provide for an effective financial and human resource base of our health system. And we have strengthened the leadership and governance in public health.

I am glad to tell you that we have made great strides in public health. Full immunization coverage has increased from around 30% to more than 70% in three years. Widespread adoption of oral rehydration therapy for diarrhea has been achieved in the public as well as private sectors. A major national effort against tuberculosis has already placed

more than 200,000 cases under treatment – and we have just begun. We are moving aggressively against acute respiratory diseases, cancer, cardiovascular diseases and leprosy.

We are also into preventive systems, including promotion of breast feeding, family planning, and prevention of blindness, and even of that dreaded disease, AIDS. Likewise, our crisis responses have also kept in step. Our disease monitoring is now nationwide. Excellent field investigation of outbreaks has allowed us to respond to prevent further deaths from red tide and formalin poisoning.

For three years now, we have regularly allocated more than 10% of an increasing budget for capital outlays to improve hospital facilities and equipment. We have established networking of expertise, equipment, services and patients among regional hospitals even as we begin to upgrade systems for our 42 provincial and 278 district hospitals. At present, we are finalizing a National Hospital Development Plan that will serve as the basis for a major public investment project.

Our national drug policy has advanced. A law for the use of generic drugs has been passed and is being implemented. We have tightened our food and drug regulations as well as strengthened our regulatory agency. We opened our first commercial plant for producing herbal medicine, promulgated a national drug formulary or essentials drug list, and began research and development efforts to locally develop and produce health products that we currently import. We completed a national drug production priorities plan from which we will draw detailed feasibility studies for public-private collaboration projects. Our media and our professional organizations are undertaking a massive information drive to promote rational drug use. Our government drug procurement activities have been rationalized leading to better prices with as much as 30% less than what we used to pay. And for more effective drug use, we have closed companies producing substandard drugs and delisted unsafe or ineffective drugs.

All these measures were supported by a 23% average annual growth in the government health budget from 1987 to 1990. This actual increase in resources is on top of an effective increase of about 30% more due to more efficient government operations that has reduced procurement prices, eliminated waste and leakages, and better utilized resources and assets. We have increased the support value of our medical insurance program for employed Filipinos and promoted health maintenance organizations through such steps as increasing the salaries of medical and allied medical workers in government service.

At the core of all these is a strong and credible Department of Health. From a functionally fragmented agency, we reorganized the department into integrated units equally responsive to policies for and the needs of the community.

Yet, even with a technically sound and systematic structure, we would not have achieved these gains without the commitment and dedication of our workers in medicine and the allied medical fields. Especially of our government health workers who labor in remote barrios to deliver health services where there used to be none.

So I propose to dedicate this first day of your meeting to the 68,000 Filipino health workers in government service, and all the health workers in the service of the governments of your respective countries, in recognition of their tireless efforts to improve the health of our respective peoples.

And then, let me pay homage to this international network of concerned individuals whose unrelentless fight against disease and debility has resulted in prolonging man's life span as it has likewise tremendously improved the quality of life for everyone.

Let me salute the World Health Organization, particularly the Western Pacific Regional Committee for all these years of service to mankind.

And now as you meet, perhaps you will be reminded that the diseases that stalk the rich are different from those that the poor endure. Most of the countries meeting here are from the Third World, where poverty is the most appalling social disease.

I would not be surprised if most of the countries represented here share many health and health-related issues that my country suffers from. For, despite the improvements I had cited, we in the Philippines continue to face big problems, which rich nations may not have. Communicable diseases remain dominant causes of death and illness. We remain dependent on external assistance for vaccine supplies and other resources. Our public hospitals need huge amounts to achieve international standards of quality and effectivity.

Of course, we face health-related problems intrinsic to a Third World country: availability of safe water, adequate hygiene and sanitation and sufficiency in essential drugs. The full implementation of our National Drug Policy is hampered by the resistance of some sectors of the drug industry and the medical professions, through the prodding of some multi-national drug companies. I want to use this occasion to appeal to these companies not to allow themselves to be unduly influenced by the profit motive.

I am sure that all of you here, representing the health ideals of your respective nations, have accomplishments and difficulties to tell. I urge you all to share your thoughts unstintedly. For it has always been this free exchange of ideas and experiences that has made your organization viable, even after 40 years. It is this same open flow of information that has brought about the dramatic improvements in the life expectancy and the quality of life of men all over the world.

Let me wish you then a most fruitful discussion, and a longer life. Mabuhay kayong lahat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Law Day Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Law Day**

[Released on September 21, 1989]

JUSTICE FOR THE POOR

President Aquino sounds out once more her call for a new moral order in government service, particularly in the judiciary. She bewails the enormous backlog of cases, the slow pace of justice and the situation of justice being beyond the reach of the poor. She urges lawyers to practice their profession honorably, prosecute the guilty and set the innocent free regardless of wealth and power.

The irony of celebrating Law Day today does not escape me. Exactly 17 years ago, a tyrant completed his travesty of our laws as he usurped all the powers of the land in his hands and deprived everyone else even of that basic right to think for oneself. Majority of the Supreme Court upheld his move, and many of our lawyers, including those from prestigious and reputable law firms, applauded. To cap the insult, the whole nation was made to celebrate the day as Thanksgiving Day.

I did not come here to harp on past misdeeds. Only to remind you that the law, though it seeks to make us all equal, may be manipulated to suit one's ends. And that the bottom line of real justice are an unsullied integrity and an obsession for fairness and truth.

Perhaps, though, we can see added significance in celebrating Law Day today, if only to remind us that liberty ceases when we let go of the rule of law. And also to remind our lawyers that they are the guardians of the laws of the land, and necessarily, of our freedoms.

In my State of the Nation Address this year, I sounded out once more my call for a new moral order in government service. To my fellow government workers, I said: "Unless the public sees results soon, it will be goodbye for you." I also urged the Department of Justice to take stronger measures against the inept who have caused so many cases at the initial preliminary stage to languish in limbo.

The feedback I am getting now is heartening. Very recently, you heard of several prosecutors of the Department of Justice who were terminated or suspended for various offenses. This is just the beginning. The Secretary of Justice has assured me that in the next few weeks, more substantial results will come in response to my directive. Let me just say that I am very hopeful.

Many a time, too, I have nudged the judiciary for its inability to move the mountains of cases that pile up in the country's "salas" — only to be told that the lawyers contribute in large part to the enormous backlog. Postponements are sought by counsel at the slightest excuse — stomach upset or traffic jam, if not indisposition of clients or witnesses. And more often than not, these are granted by over-lenient judges.

Given such "companionismo" between lawyers and magistrates, what is a poor litigant to do? I speak from my own experience as a complainant in a long-drawn out libel case and as a very much interested party in a criminal case whose end is nowhere in sight after six years.

I know that others who are short on patience end up cursing the government that has placed justice beyond their reach. Should we then make common cause with Shakespeare and cry "Let's kill all the lawyers!"? More to be taken as poetical hyperbole if not license, I would not wish such a hapless fate on the profession I would have been part of had I not yielded first to my heart.

Happily, the Supreme Court has come up with a less gory scheme. Mandatory continuous trial, no longer a pilot program, is, I understand, ready for implementation on a wider scale. To be successful, it will take lots of hard work and sacrifice on the part of the Bench and Bar, not to speak of the entire justice system. Before the experiment was launched in 84 branches of the Regional and the Municipal Trial Courts, many predicted resistance from the lawyers who would stand to lose their “per appearance” fees.

But I am told by the members of the Philippine Women Judges Association who paid a call on me before their Conference, that the lawyers in the pilot areas were very cooperative — preparing thoroughly for a more meaningful pretrial and even cutting short the litigation period where the outcome on the basis of evidence disclosed was already predictable. And they seem to have come to terms with a more realistic fee structure. Moreover, for the six-month period of February 1 – July 31, 1989, there was a marked increase in the number of cases resolved in the salas of the participating judges.

To be sure, additional administrative reforms pertaining to personnel, equipment and procedure have yet to be introduced but, I daresay, all these will be ironed out in due time.

This innovative device, for all its good intent and features, will not, however, rid the system of its age-old malaise of corruption. Even more than I, you all know that the law punishes both he who corrupts as well as the corrupted.

When I spoke before the Integrated Bar of the Philippines last June, I was given the assurance that its members will prevent a repeat of the Martial Law years and lend their expertise to the prevention, detection and the punishment of graft and corruption. I take that to mean that the whole of the Philippine legal profession has recommitted itself to the spirit of fairness, truth and justice — to nothing less than these ideals.

I thus commend the Philippine Lawyers Association for jointly sponsoring with the Integrated Bar of the Philippines and the Philippine Bar Association today’s observance of Law Day. As I do so, let me urge your associations to exact from your members the vow to practice the profession more honorably. To harass no man needlessly, to cause the guilty to be punished and set the innocent free, regardless of wealth or power. For, as the great thinker, Cicero, said, “Nothing can be honorable when justice is absent.”

With the effectivity of the Code of Judicial Conduct on October 20th, the judiciary shall be guided by canons as strict as any in other parts of the world. Let the ranks of the lawyers be equally scrupulous in their behavior in and out of the courtroom, ever mindful of the precepts in their Code of Professional Responsibility.

Completing the triad is the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees which shall apply to the rest of the personnel of our courts. For it is only too widely known that some employees enter into irregular, if not illegal, deals with lawyers and clients, running circles around the unsuspecting judge — from the clerks of court to the researchers and stenographers, each to his own sweet racket. And yes, the sheriffs who have it within their power to delay the execution of a judgment being eagerly awaited by parties whose lives, honor and property are at stake. Let me remind them of what Jefferson once declared: “The execution of the laws is more important than the making of them.”

Are you aware that many a neophyte law practitioner has been disillusioned, many a promising legal career has died aborning at the threshold of a judge’s chambers simply because of the shenanigans being committed in the very cloisters of the temples of justice? Can we blame the people if at times they lose respect of the very officials who should be instruments of truth and justice? Frustrated and helpless, they resort to remedies outside the lawful and normal channels set up by the government.

I call upon you, as officers of the court and as citizens of our country, to help your leadership bring about a reformed and more responsive administration of justice. As the Good Book says: “Let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a might stream.”

Thank you and a good day to all.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 90th Anniversary of the DOJ

Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 90th Anniversary of the DOJ

[Released on September 26, 1989]

PEOPLE AND JUSTICE

On the 90th anniversary of the Department of Justice, President Aquino talks about the implementation and progress of justice in our country and announces the remedies and measures being instituted by the government to ensure speedy answers to the citizen's clamor for justice. In the ultimate analysis, though, it is the dedication of the judge and of the prosecutor that will instill confidence in the hearts of the people regarding the adequacy of the judicial system.

Binabati ko kayong bumubuo ng Kagawaran ng Katarungan sa ika-siyamnapu ninyong kaarawan. Ang katarungan ay kakambal ng kalayaan. Ang inyong Kagawaran ay dapat ituring na mapagpalayang kasangkapan ng sambayanan. Ang katarungan ang kaluluwa ng batas. At ang batas ng pumapanday ng demokrasyang maka-Diyos, makatao at maka-bayan. Ito ang demokrasyang Filipino.

In a democratic setting, your Department evokes the spirit of freedom with responsibility. It also stands on a solid tradition of excellence. Some of the best Filipinos headed this Department: Araneta, Paredes, Qzaeta, Diokno, among them.

In the face of this spirit and tradition, your present mission is clear: to give the most and the best of yourselves to the speedy administration of justice to our people.

The record of achievements of the different offices comprising this Department is impressive. The National Bureau of Investigation, the Commission on Immigration and Deportation, the Prosecution Service, the Citizens' Legal Assistance Office and the Office of the Secretary of Justice itself, all deserve special commendation.

These achievements are taking place amidst the impatience of our people.

To the people in the street, the best assurance of the protection of human rights and the fight against corruption is the sight of persons suspected of wrong doing speedily prosecuted and tried.

This is the psychological content of justice as service. The duty of government and concern of every law enforcement officer is to provide and meet it.

We must not allow a repetition of the sham trials of the dictator.

On the other hand, prejudice should not blind us. There is, for instance, a lingering mistrust of the military. While we can not deny that many crimes have been committed by men in uniform, it is not fair that the entire military establishment should be maligned and castigated.

To bring about closer coordination between military and civilian law enforcement agencies, the Joint Legal Action Committee (JOLAC) has been created. Its principal concern is to bring about closer understanding between the fiscals and the military lawyers in charge of the prosecution of rebellion and subversion cases.

I am pleased with the great efforts exerted by the military leadership in instilling a higher sense of justice among the armed forces. As long as a soldier or policeman adheres to the Constitution's standards of justice and human rights protection, he will be a valued partner in our nation building.

I will not yield to the extreme left's clamor of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." Nor will I listen to the rightists' cry for blood. But I will see to it that justice is done.

The provisions of our Constitution and laws have to be transformed into procedures that will really and effectively deliver justice to our people. To the average man, the presence of so many legal provisions against a scenery of delay, neglect or apathy, merely serves to heighten his disenchantment against the system and government

In line with the recommendations of the Task Force on Administration of Justice that I formed, government has initiated remedies and measures to ensure a speedy response to the citizen's need for justice:

1. Filling of all court vacancies. After a delay caused by incomplete bio-data of some nominees, I have acted this week on the pending nominations for the Judiciary. The Judicial and Bar Council continues to meet weekly to screen applicants and candidates for court positions. In some municipalities, however, there are no applicants. While the Council has to recommend at least three nominees for each vacant position, in many a critical area, there is only one volunteer. This situation must be reversed.

2. "Fast tracking" of criminal cases ahead of civil cases. The national objective, based on our experience, is not to create more special courts to try criminal matters exclusively nor to constitute the existing regional trial courts as exclusive criminal courts, but to allow all branches of courts to hear both civil and criminal cases with the admonition that criminal cases, specially those involving human rights abuses, should be given a "fast track" approach.

3. Closer coordination between the courts and the prosecution service. A truly efficient delivery of criminal justice services can be achieved only by closely coordinated efforts of the trial courts functioning under the supervision authority of the Supreme Court, and the prosecution service working under the Department of Justice. It is very frustrating to litigants and counsel alike to see a judge call a case for trial only to be informed that the prosecution is not ready because its witnesses are not in the courtroom or that the matter is still under "reinvestigation."

I am happy to note that to minimize this very sorry state, the Department of Justice has issued a Circular requiring investigating fiscals to certify under oath when they receive their salaries that there is no case pending resolution by them which has been unresolved for 60 days from the date that the case was deemed submitted for resolution. I expect Secretary Ordoñez to closely monitor compliance with this circular.

4. A proposed bill has been referred by your Department to Congress seeking to authorize the Sandiganbayan to petition the Supreme Court for three regional trial court judges to act as a court to try cases falling within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Sandiganbayan. In this manner, the expense of transporting parties and witnesses from distant places to attend trials in Manila may be avoided. Approval of this measure will demonstrate to the people where the offense was committed that justice is indeed being meted out speedily.

5. A proposal for continuous trial of criminal cases has been submitted by the U.P. Law Center for consideration by the Supreme Court. This is now being discussed by the Supreme Court's Committee on the Revision of the Rules of Procedure.

6. Under study now is a system of satellite national prisons in various regions in order to decongest the New Bilibid Prison which was originally designed to confine 1,500 prisoners but which now has custody of 6,633 prisoners. Jail riots and infliction of demeaning body marks on prisoners in congested jails can be avoided by the adoption of this measure. Prisoners will then be more accessible to their families because visits will be more frequent, thus making the prisoners feel that they are still remembered and loved by their families.

7. In order to make our courts truly temples of justice where the people can expect redress of grievances, I have instructed the release to the Department of Justice from my discretionary funds for 1988 of P350 million for the construction of court buildings having a common, readily identifiable design. This will include populous areas like Manila, Quezon City and Makati, as well as depressed provinces such as those in Western and Eastern Visayas and Mindanao. I have asked Congress to appropriate an additional P300 million in 1989 to augment this fund and further improve the infrastructure of our judicial system.

In the ultimate analysis, however, it is the dedication of the judge and of the prosecutor that will instill confidence in the hearts of the people regarding the adequacy of the judicial system. Credible and dedicated officials will maintain the people's faith in government.

Ako'y naniniwala na angpananabik sa katarungan ay namamahay sa puso ng bawat tao at mga mamamayan. Tuwing silay papasok sa pintuan ng ating mga hukuman, umaasa silang ang pananabik na ito ay matutugunan ng mga hukom at piskal at upang silay magtamo ng karampatang katarungan. Huwag natin silang biguin.

Ito ang aking panawagan sa lahat ng naglilingkod sa Kawanihan ng Katarungan sa dakilangaraw na ito ng inyong pagdiriwang.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 88th Anniversary of the Office of the Solicitor General

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 88th Anniversary of the Office of the Solicitor General**

[Delivered on October 4, 1989]

**COURT AND PRESIDENT:
A SHARED COMMITMENT**

It is a cardinal tenet of democracy that no one shall be above the law. The President underscores her fidelity to this principle through the Office of the Solicitor General, whose work is to defend the actions and initiatives of the Executive against the challenge of the law. She affirms her loyalty to the Constitution, the supremacy of the law and the shared commitment of Court and President for the country's good.

The Honorable Chief Justice and members of the Supreme Court, Solicitor General Francisco Chavez, Justices, Judges, Solicitors. Fellow Workers in Government, Ladies and Gentlemen.

The Office of the Solicitor General or OSG is one of the oldest agencies of government. It was part of the Bureau of Justice created in 1901. There is a tendency to confuse the work of the OSG with that of the Department of Justice. They are different; different enough to justify their distinct personalities.

The Department of Justice is the law-enforcing arm of the Executive. It helps the President fulfill her oath to see to the due execution of the laws. In the general enforcement of the laws, it is the job of the OSG to defend the Executive — the Presidency and all its agencies and officials.

It is a cardinal tenet of democracy that no one shall be above the law. We know this as the rule of law. It is the litmus test of civilized government. By it we learn which governments are despotic beneath their forms and which are truly the people's.

The Executive since EDS A is under the law. Nothing underscores the fidelity of the Executive to this principle than the distinct office of the Solicitor General, whose work it is to defend the actions of the Executive against challenges from the law. If this were not so, if the Executive were above the law, there would be no need for a solicitor to plead the government's case. Executive action would be the word of the law. After all, it holds the sword of the nation. A fact which accounts for the saying: "When the guns speak the laws fall silent."

The past regime did not dispense with the formality of a Solicitor General. In fact, it elevated the OSG to a separate ministry. Three years later the functions of Solicitor General and Minister of Justice were combined in one man, who would be concurrently a provincial governor. It was as if to say that the Executive would never need to defend itself before the courts.

With the EDSA Revolution, we have returned to the old forms of unchanging justice. Once again, the OSG stands as a separate agency, with a distinct function: to defend the Executive under the laws. I signed Executive Order No. 300 separating the OSG from the Justice Ministry to formally recognize the submission of a democratic presidency to the supremacy of the law. It was a fitting gesture to make on the eve of my willing surrender of my extraordinary powers under the Freedom Constitution.

The separate existence of the OSG and, by that token, the submission of the presidency to the rule of law has not diminished one whit the effectiveness of the Executive.

The Office of Solicitor General has been held by eminent men of the law, Lorenzo Tanada, Roman Ozaeta, Ambrosio Padilla, among others. They have given lustre to our system of justice.

Our experience in the past three years proves that there is no contradiction between submission to the law and the attainment of progress. We have been ably represented by our counsel, the Solicitor General and his solicitors.

Thus, the Supreme Court has sustained Executive initiatives to bring justice to the farmer, and to recognize the distinctness of certain ethnic and cultural communities and regions.

Thus also, the courts have recognized the need for more effective law enforcement, without derogating from those fundamental rights, by sustaining the arrests without judicial warrants in certain cases. The Honorable Court has also given a more generous latitude to the Secretary of Labor in the settlement of labor disputes that affect the national interest.

The courts have restored to the national patrimony some 2,000 hectares of foreshore lands in Batangas, as well as 138 hectares of forest land in Quezon.

The executive prerogative of appointment without confirmation for certain offices was also recognized. We will, of course, continue to assert the rights of the Executive, and the Court, we are sure, will see to it that the balance of power in the state stands nicely poised in the interest of freedom.

Most recently, the Supreme Court has sustained our determination of the national interest with respect to the return of my predecessor. As the decision is the subject of a motion for reconsideration, I will just reiterate what I have said earlier.

The return of this man and his minions poses a greater threat to the democratic constitution he ironically invokes, than denying him entry would tend to subvert the fundamental law. I accept the view of the Honorable Court that this is a special case, involving not so much the denial of a right as the recognition of a malignant power, still able to destroy the tranquility of the state and the progress we have achieved. This recognition implies a corresponding duty on the part of the Executive to protect the state.

The case is a delicate one. I am the widow of a man who had knocked on every door for the right to return to his country. The irony of my position cannot have escaped you. This is a case that I understand full well from both sides. I know the threat that this man poses to the country I am sworn to protect, yet I know the loneliness of exile and the pain of being struck by death without setting foot on one's native soil.

I take the Court's decision as affirming the Executive determination on a matter of national interest, and equally as an affirmation of the Court's unwavering commitment to the Bill of Rights. I comprehend the Court's message that it will not relax its vigilant guard for the rights of men, even as it joins us in preserving our communities from the clear and present danger of the ambition of some to destabilize the government so that they may seize power.

We have one country and one Constitution, and owe an undivided loyalty to both.

I thank the Office of the Solicitor General, and the Solicitor General himself, for the good work they have done for my Office and for our country. I am deeply pleased and honored to be a part of this anniversary celebration. We have here affirmed an important principle: the supremacy of the law and the shared commitment of Court and President for the good of our country.

I thank you all and may God continue to bless our efforts.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before FINEX

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines Before FINEX

[Delivered on October 9, 1989]

NOT JUST MONEY MANAGERS

One of the essential elements of our monetary policy is the constant balancing act to maintain a sound financial environment that will keep inflation within acceptable levels, encourage savings and increase investment, production and employment. Beyond this, however, President Aquino hopes that the main value that will be impressed on all finance executives and business levels is that they are Filipinos first before they are money managers.

Let us make this a profitable morning by talking about certain issues that should be uppermost in both our minds.

We have here, in this audience, among the best paid, and therefore, the best trained workers in the country. At least that is the presumption. You also call yourselves the cutting edge of the Philippine economy: the men of money and management who make the economy go and largely set the direction of its growth. That is, I think, very accurate. You share with the Central Bank the control of the country's money.

As we all know, every individual endeavor and every national effort – be it to start a small business, to invest in a small farm, or to capitalize a large enterprise – will sink or swim depending on access to money. You are a very important part of the national life.

Money is the lifeblood of thriving economies. Today it is very much in the news, although it is certainly never far from our minds at any time of the day or night. Money was made by man to facilitate economic activities and generate wealth. As with all things man-made, it can accomplish that purpose or backfire and take on a destructive life of its own.

At the level of the over-all economy, an excess of money sparks and fuels inflation. Incomes and savings lose their value, and hard work and dedication lose their driving force. Men's minds are turned from national productivity to naked survival. Wage increases are demanded, worsening inflation and eroding our competitive advantage in the international economy.

On the other hand, shortage of money drives up interest rates, makes productive investments prohibitive, closes firms, and aggravates unemployment.

A balance must be struck between these two extremes. Because of the volatility of money, that balance is not a steady state but a constant effort to maintain it. One of the essential elements of our monetary policy is this constant balancing act to maintain a sound financial environment that will keep inflation within acceptable levels, encourage savings, and increase investments, production and employment.

Fiscal policies have to be conducted in a manner consistent with this objective. We should avoid temptations of immediate solutions and short-term gains at the expense of long-term growth. This objective is the underlying consideration for the monetary and fiscal measures taken in recent months to force inflation down again to single digit levels. The consequent increase in interest rates is the price that has had to be paid. Yet, already, forceful measures have arrested the depreciation of the peso.

You, as finance executives and business leaders, should appreciate the need for holding down inflation. Nothing will sap the spirit of enterprise and hard work as effectively as the devaluation of wages. Nor is there anything more unjust to the worker than to destroy the value of his work faster than he earns it.

You too will appreciate that the rise in interest rates could have been less traumatic had the fiscal position of the national government been stronger.

Fiscal strength arises from taxes. With your cooperation, we can increase our strength and improve our ability to calibrate our responses to inflationary trends and avoid the drastic measures we have had to take. You will lose more, when a cash-strapped government cannot respond adequately to inflationary pressures than your accountants have saved you in taxes.

I have said that you are an important part of the national life. You are also its most cosmopolitan element. Money is the international language. There is no language barrier that cannot be overcome by money. Bankers and businessmen can understand each other with a minimum of words because numbers virtually tell it all.

Because of your cosmopolitan outlook, you may be more at home in Hongkong and Tokyo than in this developing country to which we belong. Surely, you must have caught yourselves, saying impatiently, Why aren't things as they are in Tokyo and Hongkong? And in our exasperation with the slow pace and complicated condition of our own country, we may give up too easily on our responsibilities. We may fail to do the part that our expertise has cut out for us in the development of our country. This is the danger. You may be so far forward in your minds as the economy's cutting edge as to leave behind the national life as it is really lived in our poor cities and struggling countryside.

The theme of this conference is "values in action." If we can realize this in some measure, our time will have been well spent today. The first value that I hope will be impressed on all of us is that before we are money managers we are first Filipinos.

We belong to that part of the world that is often the victim of the vagaries of international finance and the illegal and immoral manipulations of local finance. Here, as in all Third World countries, the easiest money is made always at the expense of the country and its people — whether it be at the stock exchanges, in financial sector or in real estate for the rich.

The harder, more challenging and useful task is to make money while making the country grow — by enlarging the industrial sector, generating employment, increasing the productivity of the land, and improving the nation as a whole. In these gigantic tasks, the immediate returns are smaller and, the risks are greater. The greater benefit is really to the country, so that business takes on the character of patriotism.

You might say, Come down from the clouds. Patriotism has never been a prime motivation in business. If the economy grows, it will be incidental to the individual search for personal gain. I suppose that is true of spuriously growing economies — like the Philippines immediately after Martial Law and just before the crash in the prices of our traditional exports, and during the boom years when we racked up our foreign debt and the behest loans and when the stock markets were shamelessly manipulated by a few. Instant fortunes were made in those days, and for a few indeed the country was the best of all possible worlds. But the cost was the near permanent erosion of confidence in several vital institutions of the country: the banks and the stock exchanges which play so essential a role in the generation of capital for growth, and the standstill of the economy.

The profit motive is as strong in Japan, Korea, Singapore, and Germany — but its self-imposed limit is the toll that an opportunity for personal profit may take on the national future. Nowhere will we find a country that became great by setting out just to make a few of its people rich. In these fast developing countries, you will find an ethic that looks at how a man has made his money, as much as at how much money he has made.

I hope that this ethic is inculcated among us because without it, the tremendous efforts we are putting into growth will come to very little here. I think a start has been made. FINEX has been active in the Coalition for Transparency.

Our heads are not so easily turned anymore by instant wealth. We are less inclined now to admire people who brag of their connections to the government and the BIR.

But there are still holdouts. The spirit of reconciliation has been extended to the blind forgiveness of those who fronted for the dictatorship, and who have yet to make restitution to the nation. My critical attitude towards this development has been called vindictiveness. There was a time when you and I, protesting in the streets against these very people and boycotting their businesses, called it justice, I do not know what has happened since then. What worries me about this is not so much that the guilty are escaping censure, but that the millions of innocent Filipinos will lose faith in the value of morals.

I hope that the moral edge of the past will be restored to our judgments, and that we will stop crying for those who laughed all the way to the bank.

The challenge to the members of FINEX is to find the moral vision that will serve as the framework for the profit motive, which is the life of free economies. We must find the formula that will reconcile profit and patriotism in a synergy that will lift up even the lowest 30% of the population mired in poverty.

It is my hope that you will bring to the task of situating profit in the larger context of country the same competence and drive that has brought you such success in business. You have shown that you can do things right; the time has come to concentrate on doing the right thing.

No one can read the future. But it lies in our power to write it — by our decisions and by our work, as guided by a vision of how things should be. That vision must inspire all our efforts and hold our main attention. We must not let anything divert us from the attainment of the free, just, and prosperous nation we promised ourselves.

The greater tasks ahead are staring us at the face. We must continue to direct our energy and attention exclusively to the work ahead. We have not begun to exhaust the strength in us to make this country all it can be, given its advantages.

I do not believe we have begun to tax our strength in the private and public sector. As we approach the start of a new decade, I envision a greater burst of energy from a reinvigorated government and private sector. We shall leave the concerns of the past behind, and, hopefully, without wasting time looking back, stride into the bright future that can be ours.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the delegates of UNDA/OCIC/ASIA

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the delegates of UNDA/OCIC/ASIA**

[Delivered on October 10, 1989]

APOSTOLATE OF TRUTH AND JUSTICE

President Aquino reminds delegates of UNDA/OCIC/ASIA that the vocation of communicators has three facets of services: apostolate of justice, understanding and unity. Thus, she enjoins them to do their share to attain the country's goals and use the power of broadcast media, particularly radio, to relay truth, justice and unity to the majority of our people.

I see three facets to your vocation — three magnificent things that the communicator does. The first is: the apostolate of justice. Martial Law was declared against mass media. The most noticeable event on the first hour of Martial Law was that all radio stations, all television channels and all the newspapers were closed down — except the ones that the government controlled. And how did Martial Law end? When those in government then lost control of media.

For the snap elections in 1986, an army of communicators, just like you, came from all over the world. Some of you must have been there, too. When the revolution broke at EDSA, there were five satellite transmissions going out to all the world from the Manila Hotel. In New York, in Bangkok and elsewhere, people all over the world watched the miracle of EDSA in their homes. Here in the Philippines, our provinces were kept abreast of the drama at EDSA by radio. And when television stations were forcibly shut down and print media could not keep pace with successive developments, it was radio that fanned the hopes of millions who stood ready at EDSA to regain our freedom. In those crucial hours, radio was the most important communications medium.

As EDSA demonstrated, media now, is our last tribunal of justice. You, broadcasters, are the channels of justice for all the people on the face of the earth.

Your second service to all the world is understanding. The vocation of the communicator is to tell the truth. From the truth, people get to know and understand each other. This is a blessing. Freedom of speech is a beautiful principle. Freedom to tell the truth paves the way for deeper understanding of ourselves.

From understanding comes your third service: unity. Unity in the Philippines is a rare element. Not since EDSA have we been one for such a long time. We are 7,107 islands, separated from each other by water. We are just now developing a common language since we are divided by 87 dialects. We have a multitude of cultures — ancient, beautiful cultures — but very different from each other. We find it difficult to subordinate our personal feelings, our personal desires, our personal goals, to one common national objective. But when the miracle of EDSA occurred, we stood united in our common love for freedom. Thence did we show that we were capable of unity.

Events after our bloodless revolution have led many to return to their old ways. Sadly, we have become fragmented again. But I am hopeful, that with the help of media, especially of Catholic communicators, we shall become truly one people, united in our search for economic progress, truth and peace.

Let me remind you that here in the Philippines and in other countries where television can not yet beam signals to the remotest places, radio is still the most important agent for mass communication. Radio is our farmers' most accessible medium of information. Our fishermen's most reliable warning instrument of a coming storm. Our

provincial schoolteachers' favorite adviser of current events. As Asian broadcasters, you must recognize the importance of your vocation in bringing truth to the lives of the majority of Asia's population.

Thus, I ask you now to do you share to attain our goals. Use the power of your words to relay truth to all our people. Use the broadcast medium to bring justice to our people. This is the heart of your vocation, as Catholics, and as broadcasters.

Through you, hopefully, the whole world will come to realize that we are all brothers and sisters. That we are one family. And that we really are one world. Through communication, we can hope to achieve permanent peace someday.

Thank you and a very pleasant day to all.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the World Association for Christian Communication

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines On the World Association for Christian Communication

[Delivered on October 16, 1989]

COMMUNICATION FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The EDSA revolution was nurtured right from its inception by communication in the most imaginative and resourceful manner. There is one other transcendental factor that spelled its victory – the Filipino's faith in the Almighty. Communication has to be participatory, liberating and capable of developing culture for it to be effective and meaningful.

I am pleased to welcome you all to my country, to share my thoughts with you and to learn from you about communication the Christian way.

I am doubly pleased that you have chosen the Philippines as your conference's venue, in recognition of my country's contribution to communication. This occasion gives me another chance to thank communications specialists like you, whose effective use of media helped ensure our victory in the 1986 EDSA Revolution.

We in the Philippines believe that the EDSA Revolution is the Filipino people's best gift to the world. It was swift: all of four days; it was bloodless; and it was without precedence in modern times. As it won for us our freedom and dignity, it also showed the whole world how a nation's courage may be expressed without bloodletting. In many parts of the globe, it has been studied and emulated with varying degrees of success.

Some say that EDSA was the first revolution that utilized xerography – with reference to the suppression of media some years before it, to the lies that clogged our information channels then, and to the surreptitious photocopying of the truth by those concerned that the truth should out. It should not be forgotten that we also used less modern and rather traditional ways of reaching out to kindred minds.

The revolution also had its seeds in small group meetings where people exchanged information and where they later discovered other small meetings that sought the information they had. It was a pooling in of truths. In so desiring, the people discovered that non-traditional forms of communicating – through modern technology or other non-formal communication channels – could work for them. Right from its inception, our revolution was nurtured by communication.

Without diminishing the great contribution of modern technology to our cause, there is one other transcendental factor that spelled our victory – the Filipino's faith in the Almighty. Without that faith, our revolution would not have succeeded.

It was our people's faith that gave the church the moral authority to rally them, unarmed, to protect our rebel soldiers. Faith it was, too, that emboldened our people to kneel down in front of rushing tanks. And it was that very same faith that stopped misguided soldiers in their tracks when they found themselves confronted with civilians armed only with flowers, rosaries and statues of saints.

Our revolution, won by the deepest faith, was a miracle ably supported by Christian communicators specially the radio broadcasters, who played a key role in mobilizing the people, getting them to stay in their posts, spontaneously organizing them to follow strategies, and keeping their faith alive in the midst of danger. Faith, through people

power, overcame the dictator's firepower even as we recognize that EDSA was also a victory of Christian communication.

I am happy to note that your theme here is "Communication for Community". And that you have emphasized the development of non-formal modes of communicating. I fully agree with you that the purpose of communication is to develop community. For we must freely communicate so that we can understand each other. We must understand each other for us to commune, to live together in harmony. And when traditional or formal means cease to provide us with capable channels, we should not be afraid to deviate, to experiment, in the spirit of effective communication.

Perhaps, you and I differ in our ultimate ends. Yours is to prepare souls for the Kingdom hereafter: mine is to win hearts and minds to attain peace and progress for the country. But I am not less godly for my mission, neither are you less patriotic for yours.

Your goals and mine are not incongruent. The peace I am working for is the same peace you strive to bring to men. We are one in pursuit of freedom and truth in this world; and, you and I use the same God-given tool – communication – to achieve our mission.

It is well that you have included in your sub-themes other principles of Christian communication that the EDSA Revolution had proven true. First, that communication is participatory. For real communication is a two-way process. A message is sent, and a response should be received. True communication necessitates freedom of expression. Where there is suppression, where responses are muzzled by fear, only a monologue by the oppressor can be realized. Circumstances in this country before the EDSA Revolution had proven this right.

The second is that communication liberates. Add to this the tenet that only truth can stand all tests. The truth liberates when it is communicated. EDSA has demonstrated that there is no true communication in an atmosphere of oppression, just as there can be no real freedom where there is no freedom of expression. But where conflicts arise, you may ask, whose freedom should it be? You will certainly agree with me that it must not be the freedom only of a chosen few. It must be the freedom of the majority. That is why you and I are all supporters of democracy.

The third is that communication develops cultures. This is a fact proven everyday throughout the world, through mass media and even through inter-personal exchanges. As Thomas Mann said – "Speech is civilization . . . It is silence that isolates."

Almost four years after the miracle of EDSA, we in the Philippines are still haunted by the shadows that were with us for so long that they have almost become real to some. Shadows of persecution. Shadows of extravagant living. Of one-upmanship, of greed for power and wealth, of oppression. We are still struggling to rid ourselves of the Hydra-headed past. But we can now hope, for EDSA has abolished the deceit and the suppression that we were once forced to embrace. Each Filipino can now stand tall, confident in the knowledge that we are free once more. With the structures of democracy in place, we truly believe that progress is within reach.

May I, therefore, thank the communicators once more for boosting our courage, for leading the way out of our darkest night that preceded the dawn. On behalf of my countrymen, let me commit my country once again to the same ideals you espouse – freedom, truth and peace. And to the use of this God-sent talent of man – the ability to communicate – to seek no less than the truth.

Mabuhay tayong lahat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the 50th Anniversary of the Department of National Defense Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the 50th Anniversary of the Department of National Defense**

[Delivered on October 23, 1989]

TEAMWORK FOR DEMOCRACY

President Aquino outlines her agenda for 1990 in four words: momentum, mass, morale and maximization. These stand for strategic control of the enemy, mass-based forces to preserve momentum, improvement of morale of frontline soldiers, and optimum use of government resources. Given the magnitude and urgency of the task at hand, she appeals to soldiers and civilians alike to help each other in unity and solidarity to make democracy work for development. For this, teamwork and heroism are foremost.

I am honored to join you again this time to celebrate your anniversary. Congratulations to you all. I am aware that the Defense Department and the Armed Forces are striving hard to live up to their stated commitments to the presidency and the people.

For the first time in four years, there has been a substantial drop in the level of dissident-related violence in 1989, thus freeing more of our underprivileged people in the countryside from the clutches of uncertainty. The leadership of the underground movement has been decimated, and intrigue and demoralization have swept the enemy ranks.

Present indicators of the counterinsurgency campaign are positive and encouraging. Insurgency-affected barangays are on a steady decline. Similarly, the manpower strength of the enemy, as well as their armory count, continues to diminish.

Our victory is a tribute to both the soldier and the people. The people claim their peace and security from the services of the soldier. The soldier claims the legitimacy of his cause from the will of the people. This covenant was broken in the past. It has been resealed in the present.

I am grateful for the successful implementation of the National Reconciliation and Development Program. It is best that wounds are made to heal rather than that they be reopened to induce mortal encounters.

I would like to make special mention of the fervent determination of army engineers to finish the Lopez-Catanauan road in Quezon, despite their loss of comrades-in-arms in a treacherous ambush perpetrated by the New People's Army. Thank you for this faithful response to government's policy of peace and reconciliation with honor.

Despite the strings of victories, I must caution all against two important dangers that can shake the integrity of this covenant between soldier and people.

The specter of corruption and abuse still hovers over us, threatening to erode the meaningful relationship between the man in uniform and the civilian populace.

And then, I feel I must warn you against a possible disregard for the welfare of the innocent caught in the crossfire between our forces and that of the enemy. This latter danger has lost us a number of potential supporters who have accused the men in uniform of callousness. I ask the Defense Department and the Armed Forces to guard against these dangers and to resolve them as quickly as they arise.

Our agenda for 1990 can be capsulized in four words: Momentum, Mass, Morale and Maximization.

Momentum means we must not let up the pressure we have now exerted upon the enemy until we can attain strategic control and containment.

Mass means we must fully utilize our three-tiered defense organization consisting of the Bantay-Bayan, the territorial forces and the mobile forces to the extent that we can effectively preserve momentum.

Morale of our soldiers is what we should keep. For it, we must seek more ways to further improve the lot of the frontline soldier. I am glad to announce to you that I have just certified as urgent administration measures two identical bills, now pending in both houses of Congress, regarding expanded benefits to our veterans. House Bill 25553 and Senate Bill 1235 both provide for standardized and upgraded benefits for our military veterans and their dependents. My certification will hasten these bills' passage and thus give our veterans the benefits long due them.

Maximization is the optimization of government resources by tightening the inter-sectoral and interagency linkages that support the counterinsurgency campaign, particularly the peace and order council system.

Mga kababayan, ang Kagawaran ng Tanggulang Pambansa ay maitutulad natin sa ating mga bisig, malalakas na mga bisig na nagtatanggol at tumutulong para sa ikabubuti at ikabubuhay ng buong katawan. Magugunita natin, ilang taon pa lamang ang nakalilipas, na tayong mga Pilipino ay nagkapit bisig sa EDSA Kaya naman ang kapit bisig ay naging isang simbulo ng ating pagkakaisa bilang mga Pilipino, at bilang magkakapatid.

Ngayong araw na ito, ibalik natin ang alaala ng EDSA. Sa paghaharap natin nitong ating mabigat na gawain, magkapit bisig tayong muli. *Magtulungan tayo.*

My friends, given the magnitude and the urgency of the tasks before us, and the amount of time and resources at our disposal, "magtulungan tayo" is more than a suggestion. It is an appeal which sums up our unity of purpose and our solidarity. But it is also our stirring battlecry expressing our plan of action. Because the daunting job that lies before us is nothing less than our country's growth with equity, we have to be very sure that we are indeed working as a team.

Consider this: if we can't help ourselves, who else will? The stark truth is that we must work together because we are one family, one economy, one government, and most importantly, one nation. Family, economy, government and nation. These are the living symbols that our people will not only accept but also energetically rally around and actively support.

There are those who criticize the government. They say government does not have a very clear vision of development. To them I say, there are none so blind as those who refuse to see. They refuse to see that it is already morning after a very long night for our country. They continue to live in the past because they are afraid of the present and even more afraid of the future. And so they continue to undermine what we are trying to build.

After three and a half years, we can finally say that our political agenda has been completed with the full restoration of our democratic process and democratic institutions. It is now time to make the dream more appropriate to the times. To make democracy work for development.

Indeed, our vision is of one nation, of one society, and of one economy that is propelled forward by People Power. Of a free people capable of handling their heritage of freedom, united in goals and values, and forever vigilant against threats to rend their liberty apart. Of a government with the moral authority to lead the people without dominating or emasculating them. Of a constitutional democracy that equally exacts public discipline from its leaders and citizens, supported by a professional, patriotic and self-reliant military to guarantee peace and order. Of a national economy largely fueled by private initiative and resources. And towards this vision, we now aim for growth with equity.

The crucial challenge before us is to make the Philippines economically one. We shall pursue a balanced agro-industrial development, encouraging clusters of small and medium industries in the countryside. Private initiative shall be harnessed. And science and appropriate technology shall be applied.

The economic empowerment of the marginal sectors shall be our primary objective. This means that the economically disadvantaged, including the poorest 30% of our population, shall be the immediate beneficiaries of government attention and assistance.

Hindi natin dapat makalimutan ang ating mga kapatid na kapos sa lahat ng bagay. Sila ay ating bibigyan ng maaaring higit pang pagkakataon kaysa sa mga kapatid nating nakaririwasa sa kanilang buhay.

This is simply to declare that “those who have less in life should have more in terms of opportunities.”

Livelihood projects shall be established throughout the countryside. We will create as many jobs as possible within the constraints of our present resources. But the number of jobs available will grow with the continuing expansion of our economy.

Ang pagbibigay ng pagkakataon ay hindi lamang pagbibigay ng hanapbuhay. Ang pagbibigay ng pagkakataon ay pagbibigay na rin ng buhay.

The modernization of our farms can be attained by linking them to processing sites and markets as well as modern small and medium industries. All the necessary infrastructure shall be provided, including irrigation, farm-to-market roads, effective delivery systems for farm inputs such as fertilizers, rural credit and rural electrification.

Teamwork must be foremost: among government agencies and between public and private sectors. We shall strive further to enhance coordination among government departments and between government offices and private organizations. Hand in hand, public and private agencies should be able to suitably and adequately respond to the basic and priority needs of different communities and districts.

In terms of our national security, the continuing tasks are clear:

We must first of all ensure that our communities are blessed with law and order so that the market economy will take root and grow in the cities and in the countryside.

We must protect the development programs of the government that they will have a lasting impact on the lives of the poorest of our fellowmen.

We must ensure that government has free and unimpeded access to far-flung rural communities that need urgent and efficient public services.

We must provide full security to the Agrarian Reform Program and ensure that this linchpin of social reform will not be railroaded by conflict and violence.

We must attend to the protection of the environment through the strict enforcement of laws governing the use of our natural resources.

We must continue to maintain a credible posture of long-term stability so that the country proves attractive to investors who will spur economic recovery.

The carriage of development therefore arrives, so to speak, pulled by the two horses of programs which maintain peace and order and programs which encourage development.

The Department of Defense and the Armed Forces of the Philippines definitely play vital roles in the accomplishment of these tasks. As your Commander-in-Chief, I realize that your burden is heavy. But the promise of success is more than rewarding.

My fellow workers in government, in order to achieve our vision for our country, I will have to ask from you and from every Filipino nothing less than acts of heroism. For the Filipino has proven time and again that he is indeed capable of sacrifice and valor. We have no need for super heroes, because a great country is made up of many small heroes, working together as brothers. No one person can accomplish this vision. For economic recovery, that recovery which spells growth with equity, let us link arms once more. Magkapit-bisig tayo, magtulungan tayo.

I salute the men of the Department of National Defense and the Armed Forces for all your achievements and heartily congratulate you all.

Mabuhay ang Kagawaran ng Tanggulang Pambansa!

Mabuhay ang Pilipino!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon C. Aquino on Signing of the Act Providing for an Organic Act for the Cordillera Autonomous Region

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Signing of the Act Providing for an Organic Act for the Cordillera Autonomous Region**

[Delivered on October 23, 1989]

DEVELOPMENT THROUGH FREEDOM

In tackling the constitutional mandate and agenda for the proposed autonomy in the Cordillera Region, President Aquino considers the pressing needs of development in the rural areas of the devolution of powers and functions from the national government to the autonomous region. Autonomy must address the full spectrum of the political, social and economic aspirations of the constituent communities. And the people, she avers, must understand the benefits and responsibilities that they must bear.

Pursuant to the constitutional mandate for autonomy, Congress has passed this law that I signed today, providing for the Organic Act for the Cordillera Autonomous Region. In doing so, we have again kept faith with the Constitution.

As in the case of Mindanao, the precise terms of the autonomy remain controversial. For very similar reasons, some will be for rejecting the law because it does not offer enough powers to the autonomous region; others because it gives away too much.

The proposed Organic Act acknowledges the cultural distinctiveness and the ancestral claims of the peoples of the Cordilleras, while clearly and repeatedly defining them as inseparable elements of our one, sovereign nation.

As we proceed to discuss and tackle the agenda for the proposed autonomy, we continue to bear in mind the pressing needs of development in all of our rural areas. The devolution of powers and functions from the national government to the autonomous region must take all this into account.

For autonomy must address the full spectrum of the political, social and economic aspirations of the constituent communities. In these communities, the people's basic concerns will remain: potable water, health facilities, schools, livelihood opportunities. As I said before, when I signed the law providing for the Organic Act for Mindanao, autonomy must translate into the more effective delivery of these services. The national line agencies and the future autonomous government have a shared responsibility for moderating the disruptions inevitably resulting from change.

We must now let people in the proposed autonomous region decide for themselves in a plebiscite whether the law meets their objectives. As before, I have directed the relevant government agencies to mount a massive information campaign to help the voters understand the basis of the autonomy law, its content and its implications so as to give them a better foundation for making a rational decision. For the people must understand not only the benefits that autonomy will bring but also the new responsibilities that they must bear.

The citizens must exercise their right of free choice on a fundamental change in political arrangements. We must abide by this principle as the one most consistent with the constitutional bias towards greater local autonomy and individual freedom.

Through freedom will come development. And through development, this nation of ours will preserve the peace that it has so painstakingly achieved.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Asia Pacific Council of the American Chambers**

On the other hand, some of our supporters have called our rise from a negative growth rate to a modest but positive 6.7% a phenomenon. While we are happy with their praises, we would like to grow faster. But we realize that we can obtain better growth targets with some help from friends like you.

We have set our national development priorities: poverty alleviation, employment generation, promotion of equity and social justice, and sustainable economic growth. To achieve these goals, we have adopted a set of trade and industrial policies which focus on the establishment of an efficient and stable industrial structure and the promotion of region-based industries. We have returned to the private sector their proper role as the prime movers of economic growth. Along these lines, we have dismantled state monopolies, privatized government-owned and acquired assets and firms, and liberalized imports. A market-oriented exchange rate policy continues to be enforced in support of export promotion.

Our primary objective is to improve the economic lot of our marginal sectors. To effect industrial peace and harmony, efforts are focused on the provision of the means and conditions under which both labor and capital can work together to reconcile their respective interests.

Because we recognize the appropriate roles of local and foreign capital in economic development, we have defined these roles and enhanced the climate for the entry and growth of foreign investments. Our limited domestic capital spurs us to attract foreign investments. Although we have already implemented a revised Omnibus Investments Code and simplified investment procedures and regulations, we are conducting a review of our investment incentives to make these incentives more responsive to our needs as well as those of foreign investors.

Allow me to give you more details. The Filipino labor force's capability is unquestioned. We can provide you with an adequate supply of skilled and semi-skilled labor. And comparably, our labor rates are low. We are presently promoting the growth of family-size business enterprises in the countryside. Very recently, our Congress passed a bill, which I shall soon sign into law, encouraging the establishment of such small businesses through tax exemptions and other incentives. You may perhaps use these small establishments as sources of your materials. On top of these, I am sure that you are aware of our people's proficiency in your tongue. Our adequacy in handling your language should be a big incentive for English-speaking investors.

So let me invite you to increase your investments here. You have the technology and the capital. We can supply you with the labor, materials and site components.

Yet while I invite you to be part of this massive program to rebuild our economy, I ask you to view your investment as a mutually-beneficial plan. Let it be a cooperation of equals, for your country and mine shall both gain from this endeavor.

U.S. Vice-President Dan Quayle once said that "The USA advances its interests best when it fosters the growth and security of its allies and friends", – and I agreed with him. So I ask you, as potential investors, to help in our economic growth. Then I ask you, who are from the bastion of modern democracy, to help us nourish the fledgling democracy we have regained, that it may flourish. And that, perhaps, we may become the model of democracy in this part of Asia. When you do so, you will not only assist in nurturing a friend's economy, you will also help espouse the very ideals that your country represents.

Lastly, I would be most interested to find out how the Council perceives the latest changes in this country. Though I cannot promise to totally accommodate your needs, I am sure we can arrive at mutually acceptable goals that will demonstrate the equality of sovereign nations even as it also proves equally advantageous to us.

Thank you and good day.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino during the 8th Productivity Congress Speech
of**

**Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the 8th Productivity Congress**

[Delivered on October 27, 1989]

QUALITY PRODUCTION	STANDARDS	AT	HIGH	LEVEL
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President Aquino believes that our products can attain and sustain the high quality demanded of world-class goods. Filipino ingenuity and creativity combined could produce goods that are beautiful, functional and of unsurpassed quality.

In the more than three years that I have led this government, I have constantly pushed for increased productivity, especially in the government sector. I am glad to find a forum dedicated to this goal. I, therefore, congratulate Secretary Follosco and the Philippine Productivity Movement for sponsoring this Congress, and for choosing a theme which, if closely adhered to, will be of utmost significance to us.

I wholeheartedly agree with your theme. It is high time that we made quality a way of life. As you may be aware, I have never tired of prodding our people to give their best to whatever they do. My State of the Nation Address last July clearly reflected this support for productivity.

In the government sector, we have adopted several measures to increase the efficiency of public servants. Our 1990 budget's component for productivity concerns has been increased by 15.9%. We have set performance targets for each agency. We duly recognize excellence in public and private endeavors, holding up such exceptional records for the public to emulate. And, Congress has supplemented our efforts through the enactment of the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees which defines the performance expected of civil servants.

A reinvigorated Civil Service Commission has applied measures to reward effectivity and punish inefficiency. Foremost among these is the proposed Civil Service Code that puts together all scattered laws and policies of the Commission in one comprehensive act. The Code has been endorsed to Congress to facilitate its passage.

Most importantly and in recognition of the direct relationship between productivity and fair remuneration, we have started the implementation of the Revised Compensation and Position Classification Law which upgrades salaries and standardizes pay for basically similar work in government. I understand that some government agencies have readied the release of their respective salary differentials. In keeping with government's call for increased productivity, I am using this occasion to direct the Department of Budget and Management to hasten the implementation of the revised rates to all concerned. And, when salaries shall have been fully standardized, we shall start the measures geared at promoting only on merit basis.

Time was when public service had perfect specimens of sluggish performers, or even non-performers. I will not tolerate employees on the so-called 15/30 basis – the ones who report only on the 15th and 30th of the month to collect their pay checks. And those who are referred to, in jest, as 80% out, standing – that is, they are standing outside their offices, 80% of their official time. With these recent measures and forthcoming ones, I hope that these will be occurrences of the past. Only improved efficiency will bring back the lost glory of government service.

I have said it before and I shall say it again. This government will not put up with the service of laggards. We shall keep up the pressure on every department and agency to improve its productivity and efficiency.

I understand that the private sector also faces challenges to improve productivity. I view this as a healthy sign. To achieve our goal to be among the Newly Industrialized Countries of the 20th Century, to alleviate the poverty that has been our unfortunate legacy from the oppressor, and to consistently meet high standards nation-wide, private and public sectors must work harder together. Government and private sectors should now take larger steps to optimize all our resources.

Among the countries that have recovered from economic devastation, perhaps none has fared better than Japan. The Japanese experience of rising from the ashes of war to become an economic superpower in only 40 years is an oft-told tale. Japan has been wielding again its economic might because of its people's united efforts to attain the highest standards of production. The key word here is unity. For no other reason has the country been known as Japan, Incorporated.

If we examine closely the miracle of Japan's ascent to power, we will observe that beyond the high level of technology that they have achieved, beyond the high quality of their products today are a disciplined people, united in their belief in their capabilities and bound stronger by their determination to succeed.

This is what I want to share with you, therefore: that if we should aim for even a portion of what Japan has done, we must first be united in our goals and directions. Our vision is that of one people, one government, one economy. For after all, we are One Nation.

Perhaps, the question that bothers some of us is whether our products can attain, and then sustain the high quality demanded of world-class goods. My answer is – why not? Although our present standards still need improvement, I am confident that we can eventually do it. While I am disappointed to know that the market for “patis” and “bagoong” for Filipinos in the U.S. is dominated by another country, I am heartened to know that a local beer has consistently been rated as belonging to the best of international beers.

Setting up standards of excellence acceptable to foreign markets should not be too great a problem for us. Filipino ingenuity and creativity, known all over the world, can combine to produce goods that are beautiful, functional and of unsurpassed quality. But we ought to pay more attention to maintaining original standards. It seems that when we go into mass production, the quality of our goods suffers. So many international markets have been lost this way I challenge the management experts and the science and technology savants to devise better ways for our producers to maintain quality standards even at high-level production.

I know that we have been the mentors of other Asians on productivity and technology – Korea, on car assembly; Thailand and Taiwan, on agricultural technology; and others, on utility vehicles. If we can teach them how to improve their wares, I see no reason why we cannot produce these goods with the quality required by the international markets.

But beyond the call to improve the quality of our goods and services is the compelling need to unite as one people with one vision. Then, the vision will be fulfilled by the singular commitment of one nation to produce at optimum levels and with the highest possible standards.

Hence, I ask you, who are involved in furthering our nation's productivity, to underscore the need for unity in your campaigns even before you rally the different components of our productive efforts to your cause. I commend you for remembering to gather here all the major sectors of society involved in production. I call on these different sectors now to actively respond to your initiatives:

On my fellow workers in government, to declare the pursuit of productivity and quality as a national priority;

On both management and labor in the agricultural, industrial and service sectors, to work together in directing and supporting productivity and quality improvements in their operations;

On the academe, to set higher standards of performance and to instill in our youth the desire for excellence;

On the Science and Technology community, to accelerate their efforts to arrive at more productive processes and products.

And above all, on every Filipino, to dedicate himself to the attainment, maintenance and enhancement of productivity and quality.

In conclusion, I am pleased to endorse the Quality Manifesto drawn up in your 7th National Productivity Congress, thus: “Quality is the way to a better life. Quality is a strategic business imperative – essential to market leadership. Quality improvement, more than being a business strategy, must be an attitude that demands commitment...”

Lubos akong sumasang-ayon sa mga simulaing ito. Subalit kung nais nating maging uliran ang ating mga kalakal, kailangang magkaisa tayo sa ating hangarin, sa ating mithiin at sa ating layunin. Magtulungan tayong lahat upang makamit ng sambayanan ang kaunlaran, kasaganaan at kapayapaan.

Magandang hapon sa inyong lahat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the Vancouver Business Community

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the Vancouver Business Community**

[Delivered on November 4, 1989]

INVITING CANADIAN INVESTMENTS

Many Canadians know the Philippines as the scene of a historic drama – a victory that was achieved by Filipinos' hanging on against the odds. Similarly, Canadians built their country by just hanging on.

The Philippines has achieved so much since then. Its GNP has grown steadily, it has met its debt obligations, and democracy has been reestablished. However, much remains to be done. In spite of the economic growth, many Filipinos still live in poverty. Insurgency continues. The solution lies in the expansion of Philippine economy, for which the country needs investments from Canada.

I would like to thank the World Trade Center and the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada for this opportunity to meet the distinguished members of the Canadian business community.

This is the first time that a Philippine president visits Canada. It is therefore a privilege and a great pleasure for me to address the business leaders of Canada.

I am here to introduce the Philippines to you as an area of investment. Many of you are familiar with the country as the scene of a recent historic drama – the most successful non-violent revolution.

Those who watched from afar wondered at the odds against us; while those of us who were actually there wondered if we would come out of it alive. But in the aftermath, our victory explained itself.

The shorthand explanation was that we had lived a miracle. The realistic explanation was simply that we had held on longer than our opponent had. Hanging on, you see, is half the battle won. This is something, I think, that Canadians appreciate from their pioneer experience, for their possession of this vast continental mass had a lot to do with just hanging on – against the odds.

The spirit of my country in that perilous time had much in common with the Canadian pioneer spirit. We didn't give up because we couldn't. There was nowhere else to go. Had we given up the fight, we'd have thrown away our future.

It is remarkable how far you can go when there is nowhere else to go but up.

First, let me briefly describe how down we were. Before the Revolution, our economy had been continuously contracting – by over 10 percent in just two years. Per capita income was down to its lowest level in the past decade. The apparent good news was a low inflation rate in 1985. But that was because inflation had shot up to 50% the year before. This had left everyone too broke to meet their basic needs, much less to push up prices. Everything was flat – on the ground.

By the first year of the new government, the economy had been turned around. This was followed by three successive years of GNP growth that was quite remarkable given the conditions in which it was achieved. To describe one: 40% of the national budget went annually to debt service, along with a substantial share of our foreign exchange. That was on the economy side.

But our revolution was a political act for a political objective. Before we even thought about reviving our economy, we wanted first to be free again. It was for political liberty that my people put their lives on the line, and for nothing else. That at least was the simple message of my campaign. We never mentioned prosperity, nor did the people care. It was remarkable that the poorest of the poor in the countryside would shout the word “democracy” wherever I went in the campaign.

That says something about the Filipino’s sense of values.

And so, on the political side, we moved much faster and, I must say it clearly, with absolute success.

We transitioned from dictatorship to democracy in less than a year and half. All the methods we used were democratic. We never compromised in the morality of our means to achieve our democratic aims. We needed a democratic constitution, so we held democratic polls to ratify one. We needed a separate legislature and so we held, for the first time in 14 years, the cleanest and best attended elections not only in Philippine history but perhaps in the history of any modern democracy.

We held two more elections to establish representative government up and down the country so that the people would feel the dignity of self-rule again.

This was our unalloyed success story. The result of it is a measure of political legitimacy that few governments in the world enjoy, and therefore a measure of stability that assures the near absolute safety of any investment in the Philippines today.

Other things were not so successful. For instance, our offer to negotiate a peace with the communist insurgents. That offer was rejected. It was with great reluctance that we embarked again upon the hostile course that seemed so inimical to the spirit of our new order. But there was no help for it.

With due regard for human rights, we launched a military campaign with a determination that had not been seen under the dictatorship. The blows came so strong that the insurgents yielded: first their strongholds and then their reason. For they proceeded to blame themselves for their reverses and instigated brutal purges that have decimated their ranks. We also arrested virtually the entire top leadership of the Communist Party.

The conflict, of course, is far from over. But the tide has turned, and time runs now against the rebels where once it ran against a corrupt, tyrannical, and incompetent regime.

Remnants of the old dictatorial order, even those who had helped launch the People Power revolution, tried to seize the power also. Five coup attempts were launched. The last was crushed completely. This last engagement finally convinced the world that democracy was there to stay in the Philippines and that the country had finally entered into a period of long-term normalcy and stability. We breathed a sigh of relief, for we could now work harder on our economic recovery without distraction. But the good name of our country with which we had started – a name that stood in the eyes of the world for compassion – had been sullied by the unavoidable blood that had to be shed.

Nothing comes free, it seems.

We continued working on the economy, guided by the free enterprise philosophy of our Medium-Term Plan. We dismantled monopolies and other privileges with which the past government would reward its friends. We proclaimed and strictly observed a policy of “no fears and no favors” in business. This had a remarkable effect on the economy, as the GNP figures show.

We are going further in our avowed aim to give to the private sector the principal role as engine of the economy. Out of 296 government-owned or controlled corporations, we have marked out 130 for privatization and 118 for abolition or merger with regular government departments.

We liberalized the importation of over a thousand items, and have scheduled more.

We are particularly proud of the way we have managed our growth so that inflation, while definitely increasing, has not run away with our gains. We have kept the peso stable.

Our successes have not, unfortunately, reached those whose lives we want most to improve. Although the poverty level dropped from 59% to 49%, that is still more poverty than we can in justice accept.

But the way out is still the economy. We have to progress farther. We have to expand our economy so as to draw in the poor who must feel like strangers in their own land. That is why I am here. To attract your investments to my country to make the economy grow. Thus, we have rationalized our system of incentives and planned for 16 regional industrial centers into which we intend to pour the bulk of our infrastructure projects. From these centers, we hope that progress and prosperity will fan out to encompass the lives of all our people.

The country I have briefly introduced to you is a pioneer country. And its people are only just staking out their future. They are carving out of the wilderness that the past government had made of their country a new one that will accommodate their hopes. But don't get me wrong. We are not talking about a country where people, finally, are getting jobs but business, ultimately, is just getting by. Great fortunes are being made in the Philippines today.

The Japanese see this, so do the Taiwanese. And if there is a good profit to be made anywhere, they would know where. We are inviting Canada to look in the same place.

The US-Canada Free Trade Arrangement, it is said, has faced the Canadian economy permanently to the South. May I suggest a little loosening up and looking West, to the Pacific where the future is coming to birth.

It is also said that the US-Canada Trade Arrangement will open for Canada the gates to the international economy. I would like to think that Canada, given the high quality of its manufactures and the entrepreneurial genius of its people, can make it into the world economy without going through another country's backdoor.

You don't have to go South, to reach the East. Canada is joined to us by the Pacific. The same waters that wash our shores beat against the majestic coastline of British Columbia. The selfsame waters unite us to the future of the Pacific.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino for the Members of the Filipino-Canadian Community

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
For the Members of the Filipino-Canadian Community**

[Delivered on November 4, 1989]

**THE PHILIPPINE ECONOMY: ONE OF 1990's
BEST PERFORMERS**

Citing the economic and political gains of the country after the revolution, President Aquino does not fail to stress that Filipinos here and abroad can be very potent forces in national development. This can be done by way of investing in the Philippines, spreading good words about it, patronizing Philippine-made products, contributing to the Philippine Fund, and by being loyal to the nation they are very much a part of.

I am privileged to be the first Philippine president to visit Canada. And I am very happy to be able to share this privileged moment with my fellow Filipinos.

I came to reaffirm and, if at all possible considering the help that Canada has given us, to further strengthen the relationship between our two countries.

But I came also to be with you and to tell you, from one who is guiding our country, how things are really going over there.

For those who fled the country because of the indignity of living without rights and without freedom, your country is again what it was – the showcase of democracy in Asia. Only, I think, it is even better, because we don't take our liberties for granted anymore. I think we have a more vigilant and concerned citizenry so that what happened before will not be repeated. No tyrant will again abuse our ignorance and imprison our spirit.

The insurgency situation has improved tremendously. Your Armed Forces are now the people's armed forces. They have captured virtually the entire top leadership of the Communist Party and driven insurgent forces out of their old strongholds in the rural areas. It is not the end of that problem, yet. But we are way past the beginning of the end of it.

The economy has improved tremendously. I won't give you anymore statistics than this, that from the negative 4% in 1985, which means the economy was shrinking, we attained a GNP of 6.7% in just three years. That is remarkable, when you consider that we were able to do it despite the fact that nearly half our taxes are taken away to service our foreign and domestic debts. It is like running on one leg and still going fast. Unemployment has dropped significantly.

A well-known American investment group, Merrill Lynch, predicts that the Philippine economy will be one of the best performers in the 1990s. We stand on the threshold of becoming a Newly Industrialized Country in the coming decade.

Filipinos, here and abroad, are a very potent force. They can help make this development take place sooner – by investing in the Philippines or simply by spreading the word among potential Canadian investors that something good is dawning in the Pacific and it is our country. Wouldn't they like to be a part of it?

Hindi po kaila na handa kayong tumugon sa napapanahong hamon sa pagpapaunlad ng ating bansa. Kaya't nais ko pong pagtibayin ang inyong pagmamalasakit sa ating mga kababayan, at ang inyong pagnanasang tumulong sa kaunlaran at kasaganaan ng ating bayan.

Umaasa po kami na kahit malayo kayo ay hindi ito hadlang sa inyong pakikiisa at pagtulong sa ating mga kababayan. Maraming pamamaraan ang naitatag na upang maipatupad ang mga makabayang layunin ninyo:

- Lumahok sa Philippine Fund na kung saan kayo at maging mga dayuhang kaibigan o kakilala ninyo ay maaaring mamuhunan at kumita. Ang Philippine Fund ay ilulunsad ko sa New York sa ikawalo ng Nobyembre.
- Tangkilikin ang ating sariling produkto na, dahil sa husay ng ating mga kababayan, ay nahahanay na sa mga natatangi sa buong mundo.
- Dalawin po ninyo ang ating bayan. Marahil hindi pa po ninyo nalilibot ang magagandang pook nito na kasalukuyang umaakit sa mga maraming dayuhan. Kung hinahangaan ng iba bakit hindi tayo pa?
- Mamuhunan sa ibat-ibang kalakal sa inyong mga lalawigan o nayon sa pamamagitan ng inyong mga kaibigan o kamag-anak.

Sa mga usaping ito, mayroon po tayong Commission on Filipino Overseas na handang tumulong sa inyo.

Sa tulong ninyo at sa aming pagsusumikap, darating ang panahon na buong karangalang ihahayag natin ang ating sariling kasaganahan bilang isang bansa. Sa panahong iyon, marahil nararapat nang bumalik kayo sa ating bayan upang manirahan dito magpakailan man. Mabuhay tayong lahat!

Maraming salamat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on a Toast in Honor of Premier Vander Zalm of Canada

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On a Toast in Honor of Premier Vander Zalm of Canada**

[Delivered on November 4, 1989]

**VANCOUVER
A SPECIAL ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP**

AND

MANILA:

President Aquino's trip to Canada is both a business and a symbolic trip. It is symbolic, because it is a commitment to Canada's ideals: human decency, peace, and freedom. President Aquino imparts a message from the Catholic Bishops Conference denouncing the human rights violations of extremists, a deep concern for both Canada and the Philippines. The visit is also a business trip: President Aquino thanks Canada for all their support, invites them to visit the Philippines and proposes a special economic relationship between Vancouver and Manila.

Premier William Vander Zalm, Mrs. Vander Zalm, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

We are linked by a mighty ocean and tied, if we are up to the challenge, to the same bright future. The Pacific makes us neighbors. And so you might say, despite the enormous distance, that this visit is a neighborly visit.

The beauty of Vancouver alone was enough to delight us, but the added warmth of your hospitality has made me feel right at home here in Canada.

But this trip is mostly business. Its purpose is to deepen the acquaintance of Canadians with the country they have helped so much. It is also symbolic.

Because of its singular dedication to the world causes of human decency, peace, and freedom, any official call on Canada is a commitment to the ideals it pursues. Before I left the Philippines, the Catholic Bishops Conference issued a very strong message on an issue that is of deep concern to both our countries. That issue is the use that extremists on both sides make of the human rights violations of the other. In every violation of human rights, at least one side wins by accusing the other. The only consistent losers are the innocent victims of extremism.

It is a strange logic that seeks to establish the rightness of one side only by showing the wrongs committed by the other.

This has to stop. Both sides must stop rejoicing over each other's crimes and realize that they stand, in the eyes of all good men and true, as nothing more than criminals. This is the call issued by the Catholic Bishops Conference.

I thought it appropriate to start my visit to North America with their message.

We have many other things to talk about. Trade relations between our two countries can be much improved. But it is in keeping with the Canadian moral tradition to take up first those transnational issues that make Canada and the new democratic Philippines respected moral voices in the world.

But I came to Canada also to express our thanks for the support it has given the Philippines. That support, you may be pleased to know, has paid off handsomely. Not only is the democracy to which you gave your support and well-wishes firmly entrenched, but the Philippine economy that had been in shambles has been rebuilt and is well on the way to full recovery.

I would like to invite more Canadians to visit the Philippines, for as the beauty of Vancouver indeed defies description, may I say with pride that the beauty of my country invites comparison with yours. Canadians are known to be indefatigable travellers, especially to Thailand and Japan. Well, between Thailand and Japan lies another country – blessed with a sun that sets more splendidly than anywhere else, and with millions of other stars that shine as warmly in the smiles of its people. I would like to invite Canadians to get to know my country better. Perhaps the best way to start this is for you, Premier Vander Zalm, to accept my invitation to visit the Philippines with your family. I understand that this is how foreign investments were first attracted to other Asian countries – by the favorable reports of travellers about the friendliness and industriousness of the people and the ideal conditions for enterprise.

There is an important place for Canadian enterprise and capital in the Philippine economy. An ideal partnership beckons between two countries that have a common language, a similar political heritage, and which share the same lake of opportunities in the Pacific.

We must strengthen our ties and expand the network of our relations. Any such expansion must naturally pass through Vancouver – Canada's window to the Pacific. I propose therefore that a special economic relationship be established between Vancouver and Manila by our respective trade and industry ministries and by those in education and culture. Surely the cultural life of our countries have as much to offer as our manufactures.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like you all to join me in a toast to the continued good health and happiness of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II of Canada.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino for the Filipino Community at Toronto

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
For the Filipino Community at Toronto**

[Delivered on November 5, 1989]

A CALL FOR UNITY

The President voices out the belief that in every Filipino flows his sense of patriotism no matter where he is or what social level he has attained.

I want to thank you for the warm welcome you have given me and my delegation. I am here to share a special moment of recollection with you, my countrymen, whose prayers and expressions of support sustained our struggle and helped us consolidate our victories.

Kayo pong mga Pilipinong naninirahan sa ibang bayan, ay may papel na dapat gampanan sa ating hinaharap. Isang mahalagang kabanata ng ating kasaysayan ang nagaganap. Ang inyong pakikibahagi ang inaasahan ng ating minamahal na mga kababayan – mga kababayan na muling umaasa sa isang magandang kinabukasan.

Tinatanong ko po kayo ngayon. Kayo ba ay bahagi pa ng ating bayan na nakaranas ng pagsilang muli ng kalayaan at karangalan? Nakikiisa pa ba kayo sa lahat ng mamamayang Pilipino upang matamo ang larawang-diwa na pinapatnubayan ng mga tuntunin ng demokrasya? Sa mga katanungang ito, batid ko na sang-ayon ang inyong mga tugon dahil naniniwala po ako na ang pagkamakabayan ng bawat Pilipino ay nananalaytay pa sa inyong mga ugat at hindi maaring sugpuin ng mga pansamantalang kaginhawahang inaalay ng bansang ngayo'y inyong tinitirahan.

Sa misang ito na inialay para sa mga hangarin ng ating mga kababayan, ako po ay taimtim na nanalangin na mamulat ang bawat Pilipino upang ang tunay na pagkakaisa ay muling umiral sa ating bansa. Hiniling ko rin sa Poong Maykapal na matuklasan ng lahat ng ating kababayan ang kanilang likas na kakayahan at kahalagahan tungo sa makademokrasyang tuntunin ng ating bayan. Taglay ninyo ang kakayahang tumulong at makibahagi. Binigyan kayo ng Diyos ng talino at kasipagan. Hinihintay ng ating mga minamahal na kababayan ang pagpapatupad ng inyong pagnanasang makiisa tungo sa kasaganahan at kaunlaran ng ating bayan. Maraming salamat po.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the dinner in Honor of the Premier of Ontario

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the dinner in Honor of the Premier of Ontario**

[Delivered on November 5, 1989]

**RECIPROCITY, MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS
TO BOTH NATIONS**

Ontario is beautiful, inviting, and welcoming. Filipinos have repaid its hospitality by contributing to Canada's progress, prosperity, and diversity. Canada, in turn, has given protection to Filipino workers, and has formulated a multicultural policy towards immigrants. June 12 was even proclaimed "Philippine Independence Day in Ontario". This friendship should be incorporated into programs and policies for the mutual benefit of both countries.

Thank you, Mr. Premier, for your warm words of welcome for me and my party. I want to thank you and Mrs. Peterson also for the wonderful dinner you have tendered in my honor and to which you invited many of my countrymen.

I am very happy to be here in beautiful Ontario and in the leading Canadian city of Toronto – the nest of the Blue Jays, and also the financial capital of Canada.

Of the 150,000 Filipinos who have settled in Canada, half have chosen the Province of Ontario to be their home. Filipino-Canadians will repay the welcome you extended to them with the fiercest loyalty for Canada and the greatest pride in being Canadians.

Filipino Canadians have reciprocated by contributing significantly to the progress and prosperity of their communities and to the diversity of Canadian culture. I am proud of my people here. They have been the best ambassadors of goodwill from the Philippines to Canada and from Canada to the Philippines. For they speak so highly of their new country.

Canada, we are told, takes care of its own. The Province of Ontario stands out, not only in the ample protection it extends to Filipino workers, but also for its multicultural policy towards immigrants. That wise policy regards diversity, not as detracting from national unity, so much as further elaborating the rich fabric of Canadian life.

That Canadians have a special sympathy for the Philippines is obvious. The account of the Four Day Revolution which does the most justice to that distinctively Filipino achievement was the one by Canadian Bryan Johnson.

In 1986, Ontario proclaimed June 12th as "Philippine Independence Day in Ontario". It was an important gesture for us because, for the first time in 14 years, we were celebrating Philippine independence in freedom. Ontario's message understood the universality of the event.

These separate acts of friendship and the special feeling that is so evident between us must be brought together into programs and policies that will draw the economic and cultural life of our two countries closer together – to our mutual advantage.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast: to your good health, Premier and Mrs. Peterson, and to the deep and lasting friendship of our two countries.

Mabuhay!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the state dinner in Honor of Governor General Jeanne Sauve

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the state dinner in honor of Governor General Jeanne Sauve**

[Delivered on November 6, 1989]

FOR HUMANITY AND FREEDOM

President Aquino recounts that in the Philippine struggle for freedom and democracy, Canada, at this critical period, stood by her side. She exalts the Canadian tradition to stand by freedom wherever in the world it is born and to defend it wherever it is imperilled, as the bones of Canada's sons also littered the road to freedom in two World Wars and in the Korean conflict.

I have looked forward to this visit since you invited me in 1986, shortly after I assumed the presidency. I recognized the gesture gratefully for what it was: a stabilizing act of recognition by a great sovereign state for a new government and a young democracy. That it came from a woman head of state was not lost on those who doubted that a woman could lead and protect the new democracy in the Philippines.

It was a period of great uncertainty for my government and for the new democracy. Every friend of freedom counted immensely in the calculation of democracy's chances of survival. Yet I was always confident that Canada would stand by our side. For it has become a Canadian tradition to stand by freedom wherever in the world it is born, and to defend it wherever in the world it is imperilled.

The bones of Canada's sons littered the road to freedom in two World Wars and in the Korean conflict. And Canada's extensive involvement in UN Peacekeeping Missions has made its armed forces highly respected as virtually the army of humanity in the cause of peace. In these many trials of strength, the courage of the Canadian soldier was legendary and a critical factor in the outcome of the battle or in the enemy's decision to engage at all.

The Philippines has also been unsparing in its commitments to the general causes of humanity. Canadians and Filipinos spilled blood on the same steep slopes of Korea. Both the Philippines and Canada are original members of the United Nations and are among the earliest signatories to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

San doute les difficultés que les Canadiens ont affrontées pour forger ce grand pays à partir de l'immensité, expliquent-elles la perception sans commune mesure des problèmes du Tiers Monde par le Canada et le les contributions qu'il apportées pour les résoudre, sous forme d'aide, d'investissements ou d'allègement de la dette.

Mais le fait est que le Canada se distingue des autres pays développés par la générosité de son assistance au Tiers Monde et par l'intelligence dont il fait preuve dans la mise en application de cette aide.

Les Philippines, qui pourtant ne sont pas membres du Commonwealth, ont été l'objet d'une assistance toute particulière de la part du Canada. Elles viennent au 3^{ème} rang des bénéficiaires de son assistance dans les pays d'Asie de l'Est. Aux heures sombres de 1987, lorsque les forces conjuguées de la Droite et de la Gauche ont gravement mis en péril notre jeune Démocratie, le Canada lui a apporté un soutien de 100 millions de dollars.

Nos contributions aux mêmes causes universelles sont, par la force des choses, limitées. Nous sommes encore un pays en développement. Et cependant, nous aussi avons apporté beaucoup à la cause de la Liberté et de la Sécurité de chacun. Bien que pauvres sur le plan matériel, les Philippines peuvent s'enorgueillir d'avoir lors de notre Révolution qui a si bien illustré le Pouvoir de Peuple — montré la voie moderne vers la Liberté qui, depuis, a été suivie, de part et d'autre du Rideau de fer, par d'autres nations asservies.

La distance qui sépare nos deux pays est très grande, tout comme le sont les différences entre nos deux cultures.

Mais ce qui nous unit est la foi en certains principes intangibles: la Paix, la dignité humaine et la liberté politique, et aussi la volonté de respecter le point de vue d'autrui qui représente en fait la meilleure assurance pour obtenir cette paix pour laquelle il nous faut lutter constamment dans ce monde de discorde.

Puis-je vous demander maintenant de vous joindre à moi et lever vos verres.

– en l'honneur du peuple du Canada, auquel le peuple philippin exprime sa profonde gratitude pour la sympathie et l'aide qu'il lui a apportées,

– pour les relations entre le Canada et les Philippines, en sorte que la chaleur et l'affection qui nous ont été témoignées lors de cette visite attestent de part et d'autre la profondeur et la solidité des liens que nous consacrons ici,

– pour le Gouverneur Général Jeanne Sauv  ,    qui nous souhaitons Bonne Sant   et r  ussite dans ses entreprises.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on a State Banquet in Ottawa

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On a State Banquet in Ottawa**

[Delivered on November 6, 1989]

CANADA, A GENTLE GIANT

Canadians have been good to the Philippines. In spite of the absence of historic ties and the distance separating Canada and the Philippines, it is remarkable that Canada has extended its assistance. Canada is the image of uprightness, caring and peace. The President hopes that this visit signals the beginning of a new, more meaningful chapter in Philippine-Canadian relations.

Mr. Prime Minister, allow me first to thank you for the extremely warm hospitality you have extended to me and my party. The most descriptive word for your hospitality and the friendliness of the Canadian people is “Filipino”. In the future, when my countrymen entertain me in their accustomed manner, I shall say only, You have given me a Canadian welcome. And they will take it as the highest compliment one could give, for I shall tell them of how well you have received us here.

Canada has been a good friend of the Philippines. Canadian assistance has been quite substantial over the years, and, more importantly, consistently wise in its application. The generosity of this country is all the more remarkable given the lack of long and direct historic ties between Canada and the Philippines. Such disinterestedness is rare and must be rooted in a special ability to sympathize with the human condition everywhere and in an acute moral sense that is not diminished by distance.

On the contrary, the deep impression Canada has made on the world has been that of a gentle hand of caring and of a soothing voice of peace. Yet these attributes spring astonishingly from a fund of strength that might have been put to selfish and profitable purpose. For it is remarkable, given its great and well-deserved martial renown, how much this nation is given to peace at home and abroad.

We hear it said that Canadians are upright, hardworking, civic-spirited, but too inward looking. Yet these days, many of you wear a red flower *in memoriam*. I passed by vermillion fields of poppies in Europe and remembered the war poem we learned at school. I was seeing not just a wonder of nature but a fitting memorial to a wonder of man — his ability to sacrifice. But it dawns on me now that I had also seen a part of Europe that shall be forever Canada.

History has had its usual empires of greed and national aggrandizement. Through its international commitments to world peace, human rights, fairness among nations, through the sacrifice of many of her sons, Canada has carved out an empire of right and a dominion of caring that would — but for her modesty — claim the undying gratitude of each and everyone of us.

I leave Canada with the wise insights that its leaders have shared with me, with fond memories that will make our friendship yet stronger. I leave also with a sense of a new, and even more meaningful chapter opening in Philippine-Canadian relations, given the special initiatives we have made. These initiatives will be followed up by Philippine missions to Canada to pursue the possibilities we have seen for greater economic cooperation between our countries.

Mr. Prime Minister, Mrs. Mulroney, ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast: to Queen Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Canada, a long and happy reign over a great and good country.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino for the Banking and Business Sectors

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
For the Banking and Business Sectors**

[Delivered on November 6, 1989]

**PRESIDENT AQUINO CALLS FOR EXPANDED
CANADIAN INVESTMENTS**

Expanded Canadian business projects in the Philippines would be beneficial to both countries. Philippine economy has grown steadily the past three years. Structural reforms have been implemented, unleashing free market forces. However, the country's debt is still a burden. With the support of Canada's banks, the Philippines will get some respite from this burden through a new financial package. Investors from other countries have been drawn to the geographical advantages, skilled working force, modern managerial class, responsive government, and vibrant economy of the Philippines. The recent increase in Canadian investments is a welcome development.

A number of the Canadian companies represented here do business in the Philippines. I should like to take this opportunity to underscore the mutual benefits to be derived from new and expanded business projects in the Philippines.

The Philippines has had three successive years of economic growth. A number of Canadian companies have participated in this expansion through trade and direct investments. Of note is the fruitful partnership recently entered into by the Bank of Nova Scotia with a solid Philippine bank. We welcome such joint ventures motivated by a farsighted view of Philippine prospects. It is to such partnerships of investment and growth that the country looks for its continued economic progress.

In support of this objective, public expenditures have risen to expand infrastructure so the country can absorb new investments.

We have also made structural reforms to promote efficiencies in the use of public and private resources, we have dismantled monopolies and special privileges, liberalized trade, and privatized public enterprises. In sum, we have unleashed free market forces, and returned the economy to the private sector as the leading engine of growth.

These structural reforms as well as the investments that have poured in, need time to bear fruit. But a heavy debt continues to drain scarce foreign exchange and budgetary resources that might otherwise be invested for robust growth. The Philippine debt will be about \$29 billion by year-end 1989, and will account for around 72% of GNP. Debt service will take about 40% of the national budget this year – 40% that might otherwise have gone to high priority areas including essential infrastructures.

We have gotten some respite from this debt burden through past rescheduling negotiations with our creditors. More recently, within the framework of officially endorsed voluntary debt reduction schemes, we have succeeded in agreeing on a financial package with our commercial creditors which provides new money and efficient debt reduction that would cover the external financing requirements of the Philippine economy for the next two years. We look forward to the support of commercial banks in Canada for this financial package. This will help sustain economic growth that will enhance profit opportunities and provide the fundamental solution to our debt problem.

In attaining our growth objective, the Philippines will join the fast-growing economies of the most dynamic region in the world today. To the advantages of geography, we shall be adding a highly skilled, English-speaking work

force, a modern managerial class, a responsive government, and a fully restored and vibrant Philippine economy. It is in this economy that we invite you to invest.

These are the factors that have drawn heavy investments from Hongkong, Taiwan and Japan, particularly in the export sector. Canadian enterprise has started to come in. Recently, Canadian entrepreneurs have been equally bullish, increasing their investments by 280 percent in the first eight months of 1989 over the total of the last three years. This is a welcome development which we hope will continue.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino for the Filipino Community in Ottawa

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
For the Filipino Community in Ottawa**

[Delivered on November 6, 1989]

A CALL TO FILIPINOS ABROAD

Among foreign governments, Canada has been in the forefront of assisting the Philippines. This assistance will be devoted to the challenge facing Philippine government today: raising the standard of living in the Philippines. Filipinos overseas also have a part in this endeavor. They can invest in the Philippines, give donations through the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, patronize Philippine products, and visit the country.

I would like to thank you for the very warm welcome you have given me and my party. During my meetings with our fellow-Filipinos in Vancouver and Toronto, I was overwhelmed by the support for our efforts and the appreciation for what we have done. We are encouraged to strive more.

Canada, your adopted country, has been in the forefront of aid donors to the Philippines. During the Pledging session for the Philippine Assistance Program in Tokyo last June, Canada announced a new five-year country program of increased levels of assistance.

We have assured the Canadian government, which is deeply concerned about poverty in our country, that the assistance they are giving will be principally addressing this problem. Poverty alleviation has always ranked first in our priorities. We know that only with the upliftment of the poor can we guarantee the long-term stability of the country and the survival of our liberties.

We know that the Filipino will give his life to be free, so that he will not trade off his freedom for a better life. But it would be unfair to force him to make that choice. It is the duty of government to save him from such choices and help him achieve a better standard of living.

Buo ang aking loob na manawagan sa bawat Pilipino dito sa Canada na makiisa sa aming paghanap ng kalutasan sa mga suliraning humahadlang sa kaunlaran ng ating bayan. Kung lahat po tayo ay may iisang layunin at may iisang pagkilos, walang suliranin ang magiging balakid sa pag-unlad ng Pilipinas.

Marahil maitatanong po ninyo ngayon kung ano ang magagawa ninyo para sa ating bayan. Ang inyong pag-iibang bansa ay hindi hadlang sa pagganap ng inyong makabayang tungkulin sa inyong tinubuang lupa. Ipakita ninyo ang inyong tiwala sa ating bayan sa pamamagitan ng inyong pamumuhunan sa ating mga kalakal o kompanyang Pilipino. Madali na ang pagpapatala ng mga nangangalakal at namumuhunan. Mayroon nang Investment One-Stop Action Center na itinatag upang madaling makapagtayo ng negosyo sa ating bansa. Maging sa Kawanihan ng Adwana o Bureau of Customs, ang paraan sa pag-aangkat ay pinadali na rin sa pamamagitan ng programang Express Processing of the Release of Shipment. Ang mga pagbabagong ito ay bilang patunay sa pagnanasa ng inyong pamahalaan na kayo ay makasama sa pagpapaunlad ng negosyo sa ating bayan.

Inatasan ko ang "Commission on Filipinos Overseas," isang ahensiya sa ilalim ng aking tanggapan, na tulungan ang lahat ng Pilipino sa ibang bansa na nagnanais magbigay-alay sa kanilang bayan. Ang Komisyon ay naglunsad na ng mga programang tutugon sa inyong pangangailangan, lalo na sa pagtataguyod ng inyong kapakanan at sa pagbibigay tulong sa paglipat ng donasyon mula sa inyo patungo sa inyong benepisyaryo sa Pilipinas. Kasama ng programang ito ang isang paraan upang maipagbigay-alam sa mga nagkaloob ang katayuan ng kanilang donasyon.

Ang ating katutubong produkto ay inyo ng maipagmamalaki sa buong mundo. Tangkilikin po ninyo ito. Hikayatin ang mga banyagang kaibigan o kakilala na bumili ng sariling atin.

Marahil, panahon na rin po na dapat sariwain ninyo ang ala-ala ng mga naggagandahang tanawin sa ating bansa. Madalas ko pong tanungin ang aking sarili: kung ang mga tanawin ng Pilipinas ay umaakit ng libu-libong dayuhan, bakit hindi ang mga Pilipino?

Umaasa ako na darating ang panahon, makikita ko kayong muli hindi lamang bilang mga balikbayan, kundi bilang mga kasamang bayani sa pagpapaunlad ng ating bayan. Kayat ako po ay narito upang itanim sa inyong puso at isipan ang pag-papahalaga sa inyong pagiging Pilipino. At umasa naman kayo na ang ani ng ating pinagsikapan ay para sa lahat ng Pilipino.

Mabuhay!

Maraming salamat po.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the Toronto-Empire Club**

[Delivered on November 6, 1989]

**CANADA AND THE PHILIPPINES:
IDEAL PARTNERS TO PROGRESS**

It seems that the key to stability is to establish political legitimacy. President Aquino quickly reestablished democratic institutions, and instituted structural reforms to mobilize the economy. As a result, the economy started posting positive growth rates, and investments from Asian countries poured in.

I am here to introduce the Philippines to you as an area of investments. As businessmen and bankers, you have your own sources of information on the country. There are a number of Canadian companies here today who do business in the Philippines. Much of what I have to say is known to some of you already. Essentially, what I offer you in this brief talk is the perspective of one who has a hand in making the Philippines what it is today.

It would be a bit of an understatement to say we had nothing, for in fact we had less. We had a negative GNP in 1985. The year before that we had 50% inflation. We had a \$26 billion foreign debt, represented by virtually nothing productive, and very little foreign exchange.

The political scene offered a mixed picture. There was the people power revolution that installed a new government committed to swift democratic restoration. That was myself. But along with me were those who did help in the democratic restoration but wanted to carve up the country as a prize for their patriotism. Rightwing elements in the military wanted to share power with me. Now that was not in the program. I turned them down.

I will reserve the economy for last because it is what really counts. First, let me tell what I did with the Right.

Dissatisfied with republican honors, and determined to call the shots in the government, the rightwing military staged several coups against me. The last was an especially bloody affair which was crushed completely. The

military rightwing has since been in hiding and on the run, at any rate those who aren't standing trial. As the phrase goes, the army has returned to barracks and comes out only to fight the insurgents.

I offered to negotiate peace with the insurgents. I promised them peace, amnesty, a new life in a free country – in exchange for the surrender of their arms. They rejected the offer. I ordered the army to resume operations against them. By and large, we have prised them from their strongholds and have kept them on the run. We have captured virtually the entire top leadership of the Communist Party. The party is in such disarray that it has turned its wrath upon itself. Purges may have taken a heavier toll on the insurgents than engagements with government troops. It is a measure of their desperation that the insurgents have taken to killing unarmed civilians. While this has done them more harm than it has the government, it is not a development we are pleased with. It is not our intention to look good only by the crimes of the enemy.

We believed, and still hold, that the key to stability and progress in the Philippines is addressing the issue of legitimacy. It is the special character of the Filipino that he will not abide illegality in government. For all the power of the dictatorship, it could not rule effectively because it was widely regarded as an illegitimate and undemocratic government. So we had to address quickly the issue of political legitimacy.

On my accession to power, the only legitimate pillar of state was the Presidency. I alone held an electoral mandate. I had to rule as President and parliament rolled up in one. It was not wise to continue this state of affairs, given the Filipino's unfavorable view of authoritarian government. I moved quickly to reestablish all the other institutions of a free government. A democratic constitution was drafted and ratified by an overwhelming majority of virtually the entire voting population. In quick succession, we held elections for the legislature and for the local governments. In a year and a half, we had a full-fledged democracy.

But in that year and a half in which I governed the country alone, I instituted the structural reforms that now serve as the solid bases for the economic progress you can see in the Philippines today. The core of these reforms was the liberalization of trade, the freeing of market forces, the abolition of monopolies and privileges, and the retraction of the government from the economy.

In one year, we turned the economy around and started to post positive growth rates. In 1988, our GNP was 6.7 percent. Exports grew by 20 percent and reached an all-time high of US\$7.1 billion last year. We did this, despite the debt service which annually takes 40% of the national budget. We estimate that by end 1989, the level of our external debt will reach 72% of our GNP. These factors should be taken into account in considering the growth rates we have achieved. They testify to the strength we have built into the economy.

Other countries have seen this strength and the promise of profits that it holds out. Hongkong, Taiwan, and Japan are investing heavily.

Canadian investments in the first eight months of 1989 were already about 280 percent of total Canadian investments in the past three years, although still small in absolute amounts.

The Philippines is the gateway to Asia. And it is widely believed that the Pacific will give its name to the next age of progress. We feel that Canada would be an ideal partner for the Philippines in stepping into this new era of Asian-Pacific growth. There are strategic reasons for this; not the least of them being the integrity of Canadian enterprise. We want investors who are mindful indeed of a good profit, and regardful as well of the interests of the country.

You can go to Asia and step into a totally alien environment or go to the Philippines, be at home in an English-speaking nation, with an honest and hardworking people, and still be right in the heart of the most dynamic region of the world.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the Filipino Community

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines Before the Filipino Community

[Delivered at the Pierre Hotel, November 8, 1989]

FILIPINO FIRST

President Aquino, in an audience with the Filipino community, paves the way for a wider interaction of overseas Filipinos in national development as she urges them to help and rely on one another in the country's efforts in building the nation. While she realizes that "red tape" in government is one of their complaints in coming home, the President asserts that her government is doing its best to address their problems.

Ako po ay pumunta rito upang bigyan daan ang isang mas malawak na pag-uugnayan ng mga Pilipinong nasa ibayong-dagat para sa ika-uunlad ng ating bayan. Bago sa mga banyaga, sa ating mga kababayan, kahit saan man sila naroroon, tayo dapat umasa na makibahagi at makiisa upang umunlad ang ating bayan.

Sa layuning ito, pinagsikapan po naming magpasok ng mga pagbabago sa ating pamahalaan upang hindi maaantala ang paglilingkod sa ating mga kababayan. Hindi kaila sa akin na sa nakalipas na mga taon, ang "red tape" sa pamahalaan ang isang dahilan sa pagkawala ng inyong interes na umuwi sa Pilipinas. Bagamat maaaring ang mga pagbabagong ito ay hindi pa sapat, patuloy naming isinasagawa ang lahat ng nararapat para sa ikabubuti ng ating bayan sa kabila ng kasalukuyang kakulangan ng ating yaman.

Tungkulin ng inyong pamahalaan na paglingkuran at pangalagaan ang sambayanan, ngunit nasa ating pagtutulungan at pagkakaisa matutupad ang ating minimithing hangaring umunlad ang ating bayan.

Maraming salamat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

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**ATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the Filipino Community of Washington, DC

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
Before the Filipino Community of Washington, DC**

[Delivered on November 8, 1989]

CONFRONTING THE CHALLENGES OVERSEAS

President Aquino states that a great part of what the government has achieved it owes to the unsung heroes of the Revolution and to the overseas Filipinos, whose dedication and earnings have supported the economy for the past three years. She urges Filipinos abroad to unite and use their skills and talents to the best of their ability to confront the challenges made on our race, and to prove once and for all that we deserve to be in the league of great powers.

We have come a long way since those heady days when we celebrated here the victory of democracy. We had shown the world what Filipinos can do when they are united.

The period that followed our very successful visit to the United States was followed by one of great uncertainty and terrible tragedies. There were repeated attempts by military renegades to destroy our young democracy and return us again to the shame of military rule. Again it was Filipino unity that saved the day. With the country behind me, I faced off with the military rebels and defeated them.

After that came the peace that our country so desperately needed. The peace in which to rebuild its economy and political institutions.

We have been very successful in our efforts. From a negative growth of minus 4 percent in the last year of the dictatorship, the economy surged to a GNP of 6.7 percent, without reneging in the smallest particular from any of its international financial obligations. The employment rate increased from 88.2% in 1986 to 90.4% in 1988. More importantly, the government was able to generate 2.3 million jobs since 1986.

I have always said that a great part of what we have achieved we owe to the unsung heroes of the Philippine Revolution, to the hundreds of thousands of overseas Filipinos, whose dedication spreads the good word about the Philippines, and whose earnings have supported our economy and brought in more financial resources into our country than almost any other sector of the economy. In the past three years, remittances were so substantial as to dwarf all foreign aid to the country.

In recognition of your services, I issued Presidential Proclamation No. 276 on June 21, 1988, declaring December of every year as the month for Filipinos overseas. This is a modest expression of our gratitude for your help.

Ako po ay lubos na nagagalak na makapiling kayo ngayong gabi. Alam ko na nakikiisa kayong lahat sa hangarin at mithiin ng sambayanang Pilipino. Bagamat malayo kayo sa inyong lupang tinubuan, marami sa inyo ang nagmamalasakit at patuloy na nagnanasang makatulong sa ating bayan. Nais kong pagtibayin ang makabayang hangaring ito sa pamamagitan ng isang paanyaya. Marami pa ang dapat gawin ng ating pamahalaan tungo sa

pagpapaunlad at pagbabago sa pamumuhay ng ating mamamayan. Sa dakilang adhikain na ito, ang inyong tulong ay lubos na kailangan. Balikan po ninyo ang mga lalawigan o nayon na inyong pinanggalingan. Marahil may mga kamag-anak o kaibigan kayo na nangangailangan ng tulong sa puhunan sa kanilang mga hanapbuhay o paghahanap ng magtatangkilik ng ating mga katutubong produkto. Ito po ay isang magandang pasimula.

Habang kayo ay narito, makilahok sa pagpapalago ng ating itinatag na “Philippine Fund” bilang isang paraang pangpuhunan na makakatulong sa ating kabuhayan. Pagsikapin po ninyong anyayahan rin ang mga banyaga na mamahagi dito ng kanilang puhunan upang lalung pasaganahin ang ating pambansang ekonomiya at magdulot ng maraming hanapbuhay. Sa inyong tulong ang ating mga kababayang kapus-palad ang mabibigyan ng pag-asang guminhawa.

Through a program which we aptly call the “Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino”, we seek to establish a network of support between Filipinos overseas and Filipinos at home.

I have tasked the Manila-based Commission on Filipinos Overseas, an agency under the Office of the President, to serve as the primary conduit between interested Filipino Associations here and local beneficiaries in the Philippines.

Tayong mga Pilipino ay nakikilala sa sipag at talino. Ngunit marami ang nakakapuna sa ating hidwaan o di-pagkakasundo sa ating mga gawain dito. Marami rin ang nagtatanong ng ating kakayahan bilang isang lahi. Tuwirin po natin ang hindi mabuting pagkakilala sa ating mga Pilipino. Tayo po ay magkaisa. Gamitin natin ang ating sipag at talino upang tayo ay magkaroon ng isang hangarin at isang tinig dito sa Amerika upang mapabilang na malakas na puwersa sa larangan ng pulitika at ekonomiya.

Ako ay taimtim na nagnanasa na ang lahat ng ating mga pagsisikap ay magdudulot ng makabuluhang halaga sa ating kinabukasan. Ang minimithi nating kasaganaan ay matatamo rin natin. Sa araw na iyon, hindi na siguro nararapat na malayo pa tayo sa ating bayan at ating minamahal upang makapaghanap ng magandang kabuhayan. Iyan ang diwa ng aking kasalukuyang paglalakbay. Para sa ating bayan . . . tayo ay magkaisa at magtulungan. Mabuhay tayong lahat!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the launching of the First Philippine Fund

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the launching of the First Philippine Fund**

[Delivered on November 8, 1989]

A TEST OF ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE AND CONFIDENCE

President Aquino graces the launching of the First Philippine Fund as a show of confidence in the Philippines as the most dynamic and profitable region in the world. The launching will test the country's economic performance in the toughest market – the New York Stock Exchange.

The New York Stock Exchange fully lives up to its reputation. We sense the tremendous energies of the free market system, which, in a short while, I shall be privileged to ring into action.

The Exchange is the competition of the strongest and best. Until you are listed here, you are in the minor leagues.

I am here today for the listing of the Philippine Fund. In a very real sense, I am here to offer the Philippines to U.S.-based investors as the area with the greatest opportunity for growth and profit in the most dynamic region of the world.

We shall regard the Fund as the Philippine flagship. We shall follow its progress carefully as a barometer of international investor confidence in the Philippines and a gauge of the wisdom of our policies and effectiveness of our initiatives. After four successive years of economic growth, we feel confident about testing our economic performance in the toughest market – the New York Stock Exchange.

Like many other country funds on your boards, the success of the Philippine Fund depends on several factors.

One of them is the quality of the institutions backing the fund, and the competence and integrity of the people who man them. The appointed manager of the Fund, Clemente Capital, is well-known and respected. The designated trustee, the Philippine National Bank, is our country's largest commercial bank and the most successful privatization offering that this government has made.

We hope that the groundswell of confidence that met the PNB offering in Manila and drove its share prices through the roof will be matched by the response of the New York Stock Exchange to the Philippine Fund.

The underwriting syndicate needs no introduction. It is led by Nomura Securities International and actively participated in by Paine Webber, Credit Lyonnais, and the International Finance Corporation.

The quality of the institutions handling the Fund will be well complemented by the quality of securities offerings in the Philippines today. This is the right time for the Fund to come into play.

The capitalization of the Philippine market has increased in the past three years 1,450 percent: from \$670 million to \$10.4 billion and growing. This makes the Philippine stock market one of the fastest-growing capital markets in the world. The Manila Stock Exchange composite index rose from 131 index points in 1985 to 1,100 index points today. The Makati Stock Exchange went up from 23 to 1,200 index points.

The success of the PNB offering has encouraged us to accelerate our privatization program. There will be share offerings of several, strong Philippine corporations in the very near future.

Things are going well in the Philippines and will get better. If you won't take my word for it, take the word of Merrill Lynch which reports that the Philippines, given present trends, may emerge as one of Asia's best-performing economies in the first half of the 1990s. The symbol of the bull in Merrill Lynch stands for stock market confidence, I hope.

We enjoy the good opinion of the international financial community for our firm management of the economy and our faithful discharge of the foreign debt. We have shown that the Philippines can perform creditably according to the highest economic standards. The restructuring of the economy has been hard on the Filipino people, but we would rather be bankable than pitiful. We would rather be an attractive target for investments than an object of charity.

The listing of the Philippine Fund shows the Philippine economy coming of age and rightly feeling confident that it can test its mettle in the New York Stock Exchange.

May I thank the Chairman and directors of the Exchange for their warm hospitality and encouraging reception. Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon before the New York Chamber of Commerce

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines Before the New York Chamber of Commerce

[Delivered on November 8, 1989]

PROSPECTS OF PHILIPPINE DEVELOPMENT

Confident that she can tackle the dual challenge of the Left and the Right, President Aquino assures members of the New York Chamber of Commerce on the benefits of investing in a revolution especially if taken in the light of improved political, economic, and peace and order climate, and the resolve of her government to implement much needed reforms. While there are many other concerns that need to be addressed, the Philippine government has drawn up a master-plan for recovery towards poverty alleviation, promotion of social justice, and attainment of sustained economic growth.

Standing before an audience like this three years ago, I said that two things must have been uppermost in their minds; Curiosity about an unlikely looking revolutionary, and was it wise to invest in a revolution.

How could a woman survive forces such as those that had brought her to power? People said I had ridden to power on a tiger and would end up inside.

If I did ride a tiger — meaning the military revolt — I got off quite nicely, as you can see. Of course, it wasn't as easy as I now make it sound. For between getting on and getting off, I would survive five coup attempts, the last of which was crushed completely. The Army would not leave the barracks again except to resume hostilities, on my order, against the insurgency. The truth, however, is that I was swept to power by the force of the people and the people kept me safe.

When I came to the United States three years ago, the government faced two outstanding threats. One from the Right, the other from the Left.

In July of '86, I proposed a ceasefire to the communist insurgents to enable both sides to sit down and negotiate a peaceful settlement of the insurgency. I offered amnesty, a rebel returnee program for which, I admit, we had little money, and a chance to start life anew in a free country if they would lay down their arms. Thousands accepted the offer then, thousands are still defecting from the cause. But the insurgent leadership rejected the offer and the Army has taken to the field again — this time with better results. For the Army was now fighting with the people, against the enemies of peace and freedom.

We have prised the insurgents from their strongholds in remote areas. We have them on the run. The most seasoned of their leaders have been captured or been so exposed as to have lost their effectiveness. The Communist Party has chosen to ascribe its losses, not to the basic incompatibility of its thought with the faith of a people so close to God and democracy, but to the disloyalty of its men. Party purges have taken as great a toll on its ranks as encounters with the government.

With the rightwing in the military there was nothing to negotiate. They wanted a share of the government, I told them to get elected first. The role of this military faction in the February '86 revolution contributed greatly to the outcome. Yet it could not serve as a mandate to share with me the office to which I had been elected by vote and confirmed by revolution. Dissatisfied with the republican honors I heaped on them, this faction attempted several times to overthrow the government — with dismal results for them.

The strongest issue I faced when I was here three years ago was whether our young democracy could survive the dual challenge of the Left and the Right.

The threat from the Right has dissolved in the face of continuing popular support for constitutional government, the professionalism of the officer corps, and my intransigence on the matter of sharing power with anyone who has not been elected.

With respect to the threat from the Left, I can say without fear of contradiction by future events that the communists will never succeed in recruiting from a God-fearing, freedom-loving people the numbers they need for a decisive victory.

And so now I can answer that it would be as wise to invest in the Philippine revolution today as it was to invest in the city of New York after the American War of Independence. With the added assurance that the Philippines will not default on its debt, and cannot call on the Federal Government for a bailout.

To wind up the political picture: In a year and a half we ratified a democratic constitution and elected the Congress and local governments. These elections had the biggest turnouts of any election in any Western democracy in terms of percentage of voter population. A clear demonstration of the depth of democratic commitment in my country. In these elections, too, administration candidates were swept into office by unprecedented majorities, sealing the fate of any opposition except that which will emerge from the ranks of my followers.

In sum, government has achieved a degree of legitimacy that forever precludes any other mode of political change other than the processes laid down in the Constitution.

If the political climate is the first consideration of business, I believe we have addressed that concern completely.

But if the question is peace and order, then I must back down a little and say that in some places in Manila you may feel at home.

In the year and a half before I relinquished part of my power to an elected Congress, I governed as president and parliament rolled up in one. In that capacity, I set in place the structural reforms that have injected new life and revealed the unexpected strength of the Philippine economy.

The economy I inherited had contracted 10 percent in the previous two years. GNP the year before I took office had been negative 4%. Inflation was down to 5.5% but only because 50% inflation the year before had wiped out purchasing power.

Yet, by the time I was speaking in New York, seven months from when I took office, we had turned the economy around and by year-end posted a positive GNP of 1.5%. In 1988, GNP was 6.7%

These figures are modest by the standards of the Asian tigers. But not when seen against the backdrop of 14 years of a government that concentrated on stealing rather than building the Philippine economy. And not when regarded in the light of the Philippine debt, which annually carves out 40% of the national budget for debt service. On the contrary, they reveal the fundamental strength we have built back into the Philippine economy and the discipline and resolve of the new government in implementing the necessary reforms.

I had directed the National Economic and Development Authority to draw up a masterplan for recovery: the Medium-Term Development Plan. It set forth as broad objectives the alleviation of poverty, the generation of productive employment, the promotion of social justice, and the attainment of sustainable economic growth.

Towards these objectives, we implemented several structural reforms — such as tax reform, trade liberalization to inject competitive quality into Philippine manufacture, eradication of monopolies and other economic distortions through political influence, and the privatization of government-controlled enterprises — but not at fire-sale prices.

The government does not intend to be robbed twice. The thrust of these reforms is to restore to private enterprise its proper role as the main engine of the economy.

As growth figures indicate, business has responded to these basic improvements – mainly Asian business. We regret the current diffidence of American enterprise that once played an important and, we believe, necessary balancing role in Philippine economic development. We are told that there are still some disadvantages to investing in the Philippines which Americans would want us to address, such as limitations on foreign equity. While we shall try to enlarge the areas that allow bigger foreign equity, may we say that these limitations do not seem to bother Asian investors as much, or at all.

Other concerns must be addressed. We are doing our best but it has not been enough. We are reaching — if we have not exceeded — our energy-generating capacity. Power outages are a case in point. Demand exceeded transportation capacity – roads, ports, public transport – some time back.

The development of new gas discoveries will alleviate our energy problems only in the long-term; as a temporary measure we shall soon operationalize several oil-burning power plants. In Dallas, we shall be inviting US exploration companies to increase their activities in the Philippines. In an area that has been characterized as a sea of oil, there is good reason to believe in the likelihood of a major Philippine discovery.

Downstream, we have prioritized the establishment of a petrochemical industry. Some companies have already signified interest in this. Considering the magnitude of the required investments, we would like to encourage the leading-edge petrochemical companies to join us in this development effort, including through a joint venture with the national oil company.

The French are assisting us in expanding the airport. We shall undoubtedly need another one. We are improving our port facilities. We may need a new one outside Metro Manila to decongest industrial traffic. There are studies being done.

Traffic congestion is becoming legendary; it is almost as bad as in other thriving Asian economies. But for those who cannot bear up with it, there are states in the Indian Ocean where traffic is not a problem.

We might have moved more quickly on these essential projects if debt service obligations did not put a cap on our efforts. Yet we feel that the banks must wish us to continue the progress we have made, for we must grow to pay the debt.

We have gotten some relief through reschedulings with official creditors. We recently concluded an agreement with commercial creditors on a financial package that should cover our external financing requirements for the next two years.

Clearly, the government's limited efforts must be complemented by foreign investments. Foreign assistance has increased – an indication of the enormous goodwill enjoyed by the Philippines today in contrast to the past under the dictatorship. Substantial promises of larger amounts were made at the Tokyo Consultative Group Meeting last July.

Although we have done better than the majority of LDCs in utilizing aid, we are improving the government's absorptive capacity for foreign loan assistance to do away with the problem of backed-up aid, which reached \$772 million last year. This, by the way, is the correct amount and not the three to four billion dollars that is ignorantly bandied about. We are hoping, however, that the donor countries' generative capacity for reviewing projects will also improve so that we can make full use of the \$6.5 billion net loan commitments that have been made.

Foreign loan assistance, while deeply appreciated, cannot be the lifeblood of the development we envision. For we have set our sights on recapturing the economic status we once enjoyed in the region — as the showcase not of foreign generosity but of private enterprise and democracy in Asia.

We believe we are getting there. Asian and European investors, by their response, appear to share that belief. The most conservative reading of Trade & Industry assessments would put real foreign investments at a billion dollars a year from 1989 onwards.

We had one of the most successful stock offerings in the history of Philippine business – the privatization of a substantial block of the Philippine National Bank. This morning we listed in the New York Stock Exchange the First Philippine Fund, which will invest in Philippine equities. Government will soon be making stock offerings of some of the strongest Philippine corporations today, including some that will soon be listed in the New York Stock Exchange.

The prospects for this are good. A Merrill Lynch report predicts that the Philippines will be one of the best economic performers in Asia in the early 1990s. And, as I said this morning, I hope the symbol of the bull in Merrill Lynch stands for confidence.

Let me conclude by saying that the role of American enterprise in Philippine development is still there — as necessary now, we believe, as in the past; and so is the place of Americans in the affection and trust of the Filipino people.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the luncheon in Honor of Secretary James Baker

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the luncheon in Honor of Secretary James Baker**

[Delivered on November 9, 1989]

FRIENDS IN DEMOCRACY

The restoration of democracy in the Philippines has made Philippine-American friendship more meaningful, for one country that is free cannot depend on another that is not for their common defense. And the United States applauded the translation of democracy into economic gains, for a nation that is rich cannot depend on another that is poor for their common defense. At the same time, the restoration of democracy has made Filipinos assertive and demanding, but hopefully, in spite of differences, the common goal of upholding democracy and peace will preserve Philippine-American friendship.

I am pleased to be honored again as the guest of the US Secretary of State. Of the earlier occasion, I said that it marked a fresh, new day in an old friendship. After 14 years of dictatorship, the Philippines had returned to the democracy the United States had imparted to it. Back again in the only political tradition that a nation can be proud of, the Philippines could stand proudly beside the United States.

The restoration of democracy in the Philippines gave meaning again to the alliance between our two countries – for one country that is free cannot depend on another that is not for their common defense. For in that case, the American nation would be the friend of one government, or perhaps, just one man; whereas now it is befriended by over 50 million people.

On that earlier occasion, I outlined the things we would do to translate the promises of democracy into a better life for all and therefore into an enduring guarantee of freedom. If we have not achieved most of those things, we have definitely shown that we have again the strength to do so. As I explained to the US Chamber of Commerce yesterday, the difficulties we have had to overcome – most particularly a debt service burden that eats up half our resources every year – should be regarded not with misgivings about its future but rather with the greatest confidence about its eventual success.

As the United States had applauded the *democratic* victory in the Philippines – well, perhaps I should not put it that way with this audience after yesterday's elections. As the United States had applauded the *republican* restoration in the Philippines, so has it cheered the economic gains it has made in the past three years. For a nation that is rich cannot depend on another that is poor for their common defense.

Secretary Baker, a fine lunch and a toast is not the occasion for a long explanation of the need for American support for our economic recovery efforts. And, when you are the host, Secretary Baker, it becomes unnecessary to make that appeal. Suffice it to say that the voice of the United States in the economic and financial counsels of the world carries a great deal of weight by itself. But when it is also the voice of the first American official to publicly acknowledge the threatening implications of Third World debt, that voice becomes especially persuasive and compelling.

The democratic restoration has given rise to a fresh assertiveness on the part of the Philippines. We have become suddenly American in our assertions and the complaints we sometimes hear about how we Filipinos act must remind us of how the great powers felt about the young and driven American republic. "You offer an inch and they take a foot," was not an uncommon remark in those days about the brashness of the new republic.

We are, at times, difficult to deal with. We are not always convinced that the approach taken by the United States in any particular issue is invariably right or the only one. Yet, in the most difficult cases, our strongest differences will only be about the best way to uphold the democratic way of life that we hold dear.

There will come a time when issues of vital importance must be squarely faced and clearly resolved between us. When that time comes, it is my hope that the things we solemnly affirm – such as an unwavering adherence to democracy, an ardent desire for peace, and abhorrence for conflict in the resolution of international problems, and a conviction of faith that civilization must not vanish in a nuclear war – will stand out against our differences and affirm yet again the enduring foundation of Philippine-American friendship.

May I ask everyone here to join me in a toast,

To the continued good health of Secretary Baker, a new friend for the Philippines, and to Philippine-American friendship. Mabuhay.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Smithsonian in Washington

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Smithsonian in Washington**

[Delivered on November 9, 1989]

SAVE THE EARTH

Everyone has the human responsibility to prevent the Earth from destruction. President Aquino highlights the need to ensure the protection of global environment from destruction. While Philippine forests constitute a mere 0.2 percent of total world forests, she feels that it is the obligation of everyone, small or great, to contribute to saving the Earth and its forests. Thus, she firmly eyes the transition from net deforestation to net afforestation in the remaining term of her administration, through the National Forestation Program, and a Masterplan for Forestry Development that includes banning of lumber exports and preserving our forests.

The first astronauts to see the Earth from outer space described it as “a blue pearl” floating in space. Indeed, it looked like a pearl in the first color photographs from space. But most of all it looked like a living, breathing thing.

A blue pearl is a rare find in the earth’s ocean. So is a planet like ours in the universe. The chance of finding another Earth in all its vast reaches is less than one in a billion trillion trillion. We may well be the only pearl, a small speck, in the lifeless beauty of the cosmic ocean.

These staggering numbers highlight the human responsibility towards the preservation of that pearl of surpassing beauty and incalculable worth.

There is a line in Shakespeare about the base Indian who threw away a pearl richer than all his tribe. After the second half of this century, humanity started to behave as mindlessly as that fellow.

We are slashing and burning our forests, extinguishing in the process millions of life species we shall never know. We are burning fuels and darkening our skies. We are poisoning our oceans and rivers for a thousand years. It is as though we have set fire to our own house after we had locked ourselves inside and thrown away the keys.

The rich countries are burning fossil fuels and releasing poisonous elements into the air and into our streams. The poor nations are cutting wide swaths of the forests that serve as the lungs of the earth – areas the size of countries.

The destruction of the Earth has gone so far that we have started to notice changes in what man believed were eternal verities: the limitless hospitality of the Earth for human life and the permanence of its scenic grandeur. The simile of the burning house is not altogether far-fetched. We are getting hot under the collar. The globe is warming under the greenhouse effect produced, among other factors, by the rising levels of carbon dioxide in the air.

In confronting the phenomenon of global warming, two distinct initiatives must be taken: One is the rapid reduction of the emissions of greenhouse gases in the industrialized North, and the other is the reversal of alarming trends of deforestation among the poor countries of the South.

The first would require drastic changes in the North’s patterns of consumption.

The second initiative is more difficult, because the destruction of tropical forests is not a matter of consumer preference but of naked survival. Forests are being destroyed to provide living space and livelihoods for the fast

multiplying populations of the Third World. In countries saddled with huge and unproductive debts, the government is virtually powerless to slow down or alleviate the increasing misery.

The Philippines finds itself in this situation. Yet, we shall carry our share of the human responsibility to prevent that blue pearl in space from turning into a bowl of dust. Philippine forests constitute a mere 0.2 percent of the total forests of the world and only 0.4 percent of total tropical forests. What we do to our forests may not significantly worsen the global picture, but we do feel the obligation that everyone should: If not now, when; if not us, who will? At least a start is being made in one small country.

In the Philippines we are determined to achieve the transition *from net deforestation to net afforestation* in the remaining term of my administration.

In 1986, we banned the export of raw logs. This year, we banned the export of lumber.

In 1988, we launched the National Forestation Program which aims to reforest 300,000 hectares.

With the Asian Development Bank, we have prepared a Master Plan for Forestry Development. Its most important recommendation is the preservation of the remaining virgin dipterocarp forests, pine forest and mossy forests and their inclusion into the national protected areas system. The virtual sequestration of these forests will seriously affect livelihoods of many communities.

What the industrial North will do is up to the conscience of its governments. We are doing our part. The best way for Northern governments to help the conservation efforts of countries like the Philippines is to stop the importation of illegal logs into their countries.

There is talk about swapping debt for forests, since most of the tropical forests are found in the 15 top debtor countries. We won't hold our breaths on that one. There will be occasion for doing so when the atmosphere is entirely polluted. The efforts of responsible Third World governments will not wait on the commitment of the Earth's primary polluting countries. We look more hopefully towards non-governmental organizations like World Wildlife Foundation for conservation grants.

Let us conclude as we began, with a view from space. That blue pearl in the void, so soothing to the eye, is flanked by two glaring red planets, whose searing temperatures and raging, lifeless surfaces hint at the future of the Earth.

One day perhaps, a consideration such as this on the global environment will end on a bright note of hope. It is too soon for that. The alarm must continue to be sounded

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino to J. C. Penney and Trammel Crow Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To J. C. Penney and Trammel Crow**

[Delivered on November 10, 1989]

YELLOW: PEOPLE POWER AND THE YELLOW ROSE OF TEXAS

Before great Texan businessmen and dedicated professionals, President Aquino relates how her administration turned the Philippine economy around and had it moving boldly forward. She invites them to join her in building a new country in the Philippines even as JC Penney has taken this challenge by opening its stores to Philippine-made products.

I have been to Texas many times before. And I know the warm, big-hearted hospitality of Texas. But I wasn't prepared for the welcome that Mr. Trammel Crow and JC Penney gave me right after I set foot in this big, beautiful country. My schedule says that I will be back in the Philippines the day after tomorrow. The warmth, and love, and genuine good feeling I felt all around me this afternoon at the Texas Salute made me feel I was home already. Mr. Crow, JC Penney, thank you very much.

I guess it is might and size of Texas that makes it possible for her to open wide her arms and receive her visitors like she was welcoming her children home.

Texas, of course, is more than just a kind of second home for me and my family. It represents the new life we received several years back when I brought my husband here for a heart operation. It saved his life. It would have been ironic if he had lost his life to heart disease after a tyrannical government had tried to take it in prison.

It was, of course, unavoidable that we would go to Dallas for his treatment. This is the center of heart medicine, the leading edge of the field. But I like to think there was

more than plain coincidence that a Filipino freedom fighter would be given a life by the country that came to birth in one of the most stirring victories of freedom – the state of Texas.

Coming into Dallas once more, I never cease to marvel at the beauty of the skyline. All those glass towers look like Texans standing tall to welcome us. They show the might of this great state which comes directly from its hardworking, hard driving people, energetic people who have never lost their Southern charm and hospitality.

As you know, we are building a new country in the Philippines – a country that is now free and, we hope, one day soon will be prosperous. When we recovered the country from tyranny, its economy was flat on its back. In one year, we turned that economy around and had it moving boldly forward. I think we've accomplished a lot. We started with a negative growth rate and in one year posted a positive GNP which reached 6.5 percent in three years. To appreciate that properly, you have to consider that half our revenues go to pay a foreign debt that is one of the biggest in the world, and most of which was stolen or wasted by the past government. That's like paying the mortgage on a house that was never turned over to you. That may seem unfair, but we're paying anyway. We're paying because we'd rather be known for keeping our word than keeping our money. I think that counts for something in the world; it certainly counts a lot in Texas.

We're working hard to make up for the progress we lost and give a better life to our people. We've done quite a lot by ourselves, if you don't mind my saying so, and I know you don't. Because here in Texas people see nothing wrong in telling the truth, even if it's some good you've done.

But we're going to need some help. Looking at the might of Texas assembled here – great businessmen and dedicated professionals – I feel that I have come to the right place for that help. It isn't charity we're asking for. It's to join us in building a new country in the Philippines. It is an effort that will pay off well for everyone who puts in money and hard work. It is a pioneer effort, and that is a challenge that people here appreciate.

JC Penney has risen to that challenge by opening its stores to Philippine-made products. Many of our finely crafted products are already sold in the best stores, like JC Penney, in the major cities of the world. It is a fact of marketing life that the patronage of major foreign buyers is the critical element in breaking in a big way into international market. I think JC Penney has given us this break.

This is one great effort and it is deeply appreciated. We hope to attract more such ventures between Texas and the Philippines.

There is already a growing trade between the US and the Philippines. It rose from US\$1.7 billion in 1986, to US\$2 billion in 1987, and to US\$2.5 billion in 1988. That's fine as far as it goes. Now I would like the country that I have come to love and admire to be the Philippines' best trading partner.

Every Filipino product sold in a foreign market is a fragment of the Filipino dream to be strong again and prosperous. To live in the dignity that befits free men. I can't think of any other people I'd rather have with us making that dream come true than the people of this great state.

We are so distant from each other, yet so much alike in many ways. A gallant Texan gave me the most fitting gift on my first official visit to the United States: the yellow rose of Texas. There are only two countries in the world where the color yellow is a symbol of courage — the Philippines where it stands for the people power revolution and Texas.

I want to thank you again for your warm reception.

God bless you all.

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Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Philippine-American Foundation

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Philippine-American Foundation**

[Delivered on November 10, 1989]

NGOs: BEST PROTECTORS OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Nongovernmental organizations or NGOs embody the solidarity of ordinary men in the pursuit of common goals that is fast becoming a necessity for the development and protection of the earth. NGOs do the work that governments cannot and make the commitments that governments will not. Although people in government may not match the NGO's commitment, they can match the NGO's usefulness to the people.

NGOs have suggested populist solutions to the problem of poverty, but the Philippines is taking the free market, capitalist road to progress.

NGOs have important roles in the development of the country. The Philippine Assistance Program, for instance, relies on NGOs for the implementation of its projects. Environmental protection would also be best given in the hands of NGOs.

The President sincerely expresses her gratitude to American NGOs.

It is a great privilege to address the American nongovernmental organizations that have assisted us through the years in the areas of education, nutrition, and very often, in disaster relief. I am also happy to note that a delegation of Philippine NGOs who came to the US for a conference on the environment could join us today.

With the world fast becoming, indeed, one global village there is need and singular opportunity for men to act in concert, in the pursuit of common goals, and for the safety of their one and only home — the planet whose ultimate fate they must all share.

I see the solidarity of common men, working through NGOs, to do the work that governments cannot, and to make the commitments that governments refuse — and that is to make the people strong.

I have seen your efforts to empower the poor to retake the direction of their lives by education, skills training, and access to credit through cooperatives and credit unions. By teaching them modern agricultural techniques, you have given them the best hope of a better life working the soil.

The basic postulate of your work is the search for human dignity. In your work you have been sensitive to unique cultural values and ways, while pushing for the universal advantages that practical education gives. I have marvelled at the depth of your commitment to serve the people, even in the remotest areas.

We, in government, cannot hope to match your commitment. But we can in our way approximate your usefulness to the people. We have at least more resources, although, at times, not the resourcefulness to use them well. The 49% of the population that scratches out an existence below the poverty line is a perennial rebuke to our performance.

The shortcomings of government in improving the lot of the poor has convinced many NGOs that a “people—powered” economic policy would be preferably a market driven one. For it seems that the tremendous progress the Philippines has made in the past three years has served principally to fatten the bank accounts of the rich. They have

called for more nationalism in economic policy, such as excluding foreign investments. They have called for the equal redistribution of present wealth rather than the generation of more wealth. If economies would work on the principle of justice alone, I wouldn't have any objection. But in fact economies work by forces that would simply expire from the populist solutions proposed.

The strong economies of the Asian tigers show the one sure road to success. It would be folly to strike out on a new path at this late date. We are taking the free market, capitalist road to progress and the Christian path to social justice.

I understand there would be more involvement in the work of NGOs but for the peace and order situation in the Philippines. I share your concern for the safety of field workers, but the dangers have been exaggerated. On both sides of the tragic conflict that continues in my country, there is a deep respect for those who work for the poor.

The Philippine Assistance Program assumes an important role for NGOs in the implementation of its programs. Three of PAP special projects depend on NGO expertise in institution building, cooperative organization, and technical assistance.

It would be best to give the lead in environmental protection to the NGOs. As parts of the communities that are most affected by the degradation of their environments, only the NGOs will exercise the vigilance to prevent further destruction. For the common man, the issue of environmentalism is just one issue out of many, it affects directly the kind of life he will lead. Whether one of plenty in a balanced environment, or one of destitution on a dessicated land.

The protection of the earth must be placed in the first instance, and last, in the hands of those who really care: the ordinary people.

In conclusion, I would like to express again my gratitude to the American NGOs for all the good you have done for our people.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Reception of J.C. Penney and Mr. Trammel Crow

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Reception of J.C. Penney and Mr. Trammel Crow**

[Delivered on November 10, 1989]

BREAKTHROUGH FOR FILIPINO PRODUCTS

At the reception given by J.C. Penney and Mr. Trammel Crow, President Aquino again takes the opportunity to promote Philippine-made products. Taking pride in the Filipino craftsmen and their work, she notes the rise in exports to the U.S. during the past three years. She urges help for these products to make a breakthrough in major international markets as every Filipino product sold will create jobs and reduce the poverty level back home.

I would like to thank J.C. Penney and Mr. Trammel Crow for this wonderful reception they are hosting for us.

It is customary to end one's visit to a foreign land by purchasing a few things to take home as gifts. When I thought about this, I remembered that back home Filipino craftsmen produce things of fine workmanship and beauty. These things are now sold in fine stores in the major cities of the world, including Dallas. But more of them need to be known.

J.C. Penny has offered to help bring these products to the attention of wider publics. It is a fact of marketing life that the patronage of major foreign buyers does help make it possible for a greater number of our products to land in major outlets in the international market.

I am pleased to note that our exports to your country during the past three years have risen appreciably: from US\$1,716 billion in 1986, to US\$2,064 billion in 1987, and to US\$2,516 billion in 1988. Overall, our exports have done very well, having increased from US\$4.8 billion in 1986 to US\$7.1 billion in 1988.

But this is just the start, for it is about the level of Taiwan, South Korea and Hongkong exports in 1976.

Every Filipino product sold in a foreign market carries a piece of the Filipino dream to hit a US\$ 15 billion export target by the year 1992 in order to support an economic miracle — one that will create jobs and eventually reduce poverty from the present level of 50-55% to 10-15% in a decade.

I must admit that we are openly looking for opportunities to showcase our products. The Philippines is highly capable of supplying the U.S. market, in particular, 149 world-class products falling under the five major product groups of toys and dolls, gifts and houseware, fashion accessories, processed food, and furniture — all made with the craftsmanship that is distinctively Filipino.

We need your help in other areas, such as guiding our manufacturers in quality control and in widening the product range to match current and future trends in the market. The impact of your contributions can be strong particularly on products that have high value added, high local content, strong forward and backward linkages, and produced in the countryside.

All these can help in our balance of trade. The presence here of so many distinguished people from JC Penney and of Mr. Crow himself raises our hopes, indeed, of finally making that breakthrough that will finally make the label “Philippine-made” sought after throughout the world. Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PORTAL – EDITED AT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINES UNDER COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 638**

Speech of President Corazon Aquino on Dallas Oil

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On Dallas Oil**

[Delivered on November 11, 1989]

COMMITMENT TO ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Recognizing that Philippine economy needs fuel to keep growing, President Aquino underscores her administration's commitment to energy development and oil exploration. Foremost to this concern is the acceleration of the five-year energy development program designed to achieve energy self-sufficiency, promote energy conservation and other indigenous sources of energy, and provide attractive incentives to oil exploration projects.

This occasion is made auspicious by the gathering here of the industry leaders of American oil. Aside from my hosts, I see here the chief executives of the foreign oil companies operating in the Philippines, the pioneers of Philippine oil exploration, and the heads of the Philippine National Oil Company – the flagship of the Philippine oil industry.

There are enough important people here to settle some of the outstanding issues of Philippine oil and effectively set new directions for Philippine energy development. I doubt if there is a better venue for these discussions than the state of Texas, which remains the seat of the oil and gas business in the leading oil producing country of the free world.

Halfway through my term, I can look back with some degree of satisfaction at the transformation of the Philippine economy. From three years' of negative growth rates, we jumped in three years to a 6.7% GNP. The significance of this figure comes out only when you consider that in the same period the Philippines faithfully serviced its debt with 40% of its national budget. The vigor of the private sector despite the enormous commitments of the government to the debt is quite revealing of the strength of the Philippine economy.

That strength has been recognized by other countries as well. Investments have started to pour in, mostly from Asia. Regrettably, US business is yielding its long preeminence in the Philippines to the competition.

The Philippines stands poised for greater progress. A US business report predicts that it will become one of the best performers among Asian economies in the early 1990s. The elements are there in the right combinations. The necessary structural reforms have been made and need only time to produce their desired effects, some of which are already evident.

Political normalcy has been fully achieved. Constitutionalism is firmly in place. Many problems remain, which we could sum up in the observation that 49% of the people still live below the "official" poverty line. Yet stability is assured because the system enjoys legitimacy, and the people are committed only to constitutional courses of change.

A climate favorable to investments has quietly settled over the country, giving government room for policy initiatives to which the economy continues to respond positively. The increase in investments is already straining the capacity of existing infrastructure – such as telecommunications and transportation, as well as energy capabilities. The appetite for oil grows with the hunger for expansion. Yet that hunger cannot be stilled.

Gentlemen, to keep growing, the Philippine economy needs fuel to burn. Despite determined efforts to curb fuel consumption, energy requirements rose 9% in 1988. It is the best sign that the country is on the move. Close to 60 percent of Philippine energy demand was met by oil. Today we are using energy at the faster rate of 11%.

The problem of supply is compounded by the volatility of the world energy market, where periods of plenty are followed by periods of even more and suddenly by shortage and high prices. Among consumers, waves of complacency are followed by panic.

We have carefully nurtured our progress. We shall not leave it a hostage to the vagaries of the energy market. The need to find viable substitutes to imported oil is not just recognized, it is being seriously addressed by the government. We have accelerated our five-year energy development program to accomplish two goals at least:

First, to attain a respectable degree of energy self-sufficiency sooner than planned; and, second, to promote energy conservation and encourage shifts to indigenous energy sources, such as coal, hydropower, geothermal and domestic oil. In 1988, indigenous energy saved the country about half a billion dollars.

The Philippines must find oil or stop growing but it cannot do either. We won't discover oil unless the search for it is intensified. And we can't slow down the economic expansion because it is the only way to catch up with our people's basic demands.

We have therefore adopted some of the most attractive incentives for oil exploration. Incentives such as service fees of up to 40%, reimbursable operational expenses, exemptions from virtually all taxes and duties, iron-clad legal assurances of repatriation of investment and profits, and free market determination of crude oil prices.

An independent report describes the Philippine contractual regime as the most profitable in the Region. A bill introduced in our Congress would increase those incentives. I shall support that bill.

The attitudes of the government institutions involved in oil reflect the government's overriding aim to get oil exploration off the ground in the required scale. Red tape has been virtually eliminated in the Office of Energy Affairs. A model contract adopted by the OEA eliminates the need for negotiations on most items except work obligations. Our attitude is that there is no bureaucratic purpose so important as to justify any delay in the discovery of oil.

But there is really only one incentive that will get oil exploration really going in the Philippines. And that is the likelihood of discovery.

We must have oil. There is oil all around us – Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia – and we have found some in the Philippines. Yet, our discoveries have not been anywhere comparable to our neighbors'. Oil is no respecter of political boundaries. The problem is not the geology of the country but the fitful character of oil exploration to date. To find oil, you have to drill for it – a lot; more and deeper wells. The US has drilled some two million wells to achieve its productive capacity.

After the 1973 oil crisis, we adopted an innovative service contract system to attract foreign investments and expertise. Under that system, 149 wells have been drilled up to the present. One hundred and forty-nine. That's like sticking a toothpick in a haystack to find a pin.

Yet, with those few probes, we made significant discoveries in the Northwest Palawan Shelf. We have delineated 6 oilfields, five of them are currently producing, and all are found in this Shelf. A major gas discovery — the Camago

well of Occidental Philippines — was recently made in the same area. A number of smaller discoveries have been made by an American-Filipino consortium led by Alcorn.

In 1983, a more systematic and scientific approach was taken. The Philippines did a nationwide basin evaluation survey. The World Bank funded this exhaustive study of Philippine petroleum geology. The survey revealed geologic features similar to those where oil has been found around us. This has strengthened our confidence in the commercial presence of oil in the Philippines.

In the meanwhile, there are other aspects of the oil industry that invite investments. On the downstream side of the energy business, existing refinery capacity will be used up in the early 1990s, given present trends. Given the lead time for setting up new refining capacities, it is not too early to start making plans.

For a country aspiring to become an NIC, it is necessary to think in terms of basic industries. One such industry is petrochemicals. Our government is granting a number of investment incentives in various aspects of this industry to encourage the entry of responsible foreign investment that will introduce genuine technology into the country. We are willing to consider a number of approaches, including a partnership between the strategic state oil company and qualified foreign companies.

Before I conclude let me address a few of your specific concerns.

You are worried about the legal environment for oil exploration. I don't presume to speak for the Congress, but I know that there isn't a single Filipino who does not want oil to be found. And there isn't a single factor that could outweigh in anyone's mind the imperative of finding oil.

I haven't given a speech of this length during my entire trip. This only underscores the strength of my commitment to helping oil exploration and development in the Philippines.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on IFW in Dallas Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On IFW in Dallas**

[Delivered on November 11, 1989]

A TEST OF WILL

Eleanor Roosevelt said, “What must be done, will be done”. This describes how Corazon Aquino approached the challenges that confronted her: running for the presidency against a corrupt political machinery and running a country beset with debt, insurgency, and a bankrupt economy. Nevertheless, under the country’s first woman president, the nation’s economy recovered dramatically and democratic institutions were established proving that “what must be done, will be done.”

Good morning. I’m Cory Aquino and I am very happy to be here today among people who have shown an interest in the Philippines. There is a great deal to talk about the Philippines, for many things have happened there. So we should get down to it immediately.

Eleanor Roosevelt said, “What must be done, will be done”. She was right. Necessity is the mother of action. As you know, I was “just a housewife”. What has set me apart now are the extraordinary challenges that fate threw in my path. They might have come to you as well.

Let us take one of them: the challenge of running for the Presidency. This is daunting enough in a free country, like the United States. Imagine how the difficulties are compounded when the election is intended to be a fraud, and you must expect to be cheated and to lose with a good grace – even if the majority of the people had voted for you.

This was the challenge I faced: the challenge of an unfair and dirty election. I took up the challenge because the election, despite the foregone conclusion of a fraudulent count, could make the first crack in the hitherto solid wall of the dictatorship.

If we took part in the election perhaps the breach would even widen and our people could walk through it to freedom.

The chances for this were small. But taking part in the elections was something that had to be done.

How did I approach the campaign? I campaigned for votes up and down the country, as though the votes would be honestly counted.

Some of my followers asked what was the point if we would be cheated, anyway. I said cheating in the election was the job of the dictator; getting the votes, even if they were ultimately counted only in the hearts of the people, was mine.

I figured before I worried about getting votes honestly counted, I had better make sure the people had voted for me. They say this is how a woman looks at things. First, to get done what can be done, and then to worry about those that defy execution.

As a result I got the votes. As expected, the dictator proceeded to cheat me in the count. The margin must have been so big that the cheating had to be massive, so much so that the official talliers walked out in disgust — straight into the arms of visiting US Senators and observers. That was the beginning of the end.

I knew that I had won, and so, around midnight of election day, before he could make his own announcement, I proclaimed my victory. The dictator was stunned. He spent the following days explaining that, No, it was he who had won. He had been put on the defensive.

What followed is history, in the images that now represent People Power: the people massing all over the country to protest the fraudulent count, my call for civil disobedience, and the rising of the military to join in the national outrage, and the flight of the dictator. I had become President.

The next problem was my leadership. Other people had problems with it. I was suddenly in charge of a whole country like a housewife having the whole house to herself to clean. But it was a bit more complicated. Some members of the military wanted to share my duties as housewife or caretaker of the country. This was, of course, out of the question. They didn't look the part, and only I had been elected President.

They tried to crash into the house by staging five coups. Each of them was foiled; the last was crushed completely.

Some people were unhappy at the way I ran things. For instance, before I did something that affected many people, I would ask them first what they thought of it. This was regarded as a lack of leadership qualities. I thought it was only good manners, as well as the best way to educate the people on how to govern themselves and become a true democracy.

When a decision was called for, I let time pass before deciding. This was called indecisiveness. Others said it was the fickleness one would expect. I thought it was merely predicating action on careful thought. I think they wanted a cavalry officer and not a President because people kept urging me to rush headlong into this or that. I am surprised at the premium men put on recklessness, which probably explains why a woman finally became the president of the Philippines and why women run for great cities in Texas.

As you know, when you move into an old house, there are always things left by the last owner that you can't abide; a grotesque planter, for example.

What I found were the friends of the previous tenant — the people who had helped him rob the country blind. I also found a communist rebellion in full swing, and a Muslim secessionist movement that wanted me to govern a house divided.

I also found a pile of unpaid bills, amounting to about \$26 billion — our foreign debt. What would I do about these things?

The accomplices in the national theft have been charged in court. The communists, I offered a chance to lay down their arms and start life anew in a free country. And the Muslims I promised a measure of autonomy — but always within one, unified state. I would not be the President to preside over the dismemberment of my country.

The communists rejected the offer; so I called out the armed forces. My Muslim brothers were more reasonable and said they would give the autonomy provisions of a new constitution a chance to work before they did anything more.

The foreign debt I resumed paying because I did not want the lights and the water to be cut off, and the grocer to refuse me credit. In my opinion, I needed these things not only to pay the debt but also to improve the house and the lives of the people who live in it. I then proceeded to put the house in order.

It took three years to put things back in place. This wasn't bad considering the 14 years that were spent taking it apart.

I also called in the night watchman and thanked him for keeping the house secure, but I admonished him not to beat up people who walked by the house merely on suspicion of wrongdoing. I told him firmly that I would not tolerate

his rowdy behavior. Thenceforth, he himself would have to respect the laws he was fighting to uphold. The Armed Forces now are a force of the people, working for their security — where once they had been their oppressors.

My detractors said that I had no experience, so how could I possibly do the job of President. That job was getting done, and done rather well. So who was doing it, if not myself? I asked. Anybody else here President? The ones who raised this issue of inexperience had unquestionably the longest experience of government — they had been in office during the 20 years the country was run to the ground.

There is just no pleasing some people. But this, as you and I know, should never stand in the way of getting the chores done.

This simple narrative is how men think women do their jobs. We have tried to humor them by telling the story of a great national revival in the language they think we speak.

But you and I know that the problems of running houses, businesses, and countries, which increasingly are in the hands of women, are not simple. But that if anyone can cope with them, it would be us. Let me continue the story.

This therefore was the situation in which I found the country in 1986. It would need enormous resources to get it back on its feet. In the previous two years we had negative growth rates. The economy had contracted 10 percent. We had a foreign debt which was not represented by productive, paying assets because most of the debt had quite simply been stolen or wasted. As a result, nearly half the national budget has had to go to debt service.

Yet, with myriad other economic problems, including mass poverty that embraced 60% of the population, we turned the economy around in just one year, and by the second year were posting a respectable growth rate. We reduced the incidence of poverty by 10%.

In the international community, we were respected because, while we had good reasons not to, we have been faithfully paying the debt.

In that same year, we had a new constitution ratified. I reestablished all the democratic institutions and practices the dictatorship destroyed. And held the freest and most widely participated in elections of any modern Western democracy. We had voter turnouts of 70%. I believe this has not been seen anywhere else in perhaps a century. The Filipinos took to democracy like ducks to water.

These then were our accomplishments: an economy firmly on the road to recovery and sustained growth, and a fully established democracy. We had also stemmed the communist tide, had captured most of the insurgent leaders, and had an army fighting with a sense of moral purpose and therefore with a sharper fighting edge.

The Philippines has something even more valuable than its economic and political gains. It enjoys the respect of nations and of good men and women throughout the world. It is a voice of morality and reason in the affairs of the world because of the compassionate way in which it staged a revolution. It showed the way that is now being taken by dominated nations throughout the world — the path of non-violent protest and peaceful resistance.

I do not know how much of the credit for this remarkable political invention should go to the Filipino character or to the dominant presence of women, especially nuns, in the Philippine revolution. But compassion had won the day for us and would thenceforth constitute the hallmark of the Filipino.

I will end with that. I have been away from my country for over a week now and I should be getting back. Like all women, I plan for the future but work like there is no tomorrow. And there is a lot of work to be done today.

I want to thank you for the tremendous reception that you and the city of Dallas have given me. I hope you will visit my country. It doesn't have the wealth of Texas but it has the charm of its people that comes out especially with visiting friends.

Thank you and good day.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino before the Filipino Community

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines Before the Filipino Community in LA

[Delivered at St. Basil's Cathedral, Los Angeles, November 11, 1989]

A NATION LEANING ON ITS OWN PEOPLE

Reaffirming the bonds between Canada and the United States and the Philippines, President Aquino speaks before the Filipino community in L.A. before returning to the country. She urges them to show their desire to serve their country and fellowmen by concrete actions. She exhorts them to help their country so that the nation will no longer have to depend on other nations but rather will lean on its own people in times of great trials.

I came to North America to reaffirm the bonds between Canada and the United States and the Philippines. I return to my country with their firm expressions of support for our development.

The path we have walked towards Philippine political reform and economic recovery has been difficult and exasperating; but we persevered. Our steadfastness has started to pay off. Political normalcy has returned. The economy has taken off.

For the past week, I have been talking to Filipinos in Canada and in the United States how things are in the home country and why they should be even prouder of what it has become.

Naghahari sa puso ng bawat Pilipino ang masidhing pagnanasa na makapaglingkod sa bayan at sa kapwa. Patunayan natin ang pagnanasang ito sa pamamagitan ng mga konkreong pagkilos upang ang bayan natin ay hindi na muling umasa sa iba kung hindi sa kanyang sariling mamamayan sa mga oras ng kagipitan at pagsubok.

Bago ako bumalik sa atin ay nais kong pasalamatan kayo sa pagsama sa akin at sa inyong mga kababayan sa inyong mga panalangin. Dala ang inyong mga panalangin, babalik kami sa Pilipinas na taglay ang ibayong lakas upang gampanan ang aming mga tungkulin sa ikadadakilang muli ng ating bayan.

Sa ngalan ng ating pamahalaan at inyong mga kababayan sa Pilipinas, nais kong ipaabot sa inyo ang taos-pusong mithiin na nawa'y magtagumpay kayo sa inyong mga adhikain at mga gawain, sapagkat ang inyong pagtatagumpay ay pagtatagumpay ng buong sambayanang Pilipino.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino to the people of Basilan

Speech of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines To the people of Basilan

[Delivered on November 16, 1989]

AN AUTONOMY BASED ON THE PEOPLE'S WILL

Both the Philippine Constitution and the Tripoli Agreement agree that a plebiscite is necessary for the creation of an autonomous region. A Supreme Court ruling that the majority vote in each of the prospective constituent units shall determine which unit will in fact become autonomous – has reaffirmed this condition. It has also made the people's vote more important. Basilan, as the battleground of the secessionist rebellion in the 70s, must realize that their first test of fitness for autonomy is to conduct the plebiscite in an orderly and peaceful manner.

The next challenge is for autonomy to translate into the more effective delivery of basic services.

It has been some time since my last visit to Basilan. In many respects, the circumstances then and now are quite different. But once again, I come to call on you at a time of great political ferment to ask you to exercise your right and responsibility as Filipino citizens.

On November 19, only three days from today, the people of Basilan will have the chance to decide whether or not to belong to an autonomous region.

The Constitution mandates the creation of autonomous regions in Muslim Mindanao and the Cordilleras. But it preserves a safeguard contained in our earlier constitutions. It requires, as earlier constitutions did, that the people of the affected areas give their consent to fundamental changes in political structure.

Even the Tripoli Agreement accepts the principle that the grant of autonomy by the national government must follow the country's constitutional processes. These constitutional processes include the conduct of a plebiscite.

What both the Constitution and the Tripoli Agreement accept as a condition for the creation of an autonomous region, the Supreme Court has only recently reaffirmed. Only a few days ago, the Supreme Court ruled that the majority vote in each of the constituent units – the 13 provinces and nine cities proposed for autonomy – shall determine which specific province or city shall in fact become autonomous under the terms provided for by the law Congress has enacted.

The Supreme Court decision has given greater importance to the vote you will cast in the plebiscite on November 19. The Supreme Court has placed the power to determine the future development of Basilan where it rightfully belongs – in the hands of the Basilenos themselves, in your hands.

The right of the people of Basilan to choose whether or not to belong to an autonomous region, was never in doubt. But some groups had argued that Basilan could not enjoy autonomy unless the majority of the people in the other provinces and cities also agreed to become autonomous. The Supreme Court decision has demolished this argument. It has denied to the other constituent provinces and cities the right to block Basilan from autonomy, if autonomy is what Basilan desires.

By its ruling, the Supreme Court has proclaimed and protected the right of Basilan and the other constituent units to self-determination. It is not necessary, according to the highest tribunal of the land, for the majority of voters in all

13 provinces and cities to choose autonomy before an autonomous region can be formed. A smaller number of provinces and cities can combine to compose an autonomous region.

On this constitutional issue, all three independent branches of government have reached consensus. I had always maintained the interpretation that the Supreme Court has now upheld. I felt that entrusting the decision on autonomy to the constituent units would best carry out the spirit and the intent of the Constitution. As early as April, the Executive Branch had presented its position to Congress, and Congress had concurred with our views. The judgment of the Supreme Court makes the verdict on this question unanimous.

I have spoken at length of the Supreme Court ruling because it is obviously of crucial importance in determining the meaning of the vote you will cast in the plebiscite on November 19. But also because I find in it support and vindication for the stand of active neutrality I have taken on the autonomy issue, a stand that political opportunists have willfully misunderstood and persistently maligned.

On an issue as far-reaching as autonomy for an area as diverse as Mindanao, the surest anchor is the sovereign will of the people. The law crafted by Congress is complex enough to administer and implement. Autonomy can work only if the people stand solidly committed behind it. That commitment must be explicitly and freely expressed in the plebiscite. My efforts to implement the mandate for autonomy has been guided, above all, by an abiding faith in the ability of the people to decide what is best for them.

We had witnessed the people at EDSA defy formidable odds to topple a detested regime. We now see people power in Germany bringing down the Berlin Wall. All over the world, we can sense new waves of freedom, as tightly controlled dictatorships yield to the demands of people power. There is, therefore, no reason for us in our democratic system to deny to the people of Basilan and the other affected provinces and cities the right to receive or reject autonomy without dictation.

Basilan was a battleground in the secessionist rebellion of the seventies. A significant segment of the community has manifested in blood and tears its demand for greater control over its own affairs. Its sacrifice, by itself, has earned it the right to render judgment on the autonomy it is being offered. But whether favorable or hostile to the Organic Act at issue in the plebiscite, Basilan's experience of secessionist violence in the seventies must surely argue against the use of violence on November 19. What benefits would more victims of violence bring to Basilan? The first test of Basilan's fitness for autonomy may indeed be its ability to conduct a political exercise in a peaceful and orderly manner.

To the people of Basilan, then, and to those in the other provinces and cities proposed for autonomy, I convey a simple message. Let the guns stay silent particularly on November 19 so that the people may vote freely and peacefully. We do not need any more martyrs.

I shall not venture to predict the outcome of the plebiscite. But whatever the outcome, I can say with almost absolute certainty that the world will not end nor will all our problems magically disappear after November 19.

Thus, as we head towards the plebiscite, we must keep our perspective by also looking beyond it. The Supreme Court decision has improved the chances that an autonomous government can in fact be created.

But autonomy answers only one of Mindanao's concerns. A new political structure will not automatically address other, more basic needs: safe drinking water, medical care, educational and livelihood opportunities. To be truly meaningful, autonomy must translate to the more effective delivery of these services. Making autonomy work for the benefit of the people will test our resolve and our commitment.

In passing the law for the proposed autonomy, we have embarked on a journey of many miles. We have already taken many steps. The plebiscite is the next milestone. But we have many more miles to travel to attain the peace and progress we all desire for Basilan, for Mindanao, and for the entire Philippines.

I pray that we shall march on steadfastly together, guided by a genuine respect for each other's values and beliefs and by a deep concern for each other's welfare.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Speech of President Corazon Aquino at the Conference on Christian-Muslim Democracy, June 9, 1991

**Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the Conference on Christian-Muslim Democracy**

[Delivered on June 9, 1991]

**LET HISTORY
JUDGE US**

Much of government's non-political concern has been towards our economic development. Along this line, there are those who argue that reducing the political liberties available to the people will concentrate our people's energies on economic development.

This argument, although it strongly appealed to many who were in a hurry to bring about the development of this country, had been tried before with dangerous results; it stilled our people's energies and prefaced the total loss of our freedoms. We should never allow that to happen again to us.

I strongly believe that the political liberty of the people is a necessary precondition to economic development. Without that political liberty, the fruits of economic development will accrue only to a few and will not benefit the many. Thus, when I became President of the Philippines, I was determined to return democracy to this Republic as my primary objective.

Democracy, simply put, is to guide our national life as a nation, not by the arbitrary dictates of a single ruler, nor by the anarchy of the many, but by the fundamental law of the land, accepted by all as the yardstick by which we relate to one another. It is the collective will of the people expressed through their duly elected representatives, in the context of universal suffrage.

That fundamental law of the land, our Constitution of 1987, is rooted in a higher law – the moral law of Divine Providence. It is no accident that in the Preamble, we implore the aid of Almighty God.

As you are aware, my immediate task at the start of my term as President was to replace the previous *de facto* Constitution of 1973.¹ I called for a new one to be drawn up. The Constitution of 1987 was written by the Constitutional Commission in an atmosphere of freedom. It is now a historical fact that our Constitution was freely ratified by an overwhelming majority.

My second task was to install the mechanisms of a free electoral process, which we did, first in May of 1987, and in subsequent elections for local officials down to the barangay level.

My third task was to restore freedom of the press. That the press now should take to its freedom as a duck takes to water is a delight even if, more often than not, I should be the subject of uncomfortable comments in media. Media today is vocal and vociferous. And these are sure signs that democracy is in place. There is truth to what others say: democracy can be noisy, and that noise may be made by a free press. I hope, however, that it will always be a responsible noise which defends democracy.

With our political reforms, I believe I have laid down a stable basis for faster economic development. I hope, therefore, that political parties take this precondition seriously: not to sacrifice political liberty in the name of economic development, but to defend political liberty as a precondition to economic development.

Too often we refuse to discuss ethics in our political life. But this is contrary to the reality that we are a nation of believers. When we rose against the dictator at the EDSA Revolution, our people, Muslims and Christians alike, did not hesitate to manifest their faith in God. During that period, the people did not forget who the Final Author of their life and nation is. Such an uprising was a political act based on moral grounds.

If we are to learn from our experience, therefore, we must remember that in all political acts, we must be guided by ethical considerations. To adhere to the politics of pragmatism devoid of moral basis is to court disaster all over again. True progress goes along the path of what is morally right.

I am pleased to note, therefore, that Christian Democracy has taken root in our country. I am equally pleased to watch the emergence and growth of Muslim Democracy as the sister idea of Christian Democracy. It is not surprising that both ideas spring from the moral teachings of the two holy books, the Bible and the Koran.

Thus, I am glad that this Center for Christian-Muslim Democracy has been put up for the study and development of ideas to reinforce Philippine democracy. For, our liberty cannot be better strengthened than by the moral fiber that largely comes from having faith in the Almighty.

I note the participation here of leaders and members of long-standing organizations that have pursued this ideal in their fight for justice – the Federation of Free Workers, the Federation of Free Farmers, the Christian Social Movement, among others. Your contributions to the discussions will surely enrich the Center's perspective.

I also note the participation of foreign delegates who have come to share with us their experiences in strengthening democracy. I believe they can also learn a few things from us, particularly how our Faith played a key role in winning the EDSA Revolution which was, probably, the first of the bloodless revolutions of this century.

I call upon all the participants here to be steadfast in their belief in the Almighty. Our task is to build a nation based on the moral values of your collective beliefs. There is space for a pluralism of ideas, just as there is space for a pluralism of cultures. The blending of these ideas and these cultures has enriched, and will continue to enrich, our land for the benefit of all Filipinos and of the world.

There is no doubt that history will judge us. Let history, then, judge us in the light of the past and the present. With Filipinos like you committed to the future of our country, I believe that our liberty is secure. You are the shapers of that future, and freedom belongs only to those who are willing to work hard to sustain it.

Ipagpatuloy ninyo ang inyong magandang simulain para sa ating demokrasya. Mabuhay kayong lahat. (Continue your excellent start in the name of our democracy. Long life to all of you).

Source: **University of the Philippines Main Library**

**Speech of President Corazon Aquino on the Reflections on Our Development, June 23, 1992 Speech
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On the Reflections on Our Development**

[Delivered at the Peninsula Hotel, June 23, 1992]

One of the first lessons I learned in public office, is that as President, one is expected to lose one's sense of humor. Or at least, in public. While in office, I have to learn to joke in private and to treat other people's comments occasionally as jokes. Now that I will soon become one of you, I might as well allow for a smooth transition back to my sense of humor.

Thus, I would like to begin by announcing my first joke for the evening. During the last stretch of the elections, I often heard businessmen say, "*Pigang-piga na kami.*" There was, as my Presidential Management Staff euphemistically described to me, "donor fatigue." Well, seeing this crowd tonight, I guess the well is not really all that dry.

After all, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry had just concluded a most interesting multisectoral conference — if only to see whether or not in 100 days you can recover your contributions to the campaign kitty.

End of joke.

Indeed, I am truly pleased to be with you tonight, as I submit to you my promised assessment of the economic legacy I leave behind.

For the past six years, an interminable debate has been going on between my economic and development managers, and the critics of my administration. Many times, my Cabinet has rolled with the punches; many more times, it has been punch-drunk. Both sides cite statistics. Both present arguments with cold, calculating logic. Some critics have accused my economic and development managers of treason. My managers in turn learned only too quickly, economics for development in this country, is not for the faint of heart. And economic development in this country, thank God and peoplepower, is as robust as robust can be.

For you may not have always agreed with this Government's economic and development architects. But you will certainly agree with me that you were left to do what you wanted to do, what you needed to do, with least interference and maximum consultation from Government.

As I prepare to pass the reins of responsibility to my duly elected and proclaimed successor, let me take stock and put together a perspective of what we tried to accomplish in the economy these past six years.

1. A key focus had to be on restructuring the economy. We had to get out of cronyism, as practised by the Marcoses and those closest to them. For clearly, this led to the abuse of government power for private gain. The structures cronyism built propped up the pursuit of personal wealth through misuse and abuse of public authority. We had to replace these with those that ensured market discipline. We had to put an end to their divine right of plunder.

a) We had to ensure the independence and autonomy of the government financial institutions. The Philippine National Bank and the Development Bank of the Philippines had to be rehabilitated.

b) We had to remove controls from the productive sectors of the economy. Monopolies that had such a stranglehold on agriculture had to be quickly dismantled.

c) We had to pursue privatization so that productive assets could be more efficiently used under private sector ownership, management and control.

d) We liberalized trade and investments so that productivity is enhanced through more open competition. We removed Quantitative Restrictions or QRs, lifted price controls, lowered protectionist tariffs. We initiated the liberalization of the foreign exchange market.

We had to begin to restructure an economy reeling from the most devastating post-war recession ever. And we did put the economy back on the growth track in 1986. We continue to sustain this, despite a global economic slowdown two years ago and the major disasters that have recently struck. Figures support this. The seal of good economic housekeeping from international agencies is a boost to this. The general feeling confirms this.

And then, we had to begin the trek to stability for growth and development.

Before we completely leave economic restructuring, let me tell you now my Joke No. 2 on the subject of cronyism. One of the most amusing stories which have been circulating these past six years is that about my Mahjong Cronies, Bea Zobel and Betty Belmonte. At exactly five o'clock everyday, I'm supposed to stop working and begin playing mahjong. The story became so rife that Sister Christine Tan, observing that I was staying late at the Guest House, after a meeting with her, told me that perhaps I should relax and play mahjong with Bea and Betty. "Well, Sister," I told her then, "Taking a break with those two very good women is fine. But neither of them knows how to play mahjong, so they cannot be my mahjong cronies." End of Joke.

2. Indeed, we recognized that without stability, growth cannot be sustained. Painful as the austerities which stability imposed, still, they were the *conditio sine qua non* of long term development.

a) We therefore had to put the Government's own fiscal house in order. This was essential if we were to contain inflation down to prudent, single-digit levels. And we had to keep on fighting against inflation, because the people most deeply hurt and most seriously disadvantaged by it are the poorest of the poor, the extremely marginalized segments of society.

b) We were convinced that a low inflation rate is the best incentive to savings and investment. We therefore had to pursue our fight against inflation relentlessly if we were to make the Philippines conducive to higher rates of savings and investments.

Firmly believing in the principle of subsidiarity, the Aquino administration set out to intervene the least while serving the most. In the process, I daresay, we govern best. This way, we restored every Filipino's right to prosperity, in an environment free enough to encourage the social responsibility to enhance it. We had to stabilize the economy. And stabilize it, we did. For sustained development, truly, there is no substitute for democracy.

3. Thus, we focused on broadening the global orientation of the economy. Only by opening up could we stimulate even greater competitiveness and higher productivity among Philippine business. And regain our sterling credibility.

a) I have always believed that the main avenues to long-term growth and soundly-based development are trade and investments. More exports of Philippine goods and services. More foreign investment flows into the production sectors of the Philippine economy.

b) To ensure more exports and foreign investments, we had to increase Official Development Assistance or ODA flows so that infrastructure investments could be accelerated. Investments for roads and bridges, irrigation and drainage systems, energy and electrification, post harvest facilities, health clinics and schoolhouses. Our peso counterpart investments were quick to complement these resources.

This is why we pushed for tax and revenue reforms, and obtained them. After much gnashing of teeth, I am told. And some still believe our tax collecting agencies are toothless. That's Joke No. 3, in case you hadn't noticed.

This is also why we pushed for the Build-Operate-Transfer or BOT Law so that more substantial private sector participation becomes possible, especially for putting up peso counterpart funds.

c) We worked hard to lighten the burden of servicing our foreign debt. We succeeded in getting better terms from our commercial bank and Paris Club creditors. But the debate on this issue has raged without any scaling down of the emotionalism that attended it.

I have maintained all along that as a matter of practical reality, it is not possible to separate debt from the broader components of our international economic relations — the ODA under the Multilateral Aid Initiative-Philippine Assistance Program (MAI-PAP), more exports and more foreign investments.

Indeed, what we have been trying to accomplish brings a sum greater than its parts: the self-respect of the Filipino, the self-respect of a nation.

The self-respect of the Filipino is enhanced when he is part of an economy that is stable;

by a peso that can hold its own value without artificial props by a clutching, controlling, interfering bureaucracy;

by industries that are truly competitive, able to hold their ground without need for the mantle of protectionism or favoritism;

and by domestic productivity that goes up to world-class standards.

The self-respect of the Filipino nation is increased by institutions firmly in place supporting a socially-responsible, market-disciplined, internationally competitive economy;

by a development commitment to honor its sovereign obligations;

by creating and sustaining an environment conducive to productive partnerships between the local private sector and the international community;

and by ensuring that our infrastructure, specifically our power generation facilities, are adequate to cope with increasing demands of industry.

Self respect. Stability. Restructuring. These have been the key strands in the warp and woof of a democracy with development. I daresay, the Aquino administration has done it justice. For these are the standards by which we strove to ensure coherence and consistency amidst the cacophony of many economic and development voices. While the perennial critics may have had the luxury of picking the issues they wish to hound us for, we had the duty of looking at the entire economic, financial and development system, with all its interdependent components. A decision on one part can have a wide-ranging impact on the whole.

One cannot be proud so as to admit of no shortcomings. I am sure I have disappointed many of you at one time or another, with one or some of my decisions. But I can look at anyone of you in the eye and say:

Never did anyone of you have to worry about your business being taken over by Government at a mere whim or sign of the pen;

never did anyone of you have to hesitate about advertising the real profits you are making, out of fear of being asked to share — nay, out of fear of being pressured to give more or all to powers that be;

never before have the corporate and financial sectors made as much profit as they did in the Philippines these past six years.

In my time, and I believe, so on to the following generations of Philippine presidents, the only thing you will really have to worry about is the BIR. And that's not a joke.

Indeed, we are fortunate that the Filipino businessman is not all that materialistic. Many times I have seen how you narrow the profit margin as the service margin for God, country and people so requires. Nowhere in the world have I come across businessmen so involved in socio-civic work, in capability-building for NGOs, in relief and reconstruction work for those displaced by calamities.

So now, let me invite you to go one step further. I urge you to have face-to-face encounters with the people you help. This should not be viewed only as a natural consequence of your desire to know where your money goes. More important, the people you help will also know who you are. Who knows, they may even pray for your greater success. As I always do, for you. So that you may better serve our people directly, by reaching out to the marginalized or indirectly, by being fair and square in your business and giving the consumer a good buy.

To those of you who had wanted me to appoint you, or your recommendees, to government positions, especially board directorships, but didn't, I hope you have forgiven me by now. George Washington, the American President, on his last day in office, had to write his wife to tell her how this power of appointment made bitter enemies of his old friends.

To those of you I had wanted to appoint in Government but succeeded in coming up with some tearjerking reason to prevent it, I have already forgiven you — for now. I am magnanimous, too, when I bow out of office.

Indeed, in the end, I'd like to be able to say that it is to you who are outside government, that we handed the spoils. For we had labored mightily, so that the Filipino people shall be the victors.

As for me, I shall practice what I preach, and will continue to help our people face-to-face, starting with the small farmers in the countryside. I am putting together something like a mini-MAI-PAP, or Multi-NGO Aid Initiative and People's Assistance Program. And already, I am inviting you to consider to be part of a future pledging session.

And now for the final joke of the evening. When the matter of pensions of former Presidents was brought to my attention, I had my legal advisers prepare the appropriate Executive Order so that I could at least increase the pension of former President Macapagal from P3,500 a month to P8,000 — as much as what widows of former Presidents get. Out of delicadeza, I included a colatilla that this E.O. shall not apply to me. Don't feel sorry for me. I understand former Presidents can charge honoraria for their speaking engagements. So, the next time you invite me, you'd better have something more than the dinner. The plaques are good, but former Presidents will need the money. End of Joke.

So, let me thank you sincerely for being there with me all these six years. Thank you for being there during the failed coup attempts, the calamities. In a very real sense, the business sector is the conscience of our development.

Again, thank you for your support these past six years. Thank you, too, for your help during the campaign for Eddie Ramos. To those who voted for him because I asked you to and to those who did even if I didn't, thank you. To those who didn't, well, you can now vote for him everyday for six years.

Thank you and good night.

Source: **University of the Philippines Main Library**

Farewell Message of President Corazon Aquino to the Armed Forces, June 25, 1992

Farewell Message of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines To the Armed Forces

[Delivered at Camp Aguinaldo, June 25, 1992]

Farewell to the Armed Forces

I thank you with all my heart for this tribute. I cannot but be moved by the colors of the corps, the sound of drums and the men and women in uniform standing at attention. So much honor, courage, loyalty and duty in this historic place.

When I leave Malacañang, perhaps the last I shall see at the gate will be the sentry giving me the final salute. I shall return that salute with deep emotion. For no Commander-in-Chief, with the exception of my predecessor, has been as deeply involved as I have been with the military. There was, of course, one crucial difference between us: I gave you trust, I treated you with respect, and left you with infinitely greater honor than he did.

I brought you together with the people whom you must protect; he kept you apart to be the blind instrument of his ambition.

But I must say that, in the end, you gave me more loyalty and infinitely greater service than you gave him.

My critics say that I should not compare the Marcos regime too often with my own, and the military under Marcos with what it is today. I don't see why not. For no one can deny that you are a better military.

It is true that, under me, some of the military lost certain privileges that it enjoyed under the dictatorship. But with me the military won a country that is worth serving and worth dying for. Our country finally has the military it deserves.

It should not be surprising that I devoted the better part of my lecture at the University of the Philippines to the military question. For this question is central to the larger one of the future of Philippine democracy.

After all the work that you and I put into it, that question will be answered on June 30, when the first peaceful, democratic transition takes place in a quarter of a century. And the military helped make it possible. Chief of Staff General Lisandro Abadia, take a bow.

Your duty and devotion during the worst trials of the government is a memory I shall cherish. It is the glory of the past six years that they were the story of the battle for freedom. A battle we thought had ended, but which really only began at EDSA.

It is easily forgotten but that battle was waged mostly by the military; and the story of those years was more of loyalty than of betrayal. When the smoke clears, the disloyalty of the few will be seen against the backdrop of the great majority who held fast to their oath and duty.

In the 1930s, the military of a neighboring country intervened in politics and has not stopped doing so since. In 1986, the Philippine military intervened in Philippine politics – and did not stop until it put an end to the habit of intervention.

My intuition was right after all. In Singapore in 1985, I said that, even as the widow of Ninoy Aquino, I was not prepared to condemn an entire organization for the sins of a few. As in every organization there are good elements and bad. The important thing is to strengthen the first.

I have spoken plainly, especially to those whose lives depend on the precision of their orders. I always told General de Villa to take whatever I say at face value, for I never have a secret agenda.

I said the government would last, and it did. I said I would step down and I will; I even campaigned for my successor. I said democracy would survive and you helped me to ensure it.

I asked you, time and again, to trust me to handle the insurgency my way, and you did. The result fell short of my aspiration for a quick and universal peace, but it did not fall too far short of our objective – to make a serious and credible start in ending the insurgency.

I am aware of the agony you went through to help me fulfill these vows. I have always known it.

In my first speech to the Philippine Military Academy in 1986, I said that in February, 1986, the soldier faced a dilemma no textbook had prepared him for: What do you do when the civilian authority is itself the threat to democracy? Where lies the loyalty of the soldier, with the nation or the government of the day?

“During the long years of the past regime, our armed forces shared the agony of every Filipino. The shame and dismay of having at the head of our proud nation a man whose greed humbled our pride and whose cruelty put Filipino at war with Filipino.

“Just as we owe it to every Filipino to restore a government they can be proud of, so we owe it to our young soldiers to have a government they can be proud to defend. Military honor in the service of the state cannot be separate from the kind of government a soldier is required to serve.”

I understood, even then, the difficulty of the choices the military had to make. The choice to defy the previous government in the teeth of the soldier’s oath, and the decision to defend the succeeding government against the advice of the military’s most popular commanders.

I went through the same agony of decision myself. Among the first officers I promoted was one who warned me that he had stayed loyal to his Commander-in-Chief to the end. I told him that I hoped he would do the same for me.

On the other hand, among the most perplexing problems of the new government was how to recognize – consistently with military tradition – the patriotism of those who had broken their oath to one Commander-in-Chief without justifying their refusal to honor their oath to obey another.

The first time they broke their oath it was in the name of the people and for the sake of democracy. But there were those who claimed to hear the voice of the people when they were only listening to themselves conspire against the new government. We never had it easy, you and I; as easy as those who will come after us.

I stretched the patience of the military to dangerous lengths when I released Joma Sison and Commander Dante, top leaders of the insurgency in captivity. It was a campaign pledge. From this act stemmed much of the murmuring in the military against me. It was the same when I called for a ceasefire and talks with the communist rebels, although that initiative was backed by the best military advice. But it must be said that the murmurs never rose to the pitch of defiance on the part of the majority. Only those who were against me, whatever I did, opposed me. For what they wanted was not a policy agreeable with the military, but a power-sharing scheme agreeable to themselves.

Perhaps we were ahead of our time in proposing peace as the way to peace, instead of more war. But the times have caught up with us. Communism is a dead creed and the insurgency is in irreversible decline. The military has grown in strength by involving itself in development. The insurgency has weakened by persisting in war.

The strength of the insurgency dropped 46% – from 24,400 in 1986 to 13,000 today. The drop in insurgent arms registered almost the same percentage. Insurgent-affected barangays dropped 67% – from 8,400 in 1986 to 2,800 today. The number of active guerilla fronts was cut in half.

True the insurgents can still mount a surprise attack on a solitary unit to mock these statistics, but they will never regain the strategic advantage. Not while this army remains true to what it has become.

Time has proved that we took the right course. Joma Sison may be the last communist in Europe who takes himself seriously. And the developmental work of Commander Dante may be the best formula yet for peace and development: people-powered efforts, for people directed gains.

Perhaps the military itself will take the initiative to end the war by a unilateral declaration of peace in the next administration; and thereby leave the insurgents to fight the wars of yesterday in the non-existent battlefields of tomorrow. For the military has regained the confidence to meet all internal threats to the republic on any terms it chooses: on terms of peace or in the language of war.

1985-86 was indeed a time of great confusion for the military and the civilian government. For the military, it was a time when treason could be either patriotism or a crime, depending on the circumstances. For me, it was a time when it was either wisdom or folly to depend on the chain of command. Yet, I did.

I wasn't sure and you didn't know. It was only the decision to trust each other that allowed us to breach the wall between us, and join hands in the common defense and the development of our country.

From 1987 to 1989, and up to the present, there was never any doubt that those who persisted in rebellion amounted to no more than a few who hungered for power. That time is now behind us. The Armed Forces stands firm and united – in force and purpose – behind the Constitution. It is a testament to the strength of that commitment and to the military's true understanding of democracy, that while the constitution was rejected by the military in 1987, it was defended by them throughout the following years. The military had returned to its ancient code: Honor is obedience.

The reforms in the military, which I entrusted to the military itself, have resulted in a clear definition of its continuing tasks and in the emergence of new challenges. The designation of the PNP to handle internal security has brought to the fore the main constitutional duty of the Armed Forces, the work of national defense.

But this development also brings out the urgency to modernize the AFP for a task that grows ever larger and more urgent with every discovery of the hidden riches of our country, especially in its least defensible borders.

But the main resource of the AFP for the task of national defense is the unity and professionalism it has attained, and the trust and respect it has engendered in the people. That trust is nowhere more brightly reflected than in the election of a former military man to the Presidency of the nation. This resource must never be squandered by those who continue to hope that the AFP can be used again as the catapult of their ambitions.

And now I must bid farewell. In a sense, you, too, are leaving politics with me. For the military must, in the words of a great soldier, thenceforth stand "serene, calm and aloof as the Nation's war guardian, as its lifeguard from the raging tides of international conflict, as its gladiator in the arena of battle...."

"Let civilian voices argue the merits or demerits of our processes of government.... These great national problems are not for your professional participation or military solution. Your guidepost stands out like a tenfold beacon in the night: duty, honor, country."

Perhaps, like that soldier, I too shall dream of "the crash of guns" and "the rattle of musketry," of the eerie silence that precedes the attack. But when I wake I shall remember only the loyalty, honor and courage of those who fought on our side.

It is fitting and proper that I should come here as one of my last acts of office; here among soldiers. For as I came to power, so have I chosen to leave it – who risked their lives and wagered everything to restore democracy, and stood by me in its defense. I can only praise you for your professionalism and thank you for your loyalty.

Six years ago, you did not know me. In six years and four months, we have come to know each other very well, and what I know I like very much.

In 1986, at the PMA, I said to you, the military, that we would face whatever must come together: you and I and the people. Those words were prophetic, for our partnership has weathered every storm and brought the ship of state safely home in a new administration.

I ended my speech to the PMA cadets with these words: “Once more you are back where you longed to be, on the side of the people. Welcome home, my soldiers.”

Some people said I was presumptuous to call the soldiers my own. After six years and many battles, I have earned the right to say: Goodbye, my soldiers.

Source: **University of the Philippines Main Library**

MESSAGES TO THE CONGRESS

Corazon C. Aquino, First State of the Nation Address, July 27, 1987

**The State of the Nation
Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Congress**

[Delivered at the Batasang Pambansa, Quezon City, on July 27, 1987]

Mr. President of the Senate; Mr. Speaker of the House of Representatives; members of both Houses of Congress; the Vice President and members of the Cabinet; the Chief Justice and the associate justices of the Supreme Court; Your Excellencies of the Diplomatic Corps; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen:

Fifteen years ago, in this season of the year, my husband stood in the Senate and delivered what turned out to be the valedictory of Philippine democracy. He exposed the conspiracy to place the country under martial law, dissolve the Congress, and set the stage for the unremitting plunder of our patrimony and the degradation of our great name and honor.

The dictatorship's last mockery of democracy was committed in this hall, where the loser was proclaimed winner of the snap election. Today, I join you in rededicating this hall to true democracy. [*Applause*]

The route to these chambers was long and difficult, fraught with danger and paved with sacrifice. The electoral contest just completed has been exacting for all and bitter for some. But the nation has spoken. The complete leadership of this country has been chosen; the configuration of their powers and duties permanently set by the new Constitution.

An election is as much an expression as it is an exercise of the national will. We have been made instruments of this will. Our performance will bear witness to its wisdom.

It is my duty under the Constitution to apprise you now of the state of the nation—but henceforth its continuing progress shall be our common accountability.

THE ECONOMIC PROGRAM

When I took power in this country 17 months ago, I was immediately called upon to deal with the dangerous combination of a severely distressed economy and a growing insurgency; threats which fed on each other and on the hopelessness and confusion which prevailed. Production had contracted by 11% for two consecutive years, bringing unemployment rates to double-digit levels. Twelve percent of the labor force, nearly 2.6 million workers, were unemployed. (And up to now, 750,000 join the labor force every year.) Real per capita income had been set back 10 years. New investments had dried up and business confidence was at an all-time low. Interest payments on a \$26.3 billion external debt took almost half our export earnings. And as I must stress yet again, no part of this debt benefited, or perhaps was even seriously expected to benefit the Filipino people. Yet their posterity to the third generation and farther are expected to pay it.

Poverty blighted the land. Five million families (or 59% of the total) lived below the poverty line, as compared to 45% in 1971. Dictatorship had done nothing but make more of our people poorer.

It also made us sicker. The prevalence of malnutrition among our young and the incidence of birth fatalities had risen at alarming rates.

In short, I inherited an economy in shambles and a polity with no institutions save my presidency to serve as the cornerstone of the new democracy that we set out to build.

I had taken the oath to be president of a country that had lost everything, everything but honor. With that honor came a renewed faith in national leadership and in the ability of our race to change things for the better given the will and the courage to do it. *[Applause]*

I responded with an economic reform program aimed at recovery in the short, and sustainable growth in the long run. More concretely, it addressed itself to the basic problems of unemployment and underemployment, and the consequent mass poverty.

The program calls for comprehensive structural reforms of the internal economy, complemented by no less important external economic cooperation.

There are two basic features of this program:

The first is its comprehensiveness with respect to structural reforms. We have come to regard the scope of reform not as a problem, but as a challenge, as necessary as it is ambitious; and as realizable as the strength of our commitment allows.

The second basic feature is its reliance on the private sector to carry the main burden of growth. We have reaffirmed our faith in private initiative to propel and sustain our economy. Our premise is that, for as long as free market forces dictate the dynamics of the business environment, the private sector will respond aggressively. As a corollary, the program defines and limits government's participation in the economy.

INTERNAL STRUCTURAL REFORMS

The dictatorship gave special privileges to government corporations and select individuals. In their various forms, these enterprises had several things in common: They enriched the few at the cost of impoverishing the many. They distorted markets and factors of production. And they bore the aspect of legitimacy that made challenge and change impossible.

We abolished these monopolies and special privileges and the effect was felt almost immediately. Fertilizer prices dropped 33% and farmgate prices of copra nearly doubled in 1986. We trace in part the renewed vigor in agriculture and the general economy to these and similar measures.

We committed ourselves to a fair and transparent trade liberalization program that is consistent with our country's continuing weaknesses. Some 1,000 items were released, from a complex bureaucracy of licensing requirements, into a regime of rational tariff protection.

We removed price controls which had been an almost permanent fixture of the past regime. And yet inflation was less than 1% for the whole of 1986 and our estimates place it at an average of 1% for the first half of this year.

We instituted tax reforms to shelter the poor from onerous taxes and equitably redistribute the tax burden. We created an Asset Privatization Trust and a Committee on Privatization to start the divestiture of government control or participation in private business and, with the Sequestered Assets Disposition Authority, the SADA, to help fund the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program that I enacted last week.

EXTERNAL COOPERATION

Recession hit the international economy in the early eighties. Every economy suffered, but the heaviest toll was taken on the fragile economies of the developing nations. One of the worst hit was our own. The dictatorship had already borrowed heavily, exceeding the debt ceiling mandated by law, when interest rates shot up. Meanwhile, a

material portion of the debt had gone to projects that offered virtually no hope of payback. Conceived to either line pockets or inflate egos, these projects would never contribute to the repayment of the debt.

The domestic structural reform program we have initiated cannot be pursued in earnest unless the necessary financing is made available. Fresh funding is needed to effect adjustments in the industrial structure, to assist new ventures, and to support our social programs. This funding cannot come from the domestic economy. Low domestic incomes cannot generate the required savings. Meanwhile, debt service was taking half our export earnings. Rescue could only come from foreign sources, both official and private.

Our appeal for external economic cooperation was aimed at gaining increased flexibility in our domestic resource management. The program required a reduction in our debt burden and increased support from bilateral and multilateral institutions. Simply put, we needed to buy time for our structural reforms to start paying dividends. And time is money. While a fool and his money are easily parted, we have discovered that our foreign creditors are not such great fools as the past leadership of our country.

It is my sad duty to report to you that the results of the recently concluded debt renegotiations are far short of our expectations and, more importantly, of our urgent needs. Let me put it bluntly. Our extraordinary achievement in fulfilling the first requirement of renegotiation, the establishment of free and responsible government, gained us applause but no substantial accommodation from our foreign creditors. The saga of democracy had made great television, but no appreciable change on their business priorities. We were treated not much better than other debtors, even those who had rejected the austere discipline mandated by restructuring. A discipline we had readily accepted. Incredibly, despite the significant reduction in country risk effected by the democratic restoration, we were not accorded the terms given other countries, which got longer periods, better rates, and greater latitude for growth.

We cannot help but feel that our foreign creditors took undue and unfair advantage of the internal difficulties we have with factions intent on subverting this government and destroying our democracy. Under the continuing threat of a cutoff in trade credits, which would have given new vigor and a signal to seize the moment to the enemies of democracy, we had to relent and sign the accord.

Nothing is more revealing of the tenor of the negotiations than the insistence that our government assume the liability of planters products to a consortium of banks. Their private risk would have to become our public liability. Nonetheless, the demand stood and provided the none too subtle coercion—sign or face the prospect of a protracted delay in the finalization of the debt restructuring program agreed to in March 1987.

We do not bow our heads in shame, for the shame is not ours. Yet even as necessity has forced our hand to agreement, we vow never again to let the patrimony of this nation lie at the feet of these noble houses that have finally shown the true face of foreign finance. [*Applause*]

For the record, our foreign debt stands today in excess of \$28 billion. The increase from \$26.3 billion when we took power is largely accounted for by the weakening of the dollar against major currencies. In the next six years, we shall have to pay \$20.4 billion to our official and private creditors. Net payments could average 5% of our total output. Close to 40% of government expenditures and over 45% of our projected merchandise export earnings, or 27% of all foreign earnings, will go towards servicing this debt. The bottomline, honorable members of Congress, is that we have been left little room for domestic error. It is for this reason that I have yielded more to prudence than desire in the reform measures I have enacted. I have aimed for modest successes to avoid a comprehensive failure.

Still, despite our disappointments in this sector, I am pleased to report certain healthy signs in the economy. Recession bottomed out in late 1986. GNP posted a modest growth at 1.5%; significant nonetheless because of the previous two years' negative performance. Exports posted a volume growth of 21.7% and provided the much needed boost. To be candid, as we must always be, fortuity can account for these improvements as much as the reform measures we had taken. For the low 0.7% inflation rate in 1986 was largely a reflection of the drop in oil prices and the prevailing weak demand and purchasing power.

Our reform measures, however, started to pay dividends in the first half of this year. Our estimate of first quarter GNP is 5.5%. Unemployment declined from 12% last year to 11.2%. The exchange rate remained relatively stable. And gross international reserves at the Central Bank stood at about \$2.4 billion as of the end of June 1987, or the equivalent of five months' merchandise imports.

What is important is that this time it is not the world market but a reinvigorated domestic economy that is paving the way to recovery. Investments reversed their contractionary trend of the past three years. The 23% growth rate in investments promise a respectable real GNP growth for the rest of the year.

The current budget has a definite bias for health care, education and social services expenditures. Some 6.9 million people received food assistance from the Food and Nutrition Program in 1986. We began to expand the coverage of Medicare. Teachers' salaries were increased, and a leaner and more relevant curriculum was adopted. Some 5.2 million poor availed of vital services such as self-employment assistance, job placement, and family planning. For 1987, we have made P4.2 billion available for long-term mortgages in support of the national shelter program.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY

The price of security and national honor, no less than liberty, is eternal vigilance. And that too has a price. Our country is threatened by totalitarian slavery on the Left and reversion to fascist terror and corruption on the Right. Meanwhile, the bottom is threatened by secession. On the bomb-shattered reviewing stand of our military academy, I vowed to end all threats to our democracy by the end of my term. We shall make good on that pledge. Meanwhile, it should be clear by now that no one in these struggles has had a monopoly of anguish and no one in these debates has had a monopoly of moral insight. It is in that light that we ventured to settle these issues outside the battlefield. For, surely, in the words of an architect of conflict and peace, "a society becomes great not by the victories of its factions over each other but by its reconciliations." To this end, we shall continue to exhaust measures and avenues that will involve all our people in the task of moral and material reconstruction and national unity.

Still our march towards nationhood must be undeterred and any threat to its progress will be countered with all the resources available to us, wielded with as much passion as self-preservation can muster.

The application of force will be as effective as it is judicious. The operational thrust of our Armed Forces is predicated on deterrence, preemption, and destruction. But the question is: Can we execute? If we have come to ask our soldiers to do battle to secure our way of life, then we have an obligation to equip them sufficiently for the fight.

Having exhausted the avenues of negotiation, we have armed them with the right. Now we must complete the complement with the material, organizational, and physical wherewithal to accomplish the task.

We have directed our immediate attention towards strengthening the chain of command, reinstalling discipline within the rank and file, and upgrading morale in the Armed Forces. We have placed renewed emphasis on training—on the physical and mental readiness of the troops. Area Unified Commands have been established to facilitate force augmentation and complementation within and across the major services, particularly in areas where military operations are either imminent or ongoing.

We do, however, have a dire need to improve our intelligence, logistics, and communication services. Given our limited resources, we must improve our ratio of patrols to contacts, and our capability to maximize such combat opportunities as present themselves. We therefore need ordnance platforms and air transports for ground support, troop mobility, and medevac. We need a truly effective navy to secure our coastlines against fresh infusions of arms to rebel or fascist forces, and to punish any further attacks on our territorial honor and integrity, especially in the south.

Our Armed Forces are asked to do more for less. Defense appropriations are down 1-and-1/4% of GNP from an average of 2% prior to 1986. We have been able to afford this reduction because of the moral victory we gained in the February revolution. Still, our defense expenditures are the lowest in ASEAN, and yet no country's security is so seriously threatened as ours.

Given the realities of our finances and our priorities, we will continue to press for efficiency in the Armed Forces. But we will need a sober assessment of adequacy.

Some will say that force does not address the roots of insurgency. I will answer: Indeed, for such roots are addressed by measures of economic improvement and equitable distribution. But such measures also need time to bear fruit; time that only feats of arms and negotiating from strength can buy us.

We have chosen to improve upon our capability to effectively manage force not so that we who desire peace could wage war, but rather so that those who would war upon us will realize, by the deadliness of our riposte, the virtues of peace.

Thus: “we shall bear arms when the intent of bearing them is just,” and, if necessary, we shall mourn our dead by celebrating the birth of generations whose legacy shall be one nation, free, upright, and prosperous. *[Applause]*

I have spoken of our problems and I have sketched our programs, some of which have already borne appreciable results. A more detailed report will be submitted to this Congress. Succeeding messages to Congress will convey the legislative agenda of my administration, particularly the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, whose Congressional complement is eagerly awaited. We have prepared the ground for Congressional action on autonomy in the Cordillera, and we are determined to achieve genuine autonomy, and thus eliminate completely the issues that divide us from our Muslim brothers in a manner consistent with the honor and integrity of the Republic. *[Applause]*

In deference to the Congress, Executive Orders issued last week have 1-year, 90-day, and 60-day effectivity dates. While we believe these measures merit immediate implementation, Congress may want a second look.

I would also hope that our proposed revisions of the Tariff Code and the rationalization of the government corporate sector shall be among the Congress’ first concerns, these being two areas that I find require the common counsel of executive and legislature.

I have also spoken of our continuing vulnerabilities.

Now let me speak of our strength.

The source of the new vigor and energy in the land is the sense of pride and renewed self-confidence of our people; pride in their unmatched political achievements. And flowing from that pride, the renewed confidence that we can improve things given the will and the courage to do what is right.

That pride and that confidence rest, however, on their continuing faith in the one solid and undeniable achievement of the great moral exertion of our people: the establishment of a democratic government under an honest and dedicated leadership. In short, it rests on their continuing faith in a government that will lead them to permanent peace, freedom, and progress.

All the assaults on our government have fallen flat and harmless because the people believe in our government, in its honesty and sincere desire to work for the common good.

When this session opened, the great powers of the State that were united in my person divided, and a portion has flowed to you. I have felt no loss but rather a great sense of achievement. The great work we set out to do, for which the nation made me its single leader, is completed. We have this day opened the door of Asian democracy’s most famous home: the Congress of the Republic of the Philippines. *[Applause]*

With the portion of power that has gone to you goes the shared responsibility to maintain the people’s faith in government.

While I held total power in my hands, and even after I had scattered the enemies of democracy, I kept ever in mind that power and glory are fleeting. That, in times to come, in the words of Gandhi, “the people will not judge us by the creed we profess or the label we wear or the slogans we shout but by our work, industry, sacrifice, honesty and purity of character.” *[Applause]*

In the great debates that will ring in this chamber, remember also those words of Gandhi: “Insist upon truth by loving argument, by the testimony of your own life. Once you are assured of the truth, refuse to recant even to death. “

You are blessed beyond all Congresses of the past or of any other nation. For here, ever to guide you, are the somber shades of the eternal Senators of our Republic: Jose W. Diokno and Benigno Aquino Jr. *[Applause]* Even as their memory continues to freshen our sorrow, may their sacrifices ever nourish our idealism and commitment to our people, and remind us of the painful lesson that “a government that is evil has no room for good men and women except in its prisons.”

This day completes the circle of our democratic achievements. Now Philippine democracy rests solidly upon the three pillars of freedom: the President, the Supreme Court, and Congress. Mr. Senate President, Mr. Speaker, members of the Congress, join me now in expressing our congratulations and deepest gratitude to those who have this day by God’s grace given to the nation the fully ripened fruit of freedom: ang ating mga kababayan, ang mamamayang Pilipino.

Corazon C. Aquino, Second State of the Nation Address, July 25, 1988

**State of the Nation
Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Congress**

[Delivered at the Batasang Pambansa, Quezon City, on July 25, 1988]

Mr. President of the Senate; Mr. Speaker of the House of Representatives; members of both Houses of Congress; the Vice President and members of the Cabinet; the Chief Justice and the associate justices of the Supreme Court; Your Excellencies of the Diplomatic Corps; distinguished guests; minamahal kong mga kababayan:

In fulfillment of my pledge to uphold and defend the Constitution, I stood here last year and divested myself of the power and authority to govern this nation single-handedly. The act seemed premature to many. We had only finished laying the groundwork for recovery. The objectives of our policies had yet to be achieved; their real consequences could not be known. We had done more clearing of the rubble than building on the ruins.

We had freed the spirit of enterprise which has accounted, far more than the direction of government, for the progress of our neighbors.

We had laid with speed and care, the foundations for a stronger and broader-based democracy. We had applied the first measures for the resurrection of a virtually dead economy.

Memory will bring more vividly to mind than a recitation of statistics the devastation of our country then, the deep and sweeping poverty of the great mass of the people, the trauma of a wounded nation.

Many said it was not the time for divided counsel and shared government. It was too soon to venture into the world without the protection of the extraordinary powers I had inherited, and which I had sparingly used to steer the nation to that first day of full democracy: the inauguration of the Congress of the Philippines.

I ignored these counsels of fear.

It could never be too soon for democracy. I was almost proved wrong.

One month after I stood here and sounded a call for unity, the Right made its boldest and bloodiest move against the new democracy. With characteristic treachery, it lunged in the middle of the night at the heart of the Republic. While the attack was repulsed, the August 28 coup attempt almost wiped out the hard-won gains of a whole year and revived the nagging doubt that this country could have any future other than turmoil.

I called on the people to gather the scattered stones of the edifice and build anew.

Despite the great losses sustained, I felt no regret that we had completely restored democracy. For I had not been called to power to achieve economic progress at the cost of the ideals of the revolution that swept me into office.

TO MAKE DEMOCRACY WORK

My mandate was not just to make a country rich, but to make democracy work: to make it work as a system of genuine popular participation; to make it meaningful to the lives of the common people by giving them jobs and justice, work with dignity, health, and education, and reason to hope that the future will be better for themselves and their children.

I believed that nowhere could you find more effective cures for the ills of our country—such as the habit of oppression, the inclination to corruption, betrayal of the public interest—than in the blessings of democracy: freedom; rights; transparent dealings; and a government of the people by the people themselves.

Despite the difficulties of democracy, we would bring to the prosperous state we sought, the freedom and dignity with which we had started on February 25, 1986.

How well we have succeeded, it is my distinct pleasure and pride to report. How far we have fallen short of our needs, it is our unavoidable duty to acknowledge and rectify.

No one can deny the obvious: The economy has taken off.

The economic indicators show it; the general feeling confirms it. The economy is on the move—not fitfully anymore but in firm strides on the path of sustainable growth.

GNP grew by 5.7% in 1987; by 7.6% in the first quarter of 1988. The source of this growth, on the supply side, was increased industrial activity; on the demand side, by vastly increased consumer spending. The industrial sector grew by 8% in 1987; by another 9.7% in the first quarter of 1988. Manufacturing posted the highest growth since 1981, mainly in electronics and garments. The steep rise in primary energy consumption confirms the dramatic increase in economic activities. Oil consumption grew by 15.8%, and by an additional 9.2% this year. Our energy capabilities have begun to feel the strain—a sure sign of increased economic energy.

Unemployment dropped from 11.1% in the fourth quarter of 1986 to 9.5% in one year. One million six hundred thousand jobs had been created in 1987; well over a million of them generated by the private economy.

We have tracked this growth and found it accounted for mainly by small and medium businesses and by Filipino--Chinese entrepreneurs, sectors that made few demands on the public sector, other than to be left alone to work in the democratic economic space we have created. We are seeing people-powered capitalism in action.

PEOPLE-POWERED CAPITALISM

Unavoidably, growth exacted the price of inflation, which grew from 6.9% in 1986 to 7.4% at the end, of 1987. But even these figures compare quite favorably with a peak of 64% inflation in the last years of the dictatorship, when workers' real wages plunged. In sharp contrast, improvements in real wages in the past two years have enabled the working classes to cope with it. In manufacturing, workers' compensation increased by 21%; minimum wages of nonplantation workers—the poorest—by 23.2%. Real wages of government employees increased by 11.2%.

We do not gloss over the fact that the number of unemployed who do not partake of these gains remains significant. Still, the improvement has been marked enough to explain the drop in the number of strikes since October last year. This confirms our belief that only economic progress can produce enduring harmony in the workplace. The relative self-restraint exercised by the labor sector in allowing the economic recovery to proceed with a minimum of disruption underscores the maturity, wisdom, and patriotism of the working classes and their leaders.

We lowered the duty on crude, and revised taxes on petroleum products. We rolled back prices four times. And there are at present ongoing studies which we hope will result in a future reduction of the prices of petroleum products, particularly of kerosene, diesel, and LPG, on which the greater mass of our people depend.

To keep energy supply in step with the demands of economic growth, we have put energy development among our highest priorities. I shall set up an energy coordinating council, composed of the Executive Secretary and the heads of the National Power Corporation, the Office of Energy Affairs, the National Electrification Administration, and the Philippine National Oil Company, to keep track of developments in this area. This should allay fears that we may outgrow our energy capabilities and choke the economic takeoff.

The 1986 Tax Reform Program has apparently worked.

The increase of revenues from 10.6% to 12.2% of GNP reflects this.

To cut overhead and inject energy into the bureaucracy, I have directed Budget and Management to trim excess personnel from the head offices of the departments; at the very least to put a lid on new hires of overhead items.

The Privatization Program has generated P11.2 billion in gross revenues. The Program has proceeded less swiftly than interested parties may desire, but due care must be exercised in the disposition of assets that belong to the people. We must get the most we can for the people, in as fair and transparent a manner as possible, leaving no room for the smallest doubt about the integrity of the procedure and the people involved.

In spite of the clear guidelines I have set of transparency and open bidding, and against the urgent deadline for the privatization of certain major assets, some people still try to gain undue advantages. Let no one delude himself on that score. Those who fought with us in the campaign and revolution must remember that we fought to stop corruption of public officials and privileges to special friends. Let us not cash in on our patriotism in 1986. Let us rather be grateful to the nation and to the historical moment for the privilege we had of being heroes.

Let me return to the measures taken to spur the growth of the economy.

DECENTRALIZATION

The dramatic improvement in rural purchasing power was accounted for by the Community Employment and Development Program or the CEDP and, of course, by the unexpected improvement in copra prices. The regions are forging ahead. Three of them—Region IV or Southern Tagalog, Region VII, the Central Visayas, and Region XI, Southern Mindanao—grew faster than Metro Manila. Their great potential is only waiting to be tapped by capital investments, such as roads and communications, and by the devolution of decision making to the local level.

Thus, we have decentralized the operations of the 16 major government departments, and increased private sector representation in regional and local development councils to one-fourth. Budgets are now released directly to local governments and budget priorities are now determined in the first instance on the provincial level. An increase of revenue allotments and repeal of mandatory contributions by local units to the national government will place more resources at the disposal of the local governments.

We have given them, for the first time in history, the principal initiative in the development of their communities.

We have marked out certain pilot provinces—at present, Davao del Norte, Laguna, Negros Occidental, and Tarlac—to which greater development efforts will be directed. The idea is to see what can be accomplished by an integrated and intensive approach in a specified area, and apply the lessons learned to other provinces.

DEBT BURDEN

Great as our gains have been, we could have gone twice as fast and twice as far if we did not have one foot manacled to the debt.

Our external debt burden must be dramatically reduced. On this I believe all Filipinos are united. It should be understood that we cannot indefinitely give more than 40% of the budget for total debt service. We estimate a net payment to creditors of around \$12 billion over the next five years. This is intolerable for a country whose basic needs are as acute as ours. I hope that message is clearly heard.

Yet we understand the realities of power, the vulnerabilities of the underdeveloped, and the ways of international finance. Debtors with shorter tempers who had stormed out of negotiations have been forced to return to the table, their economies having cracked under the pressure of isolation from the international system.

We must grow, yet maintain access to the international financial system. We must find ways of funding our growth without being held hostage to our debt. If we are to meet our commitments to our creditors, the bankers must first meet our financing needs.

Our debt strategy will be rooted in the recent recognition of industrial democracies that the management of the debt crisis is too important to be left to bankers. At the Toronto Summit, they singled out the Philippines as a country which needed support in its debt reduction efforts. Japanese Prime Minister Takeshita and U.S. President Reagan argued strongly for the extension of such support.

The world economy is held back by the debt that countries such as ours carry. In 1987 there was a negative outflow of \$2.2 billion to our foreign creditors. It was blood from the veins of our economy, and took a heavy toll in missed output and lost employment. We need a transfusion to maintain our growth.

The international initiative for a consortium of donor countries to support Philippine development plans could give us that transfusion. I welcome the support of world leaders for the economic development assistance program for the Philippines. We see innovative and far-reaching debt reduction as a vital component of this international initiative.

Few countries, if any, have hewed as faithfully to the conditionalities of debt restructuring as the Philippines has. Our people have endured the most rigorous austerities, yet received no better treatment than those of countries that resisted. Yet, even as the realities of power force us to seek a just solution to the debt problem within the international financial system, those same realities may urge us someday to find that solution anywhere we can.

FOREIGN POLICY REVIEW

This has been a year of action on the foreign policy. In addition to hosting both the ASEAN Summit and the Newly Restored Democracies Conference, we have made state visits to China, Switzerland, Italy, and the Vatican. These trips have been part of an active process of strengthening and extending our international friendships. Our foreign policy should promote our assets in a way that strengthens us politically, economically, and in terms of our security. Through the two conferences held here, we furthered our goal of broadening our friendships and making common cause with those who share similar circumstances to ourselves. We are even now engaged in the periodic review of one of our oldest foreign policy commitments, our hosting of the U.S. military facilities on Philippine soil.

NEW ARMY FOR DEMOCRACY

This may be remembered as the year the insurgency was broken. For the armed Left, it has been a year of defeats and retreats; a year of propaganda by terror rather than the strategic initiative of which it had boasted. The rejection of our peace efforts restored to government the moral basis for war.

I wish we could still pursue the path of peace. Yet until the NPA and their friends come to trust their doctrines to the ballot box rather than the armalite, government has no choice except to defend our people with the gun.

Five members of the CPP central committee have been captured, eight regional leaders, 19 staff officers and 397 NPA regulars. More than 7,000 regulars and tens of thousands of mass activists and supporters surrendered earlier to the National Reconciliation and Development Program and AFP special operations teams. About 2,000 of the CPP-NPA were killed in action over the last year.

To all of you in this chamber today who are here because you won at the ballot box, democracy is beating back the challenge of the totalitarian Left. We are winning because we have given back to the people control of their lives and faith in the future. To that renewed hope we add the fresh vigor of a new army for democracy. Above all, we now have a future.

With the victories come responsibilities. The first is to keep open the door of reconciliation. These are our brothers and sisters but for as long as fratricide must be a national policy, this nation cannot be whole.

The second responsibility is to ensure an adequate level of security to our people. This means our Armed Forces must be supplemented by unarmed Civilian Volunteer Organizations or Bantay Bayan, and Citizen Armed Force Geographical Units. Our armies cannot be everywhere and be expected to achieve decisive victories. We need civilians to assist in defending their communities.

Yet they must do this with the same respect for human lives and disciplined restraint we expect of our soldiers in dealing with noncombatants. Let us not lose the moral edge in this conflict.

This morning I instructed the Chief of Staff to begin the process of disbanding all so-called vigilante groups in line with the Constitutional injunction against paramilitary groups. Every measure must be taken to protect the people's security against communist terrorism while the CVO or Bantay Bayan and CAFGU systems are put in place.

Of equal importance as security against insurgent violence is protection against common criminality. From armed robbery to carnapping, our citizens live in intolerable uncertainty about the safety of their families and their properties. I expect the military and police to arrest, not abet, this slide into criminal anarchy taking place right under our noses. Targets will be set and I shall relieve those who fail to meet our people's expectations of peace and order.

I am conscious that history will judge the achievements of this government and the usefulness of democracy not through the narrow perspective of the business centers in Manila, but by our success in making a better future for all Filipinos. It is in the fields and barrios, in the slums of our cities, that we will ultimately be judged. It is our duty as elected leaders of this nation to describe a vision of the future that lifts up the lives of this, the great mass of Filipinos: those whose voices are not raised in business councils, social happenings, and in the opinion pages of the newspapers.

For them we must build a future that is based not solely on issues of foreign affairs or the volatility of business confidence, however important. What is the good of international harmony if it does not put food in the mouths of hungry children? Of what value is a business confidence that is built on the suppression of the legitimate aspirations of the poor? Rather, we must have an action agenda that meets their urgent needs in a simple and direct way.

Action Agenda

That agenda is straightforward:

- Education;
- Jobs;
- Alleviation of poverty; and
- An economy that can sustain these goals.

Ours is renowned as the people-powered democracy. As we must live by the decisions of the people, we must ensure the quality of those decisions. Provision for education in the 1989 budget is increased by more than a third—an essential investment in the future. Free high school education led to a record enrollment of 2.3 million students. Yet, we have far from achieved a universal education. Only 70% of our children attend elementary school; of these, only 60% complete it. Unless we act decisively now, we face a future of rampant functional illiteracy. Then we shall have people without power.

This is the real national emergency, for what is involved here is not underutilized manufacturing capacity or insufficient incentives for the rich, but the very quality of the Filipino who symbolizes the great Asian miracle: a revolution without blood; democratic restoration without tears.

The second priority is jobs. For this we must accelerate economic growth. We expect GNP to grow by 6.4%, and investments to pick up at a strong rate. The industrial sector is likely to grow 9% this year.

Central to our strategy for improving rural incomes is the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program whose highest aim, I must stress again, is not mere land redistribution, but higher productivity from the land and a higher standard of living for the farming communities that are the backbone of our nation.

I signed into law the fruit of your long efforts, the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Bill, reflecting your wide knowledge and experience of conditions in the countryside.

We are increasing the expenditure for infrastructure by 50% percent, most of it to be poured into the countryside. We expect to double our spending on water supply. P1.3 billion has been budgeted for school houses.

By 1992 we intend that

- three-fourths of the entire road network will be all-weather compared to less than 50% at the beginning of this year;
- 92% of the rural population will have clean water compared to 62% this year
- there will be enough classrooms for all children of school age;
- a multipurpose concrete road in each of the 46,000 barangays in the country, serving not only as a road but as a grain drying surface; a recreation area; as the first solid evidence in these difficult to reach places that here finally is a government truly their own.

Our fight against poverty includes meeting basic needs like health care. We will intensify public health programs and pursue the various drug policies that will make essential drugs more accessible and affordable.

We must achieve a viable consensus on an authentic family welfare program that is responsive both to the Constitutional mandate and the challenge of a growing population.

The provision of basic services also includes making telephones available to all communities. For a country separated by geography but driven by market forces, the social and economic cost of poor communications is too high.

With your congressional leadership I have agreed on certain legislative priorities that reflect the national agenda I outlined today.

On the economic front, we must provide long delayed incentives to the sectors that have powered our recovery, particularly the small and medium enterprises.

On the peace and order front, the urgency of a national civilian police force is obvious, and is high on your agenda as well, along with measures enhancing protection of human rights. Our other priorities are improved civil service effectiveness, education, population, social justice, the environment, the establishment of an independent central monetary authority, and the issue of a metropolitan commission to assure basic services in the hub of economic activity in our country: Metro Manila.

TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW

A more detailed list will be submitted. A common agenda should be easy to arrive at. What is more important is implementation of policy. The time for planning is over; the time for action is now. A lot has been done, but it has barely scratched the surface of the problems.

At the end of the year in which the middle class has become better off, I now say this to my department heads: Bring more of the new prosperity to the common people, produce concrete results on your department programs—or you are out. *[Applause]* Ours was a revolution for all Filipinos. Our poor have waited long enough. No sluggard will be allowed to stall the economic takeoff.

REDISCOVERING NATIONAL PURPOSE

Let me sum up:

It is liberty that has brought us progress; freedom that has generated growth. It is democratic space that has brought the insurgents down. But there is another side to freedom, where abuse displaces responsibility.

We have too often descended to mutual abuse, suspicion, and recrimination in our political life. Far from respecting each other's positions, we have been quick to question each other's motives, We are losing the trust that held us together and gave us the strength to prevail. We are forgetting that we stood together to win this freedom that is now too often demeaned. We must find again that trust and that strength, for the task is far from complete.

That trust comes from expecting the best of each other, and equally from giving our best. [*Applause*] Across our country, millions of Filipinos are doing that everyday: giving the sweat of their brows and the strength of their arm, above all their ingenuity and energy, to make a better future for us all. Those who stand on the pinnacles of power should be shamed by the more earnest commitments of those who labor anonymously below.

We complain of a lack of national purpose, but if we are big enough in ourselves and in our dealings with each other, we will rediscover it in ourselves and our countrymen.

It was a year when we faltered in this search; when losing faith in ourselves we listened to others, whether to those who say our nationalism is flawed or those who take it upon themselves to instruct us that our future confidence as a nation rests entirely on whether we do, or do not, keep the American facilities after 1991.

Our nationalism should stand upon a larger ground than the hectareage of the bases; it should turn on something higher than the insults of short-time journalists.

Do not let anyone dictate to us where our national pride should be. We know where it lies: in a sense of our past and a sense of our destiny; in the confidence of what we can make of this nation when we are united again by trust.

We saw what can be. A vision was born in EDSA. A vision of the future, of a people standing together, not just for four days on a highway, but on and on as a nation.

Nakita natin kung ano ang maaaring maganap. Isang larawang diwa ang isinilang sa EDSA. Isang larawang diwa ng sambayanang nagkabuklod-buklod na nanindigan, hindi lamang sa loob ng apat na araw sa isang karaniwang lansangan ... kundi isang bansa ... magpakailanman.

Maraming salamat po.

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Corazon C. Aquino, Third State of the Nation Address, July 24, 1989

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Congress**

[Delivered at the Batasang Pambansa, Quezon City, on July 24, 1989]

Mr. Senate President; Mr. Speaker; members of both Houses of Congress; Mr. Vice President and the members of the Cabinet; the Chief Justice and the associate justices of the Supreme Court; Your Excellencies of the Diplomatic Corps; distinguished guests; minamahal kong mga kababayan:

Pursuant to the Constitution, I have come to report on the state of the nation. This recurring event, however, has another significance today. For it comes midway in my term of office. It is time to review what has gone before, how things stand today, and what must be done tomorrow.

Three and a half years have passed since the revolution. Recalling the perils we passed, and the ground we have covered, I marvel at the kindness of God and the strength of our people—at the fortitude and ingenuity of a race that did so much with so little, and in so short a time.

We revived a dead economy and in three years had it well on the road to recovery. The figures are well-known and unimpeachable, yet some bear repeating.

Industrial capacity, idle for lack of capital, markets, and confidence under the dictatorship, has been fully utilized. In the past two years, investments have increased 25% annually. P30.97 billion was invested in 1988. Industry grew by 8.6% in gross value added last year, improving yet further on the already impressive growth of 7.7% in 1987.

The number of business enterprises increased by 38%, most of them small- and medium-scale and located outside Metro Manila.

More than 2.3 million new jobs have been created. Unemployment declined from 12.5% in 1985 to 9.6% in 1988.

Last year, we posted a 6.7% growth. This year, we anticipate less because of a slight contraction of the world economy and the shift from consumer-led to the more substantive but slower investment-led growth that we see as the safer course to take.

The economic upturn is reflected in the reduction of industrial actions. The exuberance of a suddenly liberated labor sector has made room for a deeper appreciation of the need for all sectors to work together—rather than against each other—for the general improvement. Let us not, however, use the reduction in strikes by itself as an invitation to more investments, but rather as a barometer of the more equitable distribution of the progress we are making. We are instructed by this welcome development to work towards even greater equity in the distribution of wealth as the surest means to social order and peace.

Our greatest investment in enhancing national productive capacity is in education—in developing the intelligence and the sinews of our people, as it were.

Thus, we have put 98% of school-age children in school; we are close to universal elementary education. The universal free high school program is also well under way. Quantitatively, we are close to our targets; qualitatively we are far. A rigorous and high quality secondary education, the Japanese and German experiences teach, is the foundation of a modern economy.

Last year, 70.9% of all infants one year old or younger were immunized, representing 1,318,000 babies—a dramatic improvement over 30% in 1985; 7.7 million children were treated for various illnesses. Our aim, as we said, is sharper minds and sounder bodies for the next generation of Filipinos.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND POVERTY

Yet poverty remains prevalent. The lowest 30% of our population remains mired in unchanging misery. They think nothing has changed and I don't blame them. Liberty is a poor substitute for food. The economic improvement we have experienced has had some impact on the incidence of poverty, which declined from 59% in 1985 to 49% in 1988. But the 500,000 families who crossed the official poverty threshold may not even be aware of it.

The economic recovery has restored old fortunes far more significantly than it has touched the lives of the vast majority of our people. For all that, we cannot downplay our economic progress. For it has spoken more eloquently to the world than words ever could. It has earned us tremendous respect throughout the world. This was shown in the Tokyo Consultative Group meeting which paid tribute to the country's growth with low inflation, despite the debt. A similar respect was evident throughout my European visit. My hosts were clearly encouraged to support what they saw as a record of success against great odds. We have been working to translate this respect into concrete support to reduce those odds.

Yet nothing generated greater admiration than our political achievements.

In little over a year, we uprooted a dictatorship and planted the freest democracy in the world—with all its good and bad features. We held elections that were the freest and most participative in the history of this—perhaps of any—republic in the world.

Our swift democratization was done against the advice that I reserve emergency powers in the face of rising military adventurism and communist terrorism. But I believed then—and time has proved me right—that this nation shall find no greater source of strength to defend democracy than in the enjoyment of all its rights and liberties. Democracy is our faith and the root of our strength to defend it.

Added to that faith was the will to stand for no more nonsense from military adventurers who thought that failure to shave qualified them for national leadership. Some people don't like the way I dress. Well I didn't like the way they looked. I am in power and they are out. *[Applause]* Surely there is a lesson here to be learned about delusions of self-importance and the realities of power.

PEACE AND ORDER

My assessment of the peace and order situation is mixed. With regard to the insurgency, the tide has turned—I believe—permanently. The main weapons were democracy, a greater concern by government for rural needs, the economic recovery, a heightened respect for political and human rights, and a deeper commitment to their proper mission on the part of the Armed Forces. The AFP reports an 8% reduction in NPA troop strength. A better indicator is the brutality with which the Communist leadership has treated the common people and even their own ranks. This self-destructive course reveals a movement whose organizational and moral center has ceased to hold. This picture of disarray is both good news and bad. For we must brace ourselves for greater cruelties from a cause that is now indistinguishable from a common crime. In summary, we have beaten the insurgents less by fighting than by the example of our humanity, our concern, and the impact of our economic progress.

On the subject of common crimes, the situation is nothing less than terrible. What compounds it is the general distress occasioned by the prominence of military and police elements in the worst criminal activities. The first duty of the State is the enforcement of order. Until we—the executive, the Congress, and the judiciary—bring the situation totally under control, none of our accomplishments elsewhere will have a lasting impact on the opinion of the public. For criminality threatens the most basic rights of man—the right to live, to raise a family, and enjoy and bequeath the prosperity he has worked for.

THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

I recall our achievements not to make the past compensate for the present nor to excuse inaction in the future, but so we do not lose faith in the essential strength of our race to rebuild, to recuperate, to grow, and to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

There is the challenge of rising world oil prices that threatens to undercut our continued growth.

There is the challenge of continuing debt service that eats 40% of the national budget, or 7.7% of GNP. We are expected, in the next five years, to make a net payment to our creditors of \$12 billion or approximately P260 billion at the current exchange rate.

There is the challenge of sustaining growth and meeting our medium-term targets.

And there is the age-old challenge and threat that poverty and underdevelopment pose to the viability of democracies in the Third World. How long can we stay poor and still be free?

Poverty has lessened but 5.3 million households or 29 million people remain poor. Unemployment has been reduced but try telling that to the 2.9 million still jobless and the 7.2 million underemployed.

WHAT MUST BE DONE

For these reasons, we critically need to sustain economic growth.

First, we have to strengthen the foundations of a vigorous market-oriented economy. This would involve continued adherence to prudent fiscal and monetary policies and reliance on market forces in the functioning of the economy. These policies have engendered robust growth of private investment, output, employment, and consumption. These have also kept inflation at acceptable levels and helped protect the real incomes of wage earners. Our record of high growth with low inflation is a singular achievement among heavily indebted countries.

We must steer away from the siren songs of quick fixes, easy spending, unwarranted subsidies, and irrational price controls, which elsewhere have contributed to bloated deficits, tailspin hyperinflation, and social instability.

Second, we must go on building structures essential to the efficiency and productivity of the economy. Government has improved or constructed 1,124 kilometers of major roads and 7,821 kilometers of secondary and feeder roads to bring markets and producers closer to each other. Yet this is a small part of the projects in the pipeline—numerous ports, power generation plants, and modern telecommunications.

Third, no less important than physical infrastructure, we must continue to strengthen our public institutions and find ways to do things better, faster, and with the greater appearance and substance of integrity. I have a few words to say on the subject of corruption. Yesterday, a pastoral letter was read in all the churches deploring the resurgence of official corruption. How can the Cabinet, the Congress, and the Supreme Court deny what is plain for all to see: that corruption is again a way of public life?

I will not preempt a Congress that feels its time is better spent in investigations of anything, nor a Supreme Court that has a longer backlog of unresolved cases than there are decisions in the casebooks from the turn of the century. I have my own responsibilities to face, and my own people to hold to account. *[Applause]*

The magnitude of unresolved disputes has frozen innumerable billions of pesos worth of assets in litigation. The staggering number of unsolved crimes has eroded the credibility of the state to be respected as such.

The problem is massive for having been left unattended by the branch of government, and the departments and agencies specifically charged with the dispensation of justice and the punishment of crimes. But a start must be made.

I have ordered a review of the structure and performance of the National Bureau of Investigation with a view to making it the lead arm in criminal investigation. I have ordered a review of the prosecution service, and call upon the Supreme Court to do the same to the judiciary, with a view to relieving the incompetent and the passive who have allowed so many cases to languish unresolved.

A CLEAN AND HONEST GOVERNMENT

I am tired of being taken to task for the thing above all others that I wanted to leave as a legacy: the example of a clean and honest government. To my fellow workers in government specifically involved in this area—and in all other areas as well—let me say that unless the public sees results soon, it will be goodbye for you. *[Applause]*

The compassion that marked my administration in the past may generate doubts about my resolve in this matter, but the actions that will be taken by me in the next weeks and months will dispel them all. *[Applause]*

Fourth, as the lynchpin of our efforts to lift the mass of our people from poverty, we must implement agrarian reform with greater vigor, doing our best to combine speed with the necessary caution. I would like to stress again the aim of agrarian reform. Our objective is not merely to subdivide the misery of the land, but to raise the living standards of our farmers to the level of their dignity as the backbone of our economy.

Fifth, for our development to be at all sustainable, we need to redress the years of degradation and neglect of our environment, and preserve what remains of our natural resources. We have embarked on projects to restore and conserve our marine and forest resources—among them the largest reforestation program in history, covering 100,000 hectares a year to the end of the century.

Sixth, we must mobilize the resources, both domestic and foreign, necessary to sustain public and private investment and provide basic social services. To generate domestic resources, vigorous tax collection efforts, banking reforms, and the development of capital markets are under way. Measures to enhance public confidence in the stock markets are needed and I look to the Congress to study and initiate them.

IMPROVING TAX COLLECTION

I cannot overemphasize the importance of improving our tax performance.

We have one of the lowest tax-to-GNP ratios of any country in the world. No longer can we tolerate tax evasion as a national pastime, especially of the rich, when indeed our economic future is at stake. The place for tax evaders is not high society but behind bars. *[Applause]*

As regards external financing resources, except for one component we have installed a financing structure which will support sustained growth.

We are currently engaged in negotiations with commercial creditors for a package that will support our external financing program. An important element of this package will include debt and debt service reduction schemes

inspired by new debt initiatives. By firm adherence to its strong record of economic adjustment and performance, the Philippines is particularly well placed to be favored by these initiatives.

With the endorsement of the multilateral institutions and foreign governments—and in the conviction that we have done our part in keeping our economic house in order—we shall negotiate forcefully to secure the cooperation of the commercial banks in the Philippine recovery. In the riot-torn streets of Caracas, in the teeming barrios of Mexico, in our own barangays—no less than in Washington, Tokyo, and Paris—there is growing recognition that something real must be done about the Third World debt.

Let us not forget that we have come from a 20-year struggle between our people and a dictator, and that we are here engaged in the reconstruction of an economy and a polity as though from the ruins of war. Except the destruction has been more sweeping. We did not emerge from the Second World War with losses anywhere near the \$28 billion being exacted by our creditors.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Our principal focus must be on rural development—the liberation of the economic, social, and political energies of the countryside. We need the physical infrastructure to link rural production and consumption with the national and international economies. We need to enhance education and health to make the best use of our best assets—our people. We need to decentralize political structures to widen the people's participation in national life.

A people-powered revolution must aim for a people-empowered democracy and economy. Rural development will best realize this aim. The alleviation of poverty will come with the upliftment of the rural poor.

Unless we draw our rural areas into the dynamics of the national economy, turning hinterlands of decay into frontiers of progress, our growth and equity goals will not be attained, neither in the short nor the long term.

LAW AND GOOD GOVERNMENT

The great task that we have set ourselves will require two great instruments of social transformation: a just but iron-fisted law and good government.

There will be no progress in our communities without order, without securing the lives and properties of our citizens against criminality and the insurgency.

I have already noted the progress that has been made against the insurgency. The increasing isolation of the rebels has allowed military operations to succeed as never before. But such operations must take greater care to avoid collateral damage to the civilian population. For our moral ascendancy has accounted for the greater part of our superiority in this conflict. The protection of human rights even under conditions of conflict must be a key consideration in military operations and missions.

Our other great task is to deliver good government. This, I believe, consists of maintaining closeness to the people, honesty and efficiency in their service, and making a difference for the better in their lives. Thus, I have brought an active presidency to bear on the many issues that shape our lives from police work to women's concerns, from improving customs collections to disaster relief operations. I have brought the physical presence of the presidency to 54 provinces, from Tawi-Tawi to Batanes.

DEDICATION AND DISCIPLINE

I shall emphasize even further the standard of my example by exacting the same dedication and discipline—from my Cabinet, the bureaucracy, and the local governments. A quarterly review of departmental performance shall become the forum for diagnosing the strengths and weaknesses of programs and performance, and the basis for the proper remedies.

I expect to see the departments pull together in more coherent and focused efforts to advance policies and programs across the board, and to translate this address into action. The process should involve the participation of mayors and governors, and consultation with members of Congress.

On local autonomy and decentralization, it was never my intention to substitute the abuses of overcentralization with widespread incompetence in local leadership. Our people will simply regard both as our failure. Thus, as we devolve greater authority and resources to local governments, we shall exact from them greater responsibility to their communities and more support of the national objectives.

I call also on the support of constitutional bodies, such as the Civil Service Commission, the Commission on Audit and the Ombudsman. Even as they perform their duties with the required independence and integrity, let them be reminded that good government can be achieved as well by cooperation as by adversarial relations. The purpose of checks in government is not to induce paralysis but to achieve balance and foster progress.

As we emerge from a singular preoccupation with economic recovery, we must remind ourselves of initiatives that will have a major impact now and profound implications tomorrow. Three particular priorities are: the protection of the environment, the promotion of family planning and responsible parenthood, and the development of science and technology.

While the lead in the environmental movement must be taken by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, responsibility must be assumed by all of us. While the Department of Health is the designated lead agency for family planning, we should all contribute towards building the family as a purposeful act of confidence in the future. The Department of Science and Technology needs to bring academe, government and business together in promoting science and technology.

AGENDA FOR THE FUTURE

Our gains in the past three years serve as the base for launching a comprehensive advance on all fronts. The scale of the effort and the importance of the outcome call for the wisdom of Congress to consider and affirm these intentions. I propose the following:

First, measures to alleviate poverty:

1. Tax and other incentives to small and medium countryside business enterprises;
2. Authorizing the bidding out to the private sector of BOT projects, or projects to build, operate, and transfer self-liquidating infrastructure projects; and
3. Promoting countryside investments.

Second, measures to improve peace and order:

1. Immediate creation of a civilian national police force;
2. Limiting discretion in the disposition of seized importations;
3. Penalizing the crime of plunder to deter the accumulation of ill-gotten wealth by public officials; and
4. Further protecting human rights.

Third, measures promoting honesty and efficiency in the government:

1. Devolution of more substantial powers to local governments;
2. Doubling the financial resources of local governments effective 1990 by increasing internal revenue allotments, granting incentives for improved real estate tax collections, and abolishing mandatory contributions to the PC-INP and hospitals;
3. Reorganizing and strengthening the Philippine foreign service.

Fourth, measures promoting social justice:

1. Defining ancestral domains;
2. Providing a more extensive program of urban housing development;
3. Setting ceilings and limiting deductions on travel, representation, and other expenses;
4. Encouraging cooperatives; and
5. Rationalizing small-scale mining.

Finally, measures for the protection of the environment:

1. Increasing forest charges;
2. Increasing penalties for pollution; and
3. Adopting a national land use plan.

Finally, I seek your support for the 1990 budget that I shall be submitting in the next few days. I ask you to consider our proposals in light of the priorities I have outlined, and the deep concerns that we all share for the upliftment of our people from poverty, and of our nation to progress. I ask you to regard with sympathy and understanding my deep desire and my unshakable resolve to give our people all that I have promised them. Let me make myself especially clear on this point: I shall complete the work that we have started, the work that God gave us to do—to make a new nation, strong, and free, and prosperous. I shall not rest from that labor until its fruits have been enjoyed by you, by me, and by all our people. Only success will stop my unceasing efforts, my undying commitment to the great task before us.

God bless us all. Mabuhay ang Pilipinas!

Corazon C. Aquino, Fourth State of the Nation Address, July 23, 1990

**Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Congress**

[Delivered at the Batasang Pambansa, Quezon City, on July 23, 1990]

Senate President Jovito Salonga; Speaker Ramon Mitra; distinguished members of the Senate and the House of Representatives; Chief Justice Marcelo Fernan and associate justices of the Supreme Court; members of the Cabinet; Your Excellencies of the Diplomatic Corps; distinguished guests; minamahal kong mga kababayan:

We gather today at a most crucial time in our history.

Seven days ago, a large portion of our country was rocked by one of the most serious natural calamities we have ever experienced: an earthquake which registered at magnitude 7.7 in the open-ended Richter scale, and intensity 8 in the Rossi-Forel scale near the epicenter. The tremor struck at 4:26 in the afternoon. After 45 seconds, 9 of our cities and 39 municipalities in 15 provinces lay damaged; some, almost totally devastated.

As of this morning, based on the NDCC reports, we have accounted for 899 fatalities, most of them from the cities of Baguio and Cabanatuan. We have counted 3,061 injured with Dagupan City suffering the worst—actual property damage recorded so far is P2.6 billion. But we estimate the total damage to properties to reach from 10 to 15 billion pesos.

I personally visited Cabanatuan, Baguio, and Dagupan, sites of the heaviest damage to lives and property. There I saw and experienced for myself the grief that death and loss summon from our hearts.

But it was not sorrow alone that was present in those disaster sites.

Amid the debris, I saw the strength and courage; I witnessed the selflessness and heroism of our people. In the midst of devastation, there is the will to survive; to help others; to rebuild; to start anew.

By the grace of God and the unshakeable faith of the Filipino people, I am confident we will pull through.

Yes, once again, we face a crisis.

But you and I and the rest of our people are not strangers to this. Since time immemorial, natural and man-made calamities have visited our land—bringing with them widespread death and destruction.

And always, our people would rise from the rubble. We would shake off the dust and wipe the tears. And while we mourn our losses, our hope for the coming of a new day never dies.

Earthquakes can destroy the strongest man-made structures; but they can never shatter the faith of the Filipino.

To this day, rescue and relief work goes on. But slowly and surely, our countrymen are gearing up for the next important task—that of rehabilitation.

Our people are determined to go back to their normal lives within the next few days. Our farmers want to return to their fields. Our labor force wants to return to their workplaces. Our businessmen want to resume the conduct of trade and commerce.

Today they are no longer asking us for gestures of pity. They are asking for assistance—to help them get back on their feet.

I therefore come before you today to ask you to work hand in hand with me in the effort to restore the normalcy of our people's lives.

There is, however, more that I would like to ask of you today. Let me ask you to look beyond rehabilitation and share with me instead the vision of the building of a much stronger nation.

For while this is a time for grieving, so is this a time to survey the opportunities arrayed before us—the opportunity to grow further in our maturity as a people; to leave the mistakes of the past and build on our strength; to abandon the hatred and the division and to start afresh as a people tested by suffering, faced with the options for a better tomorrow.

At this point, we must ask; where shall we draw the needed fortitude to maximize these opportunities?

From where I stand, I see four sources.

First, our gains over the past four years.

Second, the strength and courage that our people have demonstrated during this calamity.

Third, the avenues for partnership among people and government that we have established.

And fourth, our abiding faith in God who has always cared for us.

May I invite you to examine our gains.

Last year, our nation bustled with productive energy.

The 5.7 percent growth in our economy was well within target.

A total of 17 billion 480 million pesos in foreign investments poured into our country, 75 percent more than the previous year, evidence of the continuing confidence of the international community in our economic recovery.

We reduced our foreign debt by 4.3%—from \$27,800,000 in 1988, down to \$26,600,000 as of January of this year.

Our stock exchanges registered a business volume of more than P22 billion, unmatched in the history of our country's stock market.

1989 was definitely a banner year.

Some 703,000 Filipinos gained access to new jobs as the unemployment rate in our country went down to 9.2%, from the 9.6% registered in 1988.

The annual per capita income of our workers rose by 3.3% as we moved to ensure that no government worker would receive a salary lower than P2,000; and to increase the minimum wage in the private sector by P25 per day.

91,349 more Filipino families were able to build homes last year, the fruit of a vigorous housing program with an unprecedented record. Last year's mark brought the total number of our beneficiaries from 1986 to 1989 to 193,735 families. This shows our ability to provide new homes for an average of 64,578 families every year, surpassing the record of 1975 to 1985, where an average of only 28,543 families were given shelter annually.

Over 1 million schoolchildren, including those living in remote barangays, benefited from the 26,406 classrooms constructed last year.

2,503,794 high school students benefited last year from our free public secondary education program. In addition, 101,000 more young Filipinos were able to attend high school last year. These are the students who cannot be accommodated in our public high schools but whom we assisted through service contracts with private educational institutions.

In February 1986, the lowest paid teachers, or those in Teacher Level 1, were receiving only a measly basic salary of P1,096.00 plus allowances of P350.00.

In recognition of their crucial role in the upbringing of our youth, together we endeavored to raise this pay level. Today, our teachers in the lowest bracket are receiving a total of P3,102.00, plus additional compensation paid from the local funds of the local government units where they serve.

In February 1986, the highest paid teachers, or those in the secondary Principal 4 level, were receiving only a total package of P2,393.00. Today, that has been raised to P7,478.00.

Some 1,407 more kilometers of major roads and 4,890 kilometers of feeder roads were constructed last year. This brings the total number of major roads built from 1986 to 1989 to 3,365 kilometers; and feeder roads to 18,120 kilometers.

27,530 more hectares of farmlands were irrigated last year, benefiting 18,500 more farmers.

Nearly 7,000,000 more Filipinos gained access to safe drinking water with the implementation of 51,820 water supply projects.

From 2,042 barangays all over the country, among them the remotest, 2,700,000 more Filipinos now enjoy power supply. Last year, we added 349 barangays to this number.

In all of our efforts to sustain the forces in our economy, we have emphasized the use of science and technology. At present, we are transferring technology from those who generate them to the end-users, especially in our rural areas.

Thus, we are supporting the widespread use of organic fertilizers in rice culture. This would save us some P241,000,000 yearly if used to replace half of present fertilizer imports. This type of fertilizer will increase farm income by as much as P3,000 per hectare every crop season.

We are also studying the potentials of locally developed technology using agro wastes, such as coconut husks, corn cobs, and coffee hulls, for brickmaking, grain drying, and power generation. This is called the gasifier-combustor. If one-fifth of these agro wastes replace the 4 million barrels of bunker fuel we now use for power generation, we could save about \$70 million yearly.

Our advances in these areas received further boost from our accomplishments in the peace and order scene.

Last year, over 3,500 rebels, from both the communist and secessionist movements returned to the fold of the law. Another 2,500 surrendered during the first semester of this year.

Sixty-three ranking communist leaders were neutralized. Of this, 12 were top ranking national leaders of the CPP-NPA.

We have reduced the fighting strength of the CPP-NPA by 19% by the end of 1989. And we brought down the number of communist-affected barangays by nearly 2,000, or 25% of the total number in 1988.

We registered last year a combat fatality ratio of one to two-and-a-half in favor of the government, the highest such favorable ratio in six years.

In all parameters of our counterinsurgency effort, we are ahead. Also in the interest of peace and security, we continued to engage in diplomatic moves to formalize agreements and treaties protecting our interests. We undertook serious efforts to resolve territorial disputes. Our diplomatic missions have kept our lines open with the Organization of Islamic Conference countries. We have consistently used this access to apprise these countries of our accelerated implementation of autonomy for Muslim Mindanao.

And as the century of Pax Pacifica beckons, we continue to strengthen our foreign relations through our commitments to pluralist democracy, responsible market policies, and development diplomacy—all within the Constitutional provisions on national sovereignty, territorial integrity, national interest, the right to self-determination, and the commitment to international peace.

These gains would have been meaningless without advances in the area of justice. Here, we directed our efforts over the past 12 months at further improving the investigation and prosecution processes, and at providing our less privileged countrymen with much better access to our justice system.

We initiated the prosecution of civilians who took part in the failed December coup, which cases are now pending in our courts. We also prosecuted and secured the conviction of the accused in such celebrated cases as the murder of Secretary Jaime Ferrer; the murder of NAMFREL volunteers in Quirino; the murder of Fr. Carl Schmitz; and the attempted large-scale smuggling of firearms.

We adopted measures to expedite preliminary investigation of cases by shortening the period for appeal and strictly imposing the period within which cases must be resolved. We have also weeded out corrupt and inefficient prosecutors.

We relentlessly pursued drug syndicates and gambling lords and busted their operations.

We gave 184,208 indigents free legal aid.

And because of the need for suitable and dignified facilities for our judges and other officials in the justice system, we are constructing halls of justice in various parts of the country. Twenty-three of these will be ready for occupancy by the end of this month; 16 more will be completed by the end of the year.

We also advanced our quest for social justice as 340,000 more Filipino farmers were given ownership of the land they till, 85% more than the number in 1988.

In the process, we have distributed 13 times more land to former tenants under our Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program than was distributed from 1965 to 1985.

We also ensured that the lands they now own will become more productive through financial and technical support. Last year, we released P820,250,000 in production loans to farmer-beneficiaries.

This sum brings to P1,170,000 the total amount of production loans we have provided to 220,368 farmer-beneficiaries since I signed the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law passed by this Congress in 1988.

Our determination to implement our policy of decentralization found concrete expression when you and I began the process leading to the creation of two regional autonomous governments.

The first to undergo this process were provinces in southern Philippines where most of our Muslim brethren live. This vesting of political autonomy underscores your firm resolve and mine to continue enhancing the lives of Muslim Filipinos through their more meaningful participation in our nation's political life.

On November 19 last year, our countrymen from this region cast their ballots, making their voice heard in the proposal to include their respective provinces in the proposed autonomous region. Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Lanao del Sur, and Maguindanao chose autonomy.

In this autonomous region, on February 17, 1990, over 600,000 voters went to the polling places once more; this time, to select from 126 candidates the occupants of 23 elective positions in the regional assembly. By the first week of this month, all the winners have been proclaimed, thus completing this chapter in their bid for regional autonomy.

The second to undergo this process was the Cordillera region. On January 30, 1990, the proposed Organic Act for the Autonomous Region of the Cordilleras was presented to the voters there. The province of Ifugao accepted membership in the autonomous region.

Political and material progress are, however, not the sole measures of democracy's success. That is reckoned, as well, in the quality of a people's spirit—in their attitude to the present and hope for the future.

Over the past months, in my continuing visits to the countryside, including the remotest and poorest provinces, I listened to our people and examined their lives. Having watched them so closely, I am encouraged by their resiliency and determination. Spurred by the support given them by government, they have set out to fashion for themselves a new and bright future. They are relying on their resourcefulness and industry and on one another to improve their lives.

Last year, I felt this resurgent spirit enkindled in the people of Bataan and Bohol, Cavite and Laguna. I saw this again among our countrymen in Negros Oriental, Zamboanga City, as well as Cotabato City.

This year, I saw this among the garments and livelihood cooperatives of Bulacan; and among the farmers of the people's livelihood foundations of Pangasinan and Tarlac.

This is evident too among the people's organizations of Catanduanes, Pampanga, Romblon, Negros Occidental, North and South Cotabato, Rizal, Iloilo, and Camarines Sur.

In many parts of our country, I saw a new determination among our people to work hand in hand with us, to link arms with us, in our effort to translate our democracy into a better life for our people.

As we, however, were making real headway in our socioeconomic thrusts, the enemies of our democracy, who comprised some 2% of the military, struck on December 1, 1989, in a futile bid to blunt the impact of the gains of our democracy.

For a few days, these misguided elements waged war against our people, employing a terrifying fear strategy that unmasked all their pretensions to ideological inclinations. Before our people, they attempted to display brute force, hoping to create an aura of armed victory. By December 6, the show was over. True to form, the leaders of the failed coup deserted their men once more to face the consequences of their act.

Once more, our people, and the 98% of our armed forces who remained loyal to our Constitution, thwarted the evil design of this band of military adventurists and their civilian supporters.

Once more, we proved that we are a resolute people. While we have yet to fully recover from the consequences of the imprudence of these misguided elements, our resolve to move forward has not been diminished. This failed adventurism has underscored the fact that our restored democracy has gone past its fledgling stage. It has proceeded to mature and is now ready for a more profound expression in our life as a nation.

I am truly encouraged by what our people have proved themselves capable of. They have worked hard with us to give substance to the meaning of participatory democracy, not just in the political arena, but in the realm of our nation's social and economic life as well.

As President, I have deemed it fitting to enshrine in a people's movement the transformation of democracy from concept to reality by our countrymen.

Hindi ako binigo ng ating mga kababayan. Sa pagtawag ko sa sambayanan upang magkapit-bisig, tumugon ang mga kababayan nating tahimik na nagpapatulo ng pawis upang bumuti ang buhay ng kanilang pamilya, kapwa, at komunidad.

Ang mga Kabisig nating ito ang nagbigay-buhay sa diwa ng EDSA.

Sa lahat ng dako ng ating bansa ay taglay pa rin nila ang diwa ng rebolusyon ng 1986. Patuloy silang kumikilos laban sa kahirapan, kaguluhan, sakit, at kamangmangan.

Katulong natin sila sa pagpapabilis at pagpapalaganap ng ating mga programa: sa repormang pansakahan; sa kapayapaan at kaayusan; sa pangangalaga ng ating kalikasan at likas na yaman; sa pagpapatupad ng desentralisasyon; at sa paghango natin sa mga kapus-palad nating kababayan mula sa kahirapan. Kasama natin sila sa pagtulong sa mga biktima ng nagdaang lindol sa Cabanatuan, Dagupan, Baguio, at iba pang mga pook.

Binigyang buhay ng mga Kabisig nating ito ang diwa ng ating Saligang Batas; binigyang halimbawa nila ang tunay na kahulugan ng demokrasya.

The magnitude of our people's involvement in the business of our nation today is without precedent in our history.

All these find expression in a national movement—a movement that recognizes the silent, enduring crusade of our people; and, their call for participatory democracy.

We shall count on the strength of this partnership as we take the next steps in the building of a stronger nation.

Now, the Filipino people must continue to lead the way.

Many have benefited from the example of our previous struggles.

Many more stand to profit from what we shall make out of our democracy and freedom. We have proven many things during the past four years.

There is still much that has to be done. Despite the limited time left, we have our gains of four years to build on.

And from where I stand, I see that our nation is ready to take that giant step forward. Many of the needed reforms are in place. Our democracy is tried and tested. Our people are firm in their commitments.

We, in the elected leadership, must lead the way. We must demonstrate the willingness to pay the price, to accept the sacrifice that accompanies these decisions. Above all, we must show the supreme example of unity—unity born out of our shared aspirations for the common good.

May I now invite you to examine the challenges involved in this important step forward.

THE NATION'S AGENDA: GREATER PRODUCTIVITY

First, it is imperative that we take decisive steps to continue enhancing our nation's productive capabilities.

We recognize the reality that the sufficiency of food on our tables is an important benchmark of the success of our democracy.

We took a crucial step when we launched our national rice action program early this year. Through this program, we expect to achieve a sustained annual growth rate in our production of at least 3% to 3.5% in rice, and at least 5% in corn.

We expect, however, that despite the massive resources and support we are giving our rice farmers, we will still experience a heavy toll on our harvest due to the prolonged dry season that we just experienced. Fortunately, our earlier gains in the agricultural sector will cushion the effect of this drought.

The productivity of our industrial sector was increased because of the peace that now characterizes much of labor-management relationship. Our renascent democracy has helped our workers appreciate more deeply the value of the peaceful resolution of conflicts. The number of strikes and lockouts have significantly decreased. In the process, P1 billion in workers' salaries and benefits, and about P5.7 billion in production costs were saved.

We are supporting our drive for greater productivity with a streamlined but responsive infrastructure program that placed special emphasis on our countryside. Of the total 6,297 kilometers of roads we constructed last year, 95% were built in the provinces. We have also placed emphasis on infrastructures that would support livelihood in our rural areas. Much of the productivity of our countryside rests on our speedy implementation of our Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. The selflessness of a mature people could provide this program with the much needed boost.

We also need to enhance productivity by more responsive programs on energy. We recognize the setbacks resulting from the power shortage we all experienced this year. While we have already instituted the remedies necessary to bring our power supply back to normal, we are determined to put in place the needed long-term power infrastructure that will assure our people a permanently stable supply of electricity.

These energy programs must be complemented by our efforts in the areas of telecommunications and transportation. The archipelagic nature of our geography calls for a safer, modern, and more efficient system of interisland water transportation.

We must remember that the highest priority in our quest for greater productivity are our disadvantaged countrymen. If we produce more, those who have less shall have more to partake of. This is the rationale for the many reforms we have implemented to tilt the balance in favor of the less privileged; to tilt the balance in favor of the countryside.

PRESERVING OUR NATURAL RESOURCES

Our efforts at increased production must be complemented by our reinvigorated drive for conservation. I believe an important expression of our maturity is our exercise of good stewardship over our resources.

I am pleased to report that we marked a milestone last year in our reforestation program. In 1989, we reversed the deforestation trend: We have now planted more areas with trees than the areas wasted by the irresponsible exploitation of our forest resources.

Linking arms with our people and with nongovernmental organizations, we have created a vision of development without destruction.

To underscore this commitment, I directed the Department of Environment and Natural Resources on June 1, 1990, to blast all roads leading to virgin forests being used by illegal loggers. Furthermore, we have drastically reduced the number of timber license agreements from 142 to 75.

THE POPULATION ISSUE

Our maturity must now also be reflected in our stance on the population issue. I am aware that this is an emotionally charged subject matter that some of us have opted to shelve, or even totally ignore in the past.

We must now face this responsibility squarely and address it as a crucial health issue—a health issue where the well-being of our children, mothers, families—in fact, of our whole society, is at stake.

Here, we would like to give life to Article 15 of our Constitution which upholds the importance of our families, and the right of our children to proper care and nutrition.

At stake here, too, is the very application of the principles of our democracy: where our people make the choice; where the final judgment on the morality of their choices is left to the freedom of their conscience.

THE YOUTH

The magnitude of the rebuilding work that is before us calls for the involvement of many more hands. There is thus a need for greater involvement among our youth, especially in activities where they are given the opportunities to appreciate the value of hard work, love for country, and a mature sense of responsibility.

In calling for this, we uphold the provisions of our Constitution. For we thereby underscore our recognition of the youth's vital role in nation-building.

For two years now, we have provided our youth with a vehicle for participation in public and civic affairs through the President's Summer Youth Program. Over 71,000 young people took hands-on jobs in the countryside, in private sector offices, and in our government agencies. We exposed them to the realities of life while encouraging them to keep their idealism and advocacy for reforms.

And this month we called on them to march with us in our fight against drug abuse. They have responded well with the launching of the Junior Drug Watch.

I hope that in the coming years, there will be even more participation by them in these activities.

THE FISCAL ISSUES

Our maturity is also anchored on a citizenry whose sense of patriotism is expressed in their honest and active participation in our revenue generation effort. This was evident last year as we increased our tax collection by 35.4%: from P90,400,000 in 1988 to P122,400,000 last year.

The more important expressions of our maturity, however, are the policy decisions we shall make as we adopt innovations in our revenue generation scheme: as we shift the tax burden from our poorer countrymen to the more affluent sectors of our society; as we enhance the equity and progressive character of our income tax measures; as we promote local autonomy through stronger local financing; as we continue to improve our tax administration.

We shall also undertake even more decisive steps towards lowering inflation and bringing down our fiscal deficits. In connection with this, we are intensifying our revenue generation efforts; we are accelerating the sale of government assets even as we take all the necessary measures to minimize public spending.

We will not stop until we bring down the public sector deficit to the more tolerable 3% as a ratio to our gross domestic product. We are determined to bring this ratio further down in the next two years.

SAFEGUARDING PEACE AND ORDER

We continue to strive to make compassion a genuine hallmark of our society. But as we take the path of maturity, we see the greater need to balance compassion with the strength of the arms of justice. Painful though it may be, we must look at the options for heavier penalties for plunder; for heinous crimes; for crimes against public order, including rebellion and attempts at seizing the powers of the State.

Our maturity is anchored, too, on the commitment of our soldiers to our Constitutional democracy. While there are still a few within the AFP who continue to hang the sword of Damocles over our people, I am proud to say that, on the whole, the AFP continues to be the protector of our democratic gains. Even as they perform their mandate of keeping peace and order in our land, they are also our partners in our development goals.

I cite in particular our AFP Engineering Corps, whose engineering brigades undertake the construction of several vital infrastructure, particularly in the areas threatened by insurgency.

I am pleased to note that even in our peace and order efforts, the partnership approach is applied. The civilian sector continues to play a vital role in our integrated strategy towards the attainment of these goals. This partnership is evident in our various interagency councils, such as the peace and order, the regional development, and the national reconciliation and development councils.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER NATIONS

Our maturity is anchored on our ability to earn and maintain a place of honor and respect in the community of nations.

We acknowledge the support of our friends in our economic development thrusts. Last year, we obtained pledges and grants totaling \$3,500,000, 98% of which have already been programmed or utilized for specific projects.

This place of honor also rests on our credibility before our international creditors. Today, we still suffer from the burdensome legacy of the past. Our foreign debt continues to stare us in the face; and so does the responsibility of servicing all of these debts.

Since the time we inherited these liabilities, you and I have not stopped looking for better repayment terms from our creditors. We have also pushed back the terms for the repayment of the principal. Where opportunities are present, we have taken advantage of them so as to buy back debts at significant and favorable discounts.

I share with you the concern that a significant amount of our country's foreign exchange receipts flows out to service our foreign debt. I share with you the strong desire to see the day when our precious foreign exchange shall be used instead to fund social development.

It is also my hope, however, that Congress would share with me the concern that any move we take on the manner of debt repayment must never jeopardize in any way our painfully built good standing with our creditors.

The systematic approach we have adopted over the past four years has been beneficial to our people, to our constituents. This approach has favored our economic growth; price stability; and our renewed access to the international financial market.

Our economy today is one of the best performing among nations with substantial foreign debt. And this has been possible only because our creditors believe that they can count on our word and commitment. You and I must work together to keep it that way.

RP-US RELATIONS

Finally, we must address the issue of our relationship with the United States of America.

We are determined to chart a new course in our relationship with our long-time ally. I served the notice of termination of our military bases agreement. I have made sure that the provisions of our Constitution have been strictly adhered to. Above all, I have painstakingly endeavored to ensure that the national interest will be upheld whatever the outcome of our future discussions with the United States.

I served that notice of termination knowing the far-reaching consequences of that act. I declared our preparedness to look into other possibilities in our relationship with America. I underscored our desire to keep the friendship, whatever form our partnership may take in the future.

In this historic event, there is a paramount issue to address. This is the question of our ability as a people to live out to the fullest the true essence of sovereignty.

We must ensure that in making the decision as to whether the bases must go or stay, we must unite instead of divide.

Should we become a nation divided after this decision, then there shall be no sovereignty to speak of. To follow our national will, whatever option we might take, we must first agree to rid ourselves of unhealthy division. Only then can we stand up to any foreign nation and say, "This is our people's decision; we shall pursue it by every means."

PROPOSALS FOR LEGISLATION

When the two Houses of our Congress therefore meet in this Fourth Regular Session, there are two things I shall ask of you. First, I ask you to consider and appreciate the significance of this time in our history. I ask you to consider the options for a giant step forward that are arrayed before us.

And second, I ask you to address a legislative agenda that will push our democracy further into that level of maturity—a higher level of maturity necessary to the rebuilding of our nation. A good part of this agenda is drawn from initiatives already taken by the two Houses of Congress. In adopting this agenda, we focus on the commonality of our goals and our shared vision for our country and people.

I recognize as well that most of the bills in this agenda have been passed by one of the two Chambers and accordingly transmitted to the other. It is my hope and urgent call that this agenda we have worked out together will be completely enacted during this Fourth Regular Session.

May I now propose the following:

First, to help our countrymen in the disaster areas: the immediate passage of House Bill 31448 appropriating P10 billion for aid, relief, and rehabilitation, and for the repair and reconstruction of permanent structures affected by the recent earthquake.

Second, to further hasten our poverty alleviation and countryside agro-industrial development thrusts, the passage of the following measures:

1. Providing small and medium enterprises with capital of less than P5,000,000 with an integrated assistance package and services, including more accessible credit and financing;
2. Strengthening the social amelioration program for the sugar industry;
3. Establishing a Magna Carta for small farmers which seeks to further improve agricultural productivity and income; and
4. Providing for a code governing the development and conservation of our fishery and aquatic resources.

Third, to further strengthen local autonomy: the immediate passage of the Local Government Code; particularly, the provisions rationalizing the allotment system to increase funds at the disposal of local government units.

Fourth, to further emphasize our concern for protection of the environment, the passage of the following bills:

1. Providing for comprehensive anti-pollution measures, including increased penalties for violations thereof;
2. Increasing charges for the cutting of timber and other forest products to levels that better reflect their economic value; and
3. Updating the 53-year old Public Land Law to conform to new realities.

Fifth, to enhance the equity and progressive character of our tax system, the passage of a tax reform package which includes, among others, the following bills:

1. Increase in personal exemptions from income tax;
2. Imposition of the affluent consumption tax;
3. Provision of ceilings on certain business deductions;
4. Conversion of the ad valorem tax on oil products to specific tax; and
5. Gradual phaseout of the gross receipts tax on banks to help cut intermediation cost.

Sixth, to underscore our sovereignty and independent foreign policy:

1. The passage of the law creating the Baseland Development Authority to implement the bases conversion plan which will be submitted by the Legislative-Executive Bases Council; and
2. The passage of a law upgrading our Foreign Service Corps. Seventh, to accelerate the upgrading of our transportation system:
 - a. The passage of a law increasing the capitalization of the Philippine National Railways; and
 - b. A law increasing the capitalization of the Light Rail Transit Authority.

And eighth, to strengthen the safeguards of our democracy, the passage of the following measures:

1. A revised bill repealing Presidential Decree 1850 thereby strengthening civilian supremacy over the military;
2. The anti-coup and the anti-plunder bills;
3. A bill providing for a witness protection program;
4. Omnibus amendments to the Dangerous Drugs Act; and
5. The passage of electoral reform measures.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE WORK OF CONGRESS

I join our people in thanking the ladies and gentlemen of both the Senate and the House of Representatives for the continuing legislative support you have given to our nation's aspiration for greater productivity and reform.

I cite in particular your work on the following legislation of national importance: Republic Act No. 6810 or the Magna Carta for Countryside and Barangay Business Enterprises; Republic Act No. 6763 on the construction of

concrete barangay roads and multipurpose pavements; Republic Act No. 6849 on the installation of municipal public telephones; Republic Act No. 6826 on the grant of emergency powers to the president; and Republic Act No. 6948 upgrading the benefits of military veterans and their dependents.

I also acknowledge your help in the passage of the following laws:

Republic Act No. 6846 creating the Abot-Kaya Pabahay Fund; Republic Act Nos. 6938 and 6939 on the Cooperative Code and the Cooperative Development Authority; Republic Act No. 6952 establishing the Petroleum Price Standby Fund; Republic Act No. 6956 modifying the excise tax on certain products; and Republic Act No. 6957 on the financing of infrastructure projects by the private sector.

I look forward to our continuing cooperation as we endeavor to keep the agenda of our nation foremost in our list of priorities.

As President, I reiterate my commitment to institute greater reforms during the next two years of this Presidency. I am aware of the many obstacles strewn in our path by those who wish to waylay our march towards our goals. I wish to assure you and the rest of our countrymen that I shall never be intimidated; there shall be no rest from my work until the task is completed.

But our success would not be possible without unity among us. I therefore ask you, Honorable Senators and Representatives of this our people's Congress, and the rest of our leaders, to renew with me our commitment to the dream that bound us together in 1986: democracy, freedom, sovereignty, economic growth, social justice.

Let us join hands with our people as we undertake the task of rebuilding, and as we resume our march towards our goals.

I should like to thank all our friends throughout the world—governments, institutions, as well as individuals—for the humanitarian assistance given to our people and the victims of the earthquake.

I intend to properly thank and commend them, along with all those who acted valiantly to save lives, at appropriate ceremonies in the near future.

The National Disaster Coordinating Council is hereby directed to submit to me at the soonest possible time the full list of these friends and these heroes.

May katiyakan ang ating tagumpay kung tayo'y magkakaisa. Kung kaya't hinihimok ko kayo—kagalang-galang na mga Senador, Kongresista, at ang iba pang mga pinuno ng bayan—na muli tayong manumpa sa pangarap na nagbigkis sa atin noong 1986: ibalik at panatiliin ang demokrasya, kalayaan, karapatan, katatagang pangkabuhayan, at katarungang panlipunan.

Mula sa halos ganap na pagkawasak na ating naranasan, tayong lahat ay magkapit-bisig upang magampanan natin ang ating tungkulin na itayong muli ang napinsala sa atin, nang sa gayon ay makapagpatuloy tayo sa landas tungo sa ating inaasam na mga layunin.

Magkaisa tayo. Magtulungan tayo. Maraming salamat po.

Corazon C. Aquino, Fifth State of the Nation Address, July 22, 1991

**The State of the Nation
Message
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Congress**

[Delivered at the Batasang Pambansa, Quezon City, on July 22, 1991]

Senate President Jovito Salonga; Speaker Ramon Mitra; Chief Justice Marcelo Fernan; Honorable Diosdado Macapagal; distinguished members of the Senate and the House of Representatives; Your Excellencies of the Diplomatic Corps; fellow workers in government; honored guests; minamahal kong mga kababayan:

In March 1973, six months after the declaration of martial law, Ninoy Aquino was taken blindfolded from Fort Bonifacio and brought to a place he did not know. He was stripped naked and thrown into a cell. His only human contact was a jailer. The immediate prospect, in such a place, was a midnight execution in front of a grave dug by himself.

The purpose was as clear as it was diabolical. It was not to kill him yet, but to break him first – and with him break the compelling proof that men can stand up to a dictatorship.

He came close to giving up, he told me; he slipped in and out of despair. But a power that must have been God held him together. He remembered the words of the epistle, God chose the weak to confound the strong.

On the third anniversary of his incarceration in Laur, the recollection of his pain gave birth to a poem of hope. This is the poem he wrote:

I am burning the candle of my

life in the dark

with no one to benefit

from the light.

The candle slowly melts away;

soon its wick will be burned

out

and the light is gone.

If someone will only gather

the melted wax, re-shape it,

give it a new wick—

for another fleeting moment

my candle can once again

light the dark,

be of service

one more time,

and then ... goodbye.

This is the anguish of good men: that the good they do will come to nothing. That pains suffered in obscurity or sacrifices made away from the sight of men, amount to the same, and mock the man or woman who bears them.

Mr. Senate President, Mr. Speaker, members of the Congress, distinguished guests, my countrymen:

That is not true. None of the good that we do is ever lost; not even the light in an empty room is wasted.

From Ninoy's burnt-out candle, and thousands like it in cells throughout the garrison state, we gathered the melted wax and made more candles. To burn—not as long in such loneliness—but much more brightly all together, as to banish the darkness, and light us to a new day.

You might ask, "When will the president stop invoking Ninoy's name?" My answer is, "When a president stands here other than by Ninoy's grace. And not while gratitude is nourished by memory. Not while we acknowledge that it was his sacrifice that gave us back our freedom. And restored the freely elected office whose incumbent must stand every year in this place."

Five years have passed. My term is ending. And so is yours. As we came, so should we go. With grateful acknowledgement to the man who made it possible for us to be here. A man who discovered hope in the starkest despair, and has something yet to teach a country facing adversity again.

It would be foolish to ignore what is staring us in the face. Our march of progress brought us far, but such misfortunes have come upon us as to make us feel that we are not much farther from where we started.

The eruption of Mount Pinatubo is the biggest in this century. Abroad, its effect is so far-reaching as to lower the temperature of the Earth. At home, it is so devastating it knocked off 80,000 productive hectares from our agriculture, and destroyed the commerce of at least three provinces. Hundreds of thousands were driven from their homes and livelihoods, and thrown on the kindness of relatives and countrymen, and on the solicitude of the state. It was an event so powerful it wiped out the largest military base in the Pacific, and changed the nature of our relationship with an old ally. In the wake of the volcanic eruption, more has been revealed about that relationship than was covered by its ash.

Before Pinatubo, there was the typhoon that cut a wide swathe of destruction across the southern regions. And before that was the killer quake that cut off the northern parts of the country, destroying billions of pesos in infrastructure, causing the loss of billions more in foregone economic activities. It leveled the City of Pines and buried children in the rubble of yet another city.

But those natural calamities were preceded by another entirely the work of human hands: the massive December 1989 military revolt that cut short a second economic recovery, after the dislocation caused by the earlier August 1987 coup attempt. That one strangled the powerful rebound of the Philippine economy after the EDSA Revolution.

I mention these calamities not to excuse the perceived shortcomings of my administration nor to brag about my indestructibility. I mention them so that we know where we are, and why we are here, and the exact requirements of the task to build up this country yet again.

I mention them because I will compare them with what we had and lost, and then I will ask, “Was it all in vain?” And I will answer, “It was not; no more than a hero’s life is wasted.”

By 1985, the economy had contracted considerably, its rate of growth has been negative for two consecutive years. The country was at a standstill, as if waiting only for the last rites to be performed. By 1986, we had turned the economy around—in less than a year. We improved on that performance the year after.

The rate of unemployment was reduced, the volume of new investments significantly increased. New industrial projects were introduced, hitherto idle industrial capacity was fully utilized. The foundation of new regional industrial zones was laid. Public infrastructure and services strained under the load of expanding economic activity.

I mention this, not to offset the shortcomings of the present with the achievements of the past. I mention it to show what can be done in such a short time, and how much improvement was made from conditions far worse than what we have today—the dictator’s apologists notwithstanding, that the country is worse off now than when he and his wife were stealing the country blind.

This progress was cut off by the August ’87 coup attempt. But the economy quickly rallied, and in two years recovered a great deal of the ground we had lost. We were on the verge of a second takeoff when the December 1989 coup broke out. It drained the last drop of confidence in our future from all but the hardest spirits, and shattered our image abroad.

Still we persevered, achieving gains that, admittedly, continue to fall short of the galloping needs of a fast-growing population, but real gains nonetheless.

Improved health care, increased housing, and—one of the proudest achievements we share with the legislature—free secondary education: 660,000 youth immediately availed themselves of it; another 200,000 private school students received scholarship grants under another recent law; 80,000 new classrooms have been built—the first preparation of the nation for the future of economic competition, which will take place in the highly educated minds of the youth.

We have made the first serious effort to arrest environmental degradation—already so far advanced in the previous regime that it set up an agency that did nothing about it, anyway. We have pushed agrarian reform beyond the point of no return, almost completing its coverage of rice and corn. Its extension to other agricultural activities is proceeding at a pace consistent with our resolve to achieve for the farmer the prosperity promised by agrarian reform, and not just its bare legal implementation.

Indeed, we started to make up our losses, and kept on going through the Gulf crisis which doubled the price of energy and introduced the element of a tremendous uncertainty, not only about our economy, but that of the world as well.

You might ask, “Having lost so much so easily, what was the worth of all that effort?”

With such reversals of fortune, is progress for our country a hope in vain?

Paul says that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance character; and character hope. The good we do is never lost. Some of it remains, if not in material goods, then in a deeper experience, a more practiced hand, and a spirit made stronger by that which failed to break it—stronger to meet greater challenges ahead.

But in one thing we grew from strength to strength—in the enlargement of our democratic space and the strengthening of our democracy.

Every calamity tested the capacity of democracy to absorb distress, find relief, and meet the absolute necessities of the people without the least curtailment of freedom or compromise of rights.

Against our economic gains that are ever hostages to fortune, stands one steadfast, unalloyed achievement: our democracy. Destined, I believe, to outlive our problems and deck with the graces of liberty the material progress of our future. That achievement is better seen from the disinterested distance of foreign admirers, than from the myopic view of those at home who wish to destroy it. [Applause] It is an achievement entirely in our power to preserve and enhance.

Visitors from the new Germany asked me what things strengthen democracy. Economic progress, naturally, I said. But the attainment of that depends on external factors more than on the will of a developing country. But there is a way to strengthen democracy that is within any country's reach. That is through the empowerment of the people. This is obvious to a government like ours that came to power by its means, as well as to a people like the Germans who attained complete freedom in the same way.

But empowering the people means more than just giving them elections every three years. It means enlarging their contact with government beyond elections to its daily workings—so that the vast resources of one support the initiatives of the other, and the policies of government are refined by the insights of the people. Ngunit ang pagkaloob ng kapangyarihan sa mamamayan ay nangangahulugan hindi lamang ng pagdaraos ng halalan tuwing ikatlong taon. Kailangan pagyamanin ang kanilang pagkakadiit sa pamahalaan—sa araw-araw na gawain ng pamahalaan—upang ang malawak na kayamanan ng isa ay makatulong sa mga pagkukusa ng kabila at ang mga patakaran ng pamahalaan ay paglinangin ng mga mamamayan. By this means the lives of the people shall be constantly improved and the people themselves empowered by the habit of directing their own government. The constant revision of flawed policies and the wider application of good ones are possible only by bringing together the people and the government. People empowerment, through people's organizations, NGOs, foundations, and cooperatives, is the surest means we know to make government mirror the aspirations of the people. [Applause]

In the past, the idea was to give the people just enough power to elect their mistakes and suffer the consequences until the next elections. Elections were a safety valve. We want elections to be just one of other more effective means to bring the people into government and government to the people, to make it truly a participatory democracy.

This is the only way to end the character of total war that elections have assumed, where the aim is the division of spoils and the victims are not just the losers but those who voted for them too. Such elections are like Russian roulette where your chances are five to one your life will not improve, and one to five you will blow out your brains.

Participatory democracy will end the practice of punishing provinces and municipalities for the wrong vote in the last poll. It will separate elections, where the people vote for their favorites, from the provision of public service which every Filipino has a right to expect from the government, regardless how he voted.

This administration has made large steps in that direction. To the disappointment of those who marched with me against the Marcos regime, my administration has plowed resources into regions and provinces where I was cheated in the snap elections. The politics of revenge had had its day. [Applause]

The organized participation of the people in daily government may provide the stabilizing element that government has always lacked. Policies have radically changed with each administration, yet the basic needs of its unchanging constituencies have not been met: less bureaucracy for business, more public services and infrastructure support for agriculture and industry, and economic safety net for the common man. The active participation of the people in government will lend proper direction and continuity to policy.

This is what I wish for most. That after me, the continuity of our work is not broken. So that things well done shall be completed, and the same mistakes avoided by succeeding administrations. In this way, nothing done shall go to waste, and the light of a misplaced candle shall still be valued for the light it sheds on the things to avoid.

I am not asking that all my programs be blindly followed by my successor. God knows, we have made mistakes. But surely, our objective is right—the improvement of our people's lives. And the new way is much better than those

before. To give the people greater power over their lives is the essence of democracy that we must strive to bring out completely.

These ideas, articulated in the Kabisig movement, may not have been well received by this body. It was wrongly projected. I should make it clear that the Kabisig, and the whole movement of people's organizations that I have tried to encourage, will be campaigning hard for one candidate only—the Filipino people and no one else. *[Applause]*

Give the people power movement another chance, for it will go on regardless. I ask you to consider that we have tried the politics of spoils and patronage for half a century, with no better result than the stagnation of the country in a region where everyone else is racing ahead.

The formula for success is said to be dictatorial government.

But we tried that already, with worse results than the most irresponsible democracy can produce. Besides, the spirit of our race will not accept a dictatorship; and memories, fresh as the scars it left, will not let us consider that option again. Democracy is the only way for us. We must therefore find the ways by which the pitfalls that go with its blessings are reduced, while its inherent strengths are brought to the fore. Of those strengths, the most promising is people power, a reserve for nation-building we tapped only once in our history with such marvelous result.

A detailed report of the performance of government is before you; the legislative agenda—principally the Local Government Code, the Civil Service Code, revenue enhancement measures, and electoral reforms—has been communicated to the Senate President and to the Speaker of the House.

This is the last time I shall address you on such an occasion as this. Let us clear the air between us.

I could have made things easier for myself if I had opted for the “popular.”

I could have repudiated the foreign debt, won the passing praise of a greatly relieved people, and the lasting contempt of a devastated country.

I could have opted for outright hostility towards the international banking system and invited its retaliation. But the only result would have been to weaken the present democracy against the conspiracies of the former government which contracted the miserable debt in the first place. I would have taken the chance, if I were the only one at risk, but I had a country to take care of. *[Applause]*

I could have called for an elected constitutional convention.

Surveys showed that an elected convention was the popular choice to draft a new constitution. But I believed it was more important to draft a constitution and submit it for ratification in the shortest time possible, and hold elections immediately. The people and the army needed a full elected government and a constitution around which to rally in defense of freedom.

I could not afford the luxury of the popular by waiting out the endless deliberations of an elected convention, like the 1971 Constitutional Convention. And besides, what was so great about that experience? After a year of talk and scandal, the final draft was prepared in Malacañang, approved by the frightened convention, and ratified in a fraudulent plebiscite.

I could have made things easier for myself if I had allowed the executive to influence the decisions of constitutional commissions. I might have spared myself deep embarrassments by interfering with the judgments of the courts. But I uphold the independence of these bodies. I am convinced it is in all our best interest to respect an independence that may thwart the government's will from time to time—but is yet our best assurance of justice when we will need justice most. *[Applause]*

I firmly believe in the freedom of the press. And I accept the criticisms poured on me, painful as they are, as part and parcel of the hazards of public service, and conducive to its honest performance. True, I have sued for libel, but I did not use the power of the presidency to advance my cause. And this is shown by the fact that four years later my case continues to drag on. [Applause] I have not forgotten that what my husband wanted most in prison was for the public to hear the side of freedom, and no newspaper would print it.

I submitted myself to the judicial process as an ordinary citizen, and exposed myself to indignities a president should not endure. But I want to encourage people to seek redress in the law, despite the inconvenience, rather than in vindictiveness, which has no end. I want them to make the cause of justice for one, the cause of justice for all. [Applause]

I have consoled myself that great men like Gandhi were not spared criticism either, but—regardless of it—he pursued the path he believed was true, mindful only of harmful effects on the people, but not of the consequences to him. He believed that God demands no less of us than that we follow our conscience. God will take care of the rest.

I could have done the popular thing in the last administration, and arranged a nicer retirement for myself. But my instructions to PNB, DBP, GSIS, SSS, and Land Bank were explicit: no behest loans, and no special favors [applause] whether to relative, friend, or political supporter. This accounts for their sterling performance, for the unprecedented public faith in their competence and integrity, and for the incalculable contribution, particularly of PNB and the Land Bank, to the development of cooperatives and the financing of small and medium enterprises, wherein lies the strongest hope of progress in these times.

We can roll back prices at the drop of a hat and spare ourselves all the aggravation, but we learned that hasty rollbacks exacted a heavier, long-term cost on the economy, and, ultimately, on the people, than they had saved.

I could have done any of the things calculated to win a passing popularity at home. I could have thrown away by so-called popular solutions the goodwill we have built up in financial circles by the strict performance of our obligations. This is the goodwill that accounts for the continued support extended to the Philippine Assistance Program [PAP]. Anyway, most of the pledges to the PAP are redeemable in the next administration.

I could have said, “Let my successor be presented with the bill for my popularity today.” But it is the people who would pay the price, and I am not made that way. [Applause]

I did not always adopt the ideal solutions proposed by those who have the luxury of contemplation. Government often had to do what pressing realities compelled it. And if the government sometimes lacked better choices, it never lacked the sincere desire to do good. [Applause]

I could have promoted only military officers popular with the press, and ignored the experience of a democratic government that has been the principal military objective of the rebel forces and an insurgency that just doesn’t know when to quit. But I chose instead commanders of proven courage, leadership, and fidelity to the Constitution.

I could do the smart thing still, and do the things my opponents unfairly charge me of preparing—rigging the elections in 1992, the way I did not rig the ratification of the Constitution, the national elections, and the local elections. The way they rigged elections from 1969 to 1986. But my instructions to the military and police are explicit. Let them hear it again:

The right of the soldier and the policeman is merely to cast his vote; his greater and solemn obligation is to assure the right of others to cast their votes and get them honestly counted. [Applause] No soldier has the right to combine with his comrades to campaign for a person or party and deliver to them a block of the military vote. No member of the military shall lend his name, prestige, and the influence of his position to anyone’s campaign. The same holds true for the police. [Applause]

The military has earned the people's trust as the spearhead of their liberation and the constant defender of their democracy. To these honors, it is my aim to add the distinction of shepherding our democracy through its first political succession, by clean and peaceful elections. *[Applause]*

I will not preside as Commander in Chief over the kind of military that cheated the opposition in 1978, and me in 1986. *[Applause]* That would insult the memory of the man to whom I dedicate this last address to the joint houses of Congress, and stain the proud achievement of this nation in 1986.

I specifically charge AFP Chief of Staff General Lisandro Abadia and PNP Director General Cesar Nazareno with the responsibility to assure clean and honest elections. *[Applause]* While they may not fear my displeasure because I will not be president then, they will face the judgment of the disappointed country.

Yes, I could have done all those things that win wide acclaim, exiting as grandly as any president could wish. But while my power as president ends in 1992, my responsibility as a Filipino for the well-being of my country goes beyond it to my grave. *[Applause]* A great part of that responsibility is to do the best I can today, according to my best lights, while I have the power to do it.

As President, I have never prayed for anything for myself; only for our people. I have been called an international beggar by the military rebels. Begging does not become me, yet— perhaps it is what I had to do. I could have kept my pride and held aloof, but that would not have helped our people. And it is for them that I was placed in this office. *[Applause]*

Someone who will do better may stand in this place next year, for I believe in the inexhaustible giftedness of the Filipino people. I only hope that he will be someone who will sincerely mean you well. *[Applause]*

I hope that history will judge me as favorably as our people still regard me, because, as God is my witness, I honestly did the best I could. No more can be asked of any man. *[Applause]*

On June 30, 1992, the traditional ceremony of political succession will unfold at the Luneta. The last time it was done that way was in 1965. I shall be there with you to proudly witness the event. This is the glory of democracy, that its most solemn moment should be the peaceful transfer of power. *[Applause]*

Maraming salamat sa inyong lahat at paalam.

PRESS STATEMENTS

Victory Statement: President-elect Corazon C. Aquino on the results of the 1986 Snap Elections

Victory Statement of President-elect Corazon C. Aquino: On the results of the 1986 Snap Elections, February 8, 1986

[Delivered in Quezon City on February 8, 1986]

My fellow countrymen. This is Cory Aquino speaking. The Marcos spell is broken. The myth of his invincible machine has been shattered. Against his guns, against his goons, and against his gold, the Filipino people have prevailed. They have made their cry for freedom and justice heard above the torrent of his lies and threats.

A painful price has been paid. Many have been hurt, I am sad to report, and some have died. Let us hope and pray that the tragic reports we have heard are the final price our people must pay for freedom. They have well earned it.

The trend is clear and irreversible. The people and I have won and we know it. Nothing can take our victory from us. No power can pry from our hands the freedom we have won this day.

In 1972, our country was taken from us by force in the dead of night and kept from us by deception. We became exiles in our own land. Now we have our country back. And it is fitting that, as we lost it in darkness, we have regained it in the night.

We are home again, in a country we can once more call our own. We have won back our country and won it with bravery, sacrifice, honor, and distinction. This night marks our true independence. We owe no one for our freedom but ourselves.

It is not for me to thank the Filipino people; it is for all of us to welcome ourselves home. Mabuhay ang Pilipino.

Source: Cory Aquino for President Movement, February 1986.

Source: **Ninoy Aquino Library and Learning Resources Center – Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Manila**

Javate-de Dios, A., Daroy, P., & Kalaw-Tirol, L. (Eds.). (1988). *Dictatorship and revolution : roots of people's power* (1st ed.). Manila : Conspectus Foundation Incorporated.

Arrival Statement: President Corazon Aquino on a State Visit to Indonesia

**Arrival Statement
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
On a State Visit to Indonesia**

[Released on August 24, 1986]

**REAFFIRMING FRIENDSHIP
WITH INDONESIA**

On a state visit to Indonesia, President Aquino reaffirms the close ties between the Philippines and her big neighbor in the south. She recalls that the two countries were one in race, language and culture but colonialism severed their links. But the two peoples rediscovered each other, and now pursue common goals in ASEAN.

I bring the fraternal greetings of 55 million Filipinos to the 175 million Indonesians. I have come on a mission to strengthen the friendship and solidarity of our two countries, if that is still possible given our racial kinship, our ancient ties, and a long-standing relationship of mutual understanding and unstinting support.

It is a measure of the great importance I attach to that relationship that I have made Indonesia the first stop of my ASEAN journey.

I am here for a Musjawara with the Indonesian leadership so eminently headed by President Suharto, and to reaffirm by my presence the new Philippine government's commitment to continue, and pursue with even greater energy and goodwill, the revival of the ancient relationship between our two countries and their more recent cooperative efforts in various areas, particularly in the matters of regional security and our respective national interests.

We were once one in race, in language, and in culture before colonialism severed our links with each other. But even before we became independent, we prepared ourselves for the renewal of our ties by demonstrating, in our respective struggles for independence, the nobility and courage of our race. It was by these marks that we believed we would recognize each other. And so we did. Immediately we were both independent; we reached out to each other like long-lost relatives. Truly, the stress upon these virtues is important, for the relationship between the people of Indonesia and the people of the Philippines had always been marked, not only by the affection one expects from kinship and proximity, but above all, by mutual respect.

Courage and nobility mark the Indonesian and Filipino approaches to problems and challenges. This is shown by Bandung and ASEAN, and continues to be shown in their pursuit of the common goals of peace, independence, regional security and cooperation, and in their unequivocal acceptance of the obligations entailed by a shared country.

I have come to Indonesia on a Perjalanan-Persaudaraan. I look forward to a fruitful dialogue with you, Mr. President, towards the realization of our common goals.

Long live the brotherhood and solidarity of the Indonesian and Filipino people.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Departure Statement: President Corazon Aquino before leaving for Indonesia

Departure Statement of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines Before leaving for Indonesia

[Held at Villamor Airbase, August 24, 1986]

STRENGTHENING ASEAN TIES

Before leaving for Indonesia on a state visit — her first since assuming the Presidency — President Aquino describes Indonesia as a dependable friend, having helped the Philippines in times of need. Indonesia has effectively presented the Philippine case before the non-aligned movement.

Mga minamahal kong kababayan,

Papaalis ako ngayon sa isang lakbay-kapatiran. Lubhang mahalaga para sa ating bayan ang paglalakbay na ito sapagkat ang layunin nito'y patingkarin at lalong patibayin ang kapatirang umiiral sa mga bansa ng Timog-Silangang Asya.

Hindi ako nagdalawang-loob sa paglalakbay kong ito. Maiiwan ang ating pamahalaan sa mabubutit mapagkakatiwalaang kamay. Handa naman kayong tumulong sa anumang oras upang pangalagaan ang katiwasayan at kapayapaan sa ating bayan.

Sapagkat ang katiwasayan sa ating bayan ay nakasalalay din sa katatagan ng Timog-Silangang Asya, minabuti ko na maglakbay-kapatiran upang patibayin ang ating pagbubuklod-buklod sa pagharap ng mga suliraning kapwa natin hinaharap. Sa pamamagitan nito sama-sama nating malulutas ang mga suliraning pang-ekonomiya at pampulitika.

Today, I leave the Philippines for the first time since assuming the Presidency. It is not only appropriate, but there has not been any doubt in mind, that my first visit abroad as president should be to our neighbors in ASEAN.

I chose Indonesia as my first stop because we are like family. Over the years, Indonesia has been a dependable friend. She has given us material support during times of need. She has also effectively presented the Philippine case before the non-aligned movement and Islamic fora to which the Philippines has no access. Indonesia, our largest and closest neighbor, is the chairman of the steering committee that is preparing the ASEAN Summit Meeting in Manila next year.

I am visiting Singapore to continue the dialogue which Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew and I began when he came to Manila last month. Singapore, lion city of the ASEAN, stands as a shining example of the determination of its great and good people. Its remarkable economic and social achievements underscore the fundamental importance of hard work and single-minded commitment to the achievement of common objectives. Its progress and prosperity is the economic analogue of what the Filipino people achieved in the field of politics.

The aim of my visit to Singapore, like my journey to Indonesia, is to strengthen our mutual bonds and learn how our countries may collaborate to bring peace and progress to all of ASEAN.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Arrival Statement: President Corazon Aquino upon arriving in Singapore

Arrival Statement of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines Upon arriving in Singapore

[Held in Singapore, August 26, 1986]

SINGAPORE, AN ECONOMIC MODEL

Upon arriving in Singapore to resume discussions with Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, President Aquino pays tribute to that city state, which is home to 20,000 Filipinos. The President says that the ASEAN region was one of the fastest growing areas in the world during the 1970s and early 1980s largely because of Singapore's performance. In view of this, Singapore's success story serves as a model for countries like the Philippines.

I bring the warm and sincere greetings of the Filipino people to the people of Singapore.

I am pleased to return to Singapore, this time as the leader of my people, to reciprocate your Prime Minister's visit to Manila and to reaffirm the spirit of solidarity and friendship that binds us all in ASEAN. I am particularly grateful for this visit, the first made by an ASEAN head of government to our new government.

This is the second leg of my journey to cement ASEAN brotherhood. My visit to Singapore gives us an opportunity to resume the discussions begun in Manila on matters of mutual concern, including proposals for expanded bilateral trade, investments, technology development, and regional cooperation.

We recognize Singapore's leading role in ASEAN's economic growth. ASEAN was one of the fastest growing areas in the world during the seventies and early eighties largely because of Singapore's performance. Her success story has made her a model for countries like mine.

Singapore has been temporary home to some 20,000 Filipinos who work in this country. They have been received well. I would like to believe that they have contributed their modest share to the progress of Singapore.

We recognize Singapore's valuable role in linking ASEAN to the rest of the world through its extensive network of bilateral partnerships with the industrialized countries. Her excellent access to these countries and the moral authority conferred by her economic progress have made her invaluable as the articulator of ASEAN's concern over growing protectionism and the widening technology gap between the developed and the developing world.

As members of one family, if you will, or, at the very least, of a group of nations locked by proximity in a shared destiny, Singapore and the Philippines must appreciate that a stable regional environment depends so much on the economic and social advancement of the peoples that live in it. Towards this end, we shall continue to pursue our dialogue on the peace and progress of our two countries and that of ASEAN as a whole.

Long live the spirit of solidarity and friendship between Singapore and the Philippines!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Statement: President Corazon Aquino on her pre-departure bound for Japan

Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino
On her pre-departure for Japan

[Issued on November 9, 1986]

UNSOLICITED COUPS

President Aquino warns misguided elements of the AFP from attempting to take advantage of her trip to Japan to stage any coup. She will not allow these elements to destroy the people's confidence in the New Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Permit me to make a statement of a more general but very pressing concern. As usual, on the eve of my departure on a foreign visit, the country is awash with rumors of an impending coup or an emergency contrived to justify extraordinary action taken by military units to reimpose order, which shall be a pretext for effecting changes in my government. My visits have produced positive effects on our national effort to reconstruct our country from the devastation wrought by the previous regime. This one that I am making to Japan promises equally great benefits to aid our effort. I am disappointed that certain quarters are spreading these rumors for they undermine our efforts to get much needed assistance for our country, particularly in the form of investments. They betray on the part of the perpetrators of these rumors a shameless disregard for the welfare of our people in the pursuit of personal ambitions or misguided ideas of the common good.

These rumors also insult the New Armed Forces of the Philippines that now adhere to the highest standards of professionalism in assuring the security of the people and their government, and the integrity of the State. In this, the Armed Forces have never fallen short of my high respect for their professional conduct and patriotic commitment. That respect is now shared by the vast majority of our people, who look to the Armed Forces to protect their freedom and democracy. I will not allow the New AFP to be destroyed by a handful of misguided elements, if in fact they are planning to do anything. I say they are misguided because if they carry out the rumored plans, they will achieve nothing more than to shatter the public confidence in the Armed Forces and the integrity of that indispensable institution, and play directly into the hands of the enemies of the State and our democracy.

I will not allow this to happen. I shall oppose with all my might and authority any attempt from any quarter to interfere with or dictate to my government, whether blatantly or, as the rumored plan "God Save The Queen" would have it, on my behalf. As Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, I shall not hesitate to take any action to preserve the integrity of the Armed Forces and the security of our government. I shall not allow any self-anointed saviors to interfere with our progress towards a full democracy. Much as I am said to dislike unsolicited advice, I reject unsolicited coups or for that matter any actions that violate the law or interfere with the regular process of government. This includes any actions taken by the forces of the other extreme, the left, which may also wish to take advantage of my absence. Through the Chief of Staff, I have instructed the commanders in the field to repel with all the might at their disposal any attack against our units or any centers of government, as well as any threat to the security of our people. Our enemies should bear in mind that talking ceasefire is a far cry from having one.

To our people, I say, be calm but also be vigilant. What we have won, no one can take away from us unless we let them. I am heartened by the demonstrations of all-out support expressed by the people to secure the government, even as I have endeavored to calm them lest they be provoked to take to the streets again as they did last February.

I am the President of all our people. They have put their faith and trust in me that I shall protect and do all in my power to preserve their rights and freedoms, and the democracy they restored with such glory and honor – as I have pledged to do. This is my contract with my people and my commitment to God.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Statement: President Corazon Aquino on her departure to Japan

**Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino:
On her Departure to Japan**

[Delivered at the Manila International Airport, November 11, 1986]

**ASSURING
OF PEACE AND DEMOCRACY**

THE

PEOPLE

President Aquino declares that she will convey the meaning and message of the recent revolution and the new democracy to the people of Japan. At the same time, she reassures the people that the country is safe from any threats from quarters bent on destabilizing her government, as the Filipinos are firm on keeping their hard-earned freedom.

I am visiting Japan on a mission of goodwill to reaffirm the long-standing friendship between our two nations. As in my recent travels as head of state, I shall convey the meaning and message of our revolution and our new democracy, that is to say the new pride of the Filipino and the belief that such pride provides the firmest foundation of friendship and cooperation. I shall also try to convey the new hope that was born with the Revolution. I must say in all honesty that this last part of my mission will be a little difficult, given the events and statements of recent weeks. The credibility of the Philippines as a country with a future, a country in which one could safely invest, in whose recovery and development one could profitably participate, has been greatly diminished. Well, there is no use crying about it. The harm is done. It remains as ever for those of us who are serious about working for our country and our people to repair it.

Last night, I spoke about rumored threats to the security of my government and the rights and liberties of our people. Essentially, what I tried to say is that whether these rumors are true or not makes no difference so long as we, the Filipino people, are resolved never to let anyone, under any pretext take our rights and liberties away and destroy the democracy we have restored. What our people will do is for them to decide. For myself, I know what my duty and commitment are, and that is to oppose with all my might any attempt by any quarter to dictate or in any way interfere with my government. In plain terms, any coup or other military action by misguided elements must contend with my opposition, which means with the Power of the People in order to succeed.

Knowing that the left may also try to take advantage of my absence in order to embarrass our efforts abroad, as Commander-in-Chief I have instructed, through the Chief of Staff, General Fidel Ramos, our commanders in the field to repel any attack against our units or any centers of authority, as well as any threats to the security of our people with all the force at their disposal.

To our people I say, there is nothing to worry about. We are as safe from any threats to our freedom as we are firmly resolved to stay free. And that resolve has already been tested and tempered in the Campaign, Election and Revolution that restored our democracy. So we can all be pretty sure of it. I leave on this mission with every confidence in the Power of the People to protect and preserve what it achieved.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Statement: President Corazon Aquino to the Filipino people

**Statement of Concern of President Corazon C. Aquino:
To the Filipino people**

[Issued on November 19, 1986]

SET ASIDE YOUR FEARS

Some Filipinos are spending too much time speculating what the extreme Left and Right are planning to do to subvert our freedoms. They are being distracted from the more important task of nation-building. President Aquino calls on them to focus their energies and attention instead to the courageous and single-minded pursuit of the country's goals: rebuilding the economy and securing our freedoms.

The killing of Rolando Olalia, the kidnapping of Noboyuki Wakaoji. Each incident is deplorable in itself. The savage manner of Olalia's death invites special condemnation. Both crimes have prompted an intensive investigation. Six days have passed, and the crimes have not been solved. The killers and the kidnappers have not been apprehended. I was talking yesterday with the Swedish trade minister, who told me that the slaying of the Swedish Prime Minister Olaf Palme has not yet been solved. This in spite of all the resources of a modern state thrown into the investigation. This only shows that our problems here are not unique. That even modern states have a hard time coping with criminality. It does not however excuse what has happened here. At best, it puts things in the proper perspective. We have no more reason to despair of our country, than the Swedes do of theirs. Or the Spaniards and the Portugese of their countries.

During the farewell call of the German ambassador Klaus Zeller, he remarked on the progress we have attained in just eight months, we have a draft Constitution in two months, it shall be submitted to the people at a referendum. Before the end of the first half of next year, we shall have a Congress to legislate for us. Other countries have had a longer transition from dictatorship to full democracy, at greater cost in lives.

Spain took three years to accomplish as much. And the way was not easy. Radical elements of the extreme right and left did everything they could to derail the consolidation of democracy. But the government and the people held fast to their freedom. It was the same in Portugal. Some of us are spending too much time speculating fearfully about what the totalitarian left and the fascist right are planning to do to us and to our freedoms. Forewarned is forearmed. But there is a point beyond which speculating about what evil others can do begins to serve their purpose, and no longer ours. They distract us from the real tasks before us. Giving their threats currency creates an image of instability that drives away investments, which is the very thing they want. They cannot do anything to harm this country unless we let them. Speaker Laurel had wise words of advice about this tendency of ours to worry excessively about what others are planning to do to us. He said this during the preparations for Ninoy's arrival when the opposition spent more time speculating what Marcos would do to Ninoy than planning the kind of reception that would give meaning to his courageous return. We have enough on our hands planning how to protect what we have achieved and defeat the efforts of the enemies of freedom. *Huwag mong problemahin ang problema ng iba; malaki na ang problema natin*, as he wisely put it, urging us to conserve our energies and attention to the enormous task we face to rebuild our country and secure our freedom. The enemies of our freedom can threaten to do their worst; we are safe if we do our best in the courageous and singleminded pursuit of our own goals. I know I speak for our proud people when I say, we shall never be slaves again. Not to the communists who did nothing to help us recover our democracy, as we understand it nor to the sad remnants of the right who hanker to be our masters again. I ask all our people to consider what each of us can do to contribute to our goals of democracy and progress. I ask you, who are here with me, and who represent the media, to consider what you can contribute to restore and maintain normalcy in the country.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Statement: President Corazon Aquino to the Cabinet Members

**Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino:
To the Cabinet Members**

[Issued on November 23, 1986]

A FRESH START

In the face of the coup threats, President Aquino warns the forces of the right and the left not to exploit the situation. In order to give the government a fresh start, she directs all Cabinet members to tender their resignations.

Of late, my circumspection has been viewed as weakness, and my sincere attempts at reconciliation as indecision.

This cannot continue.

It is clear that the extreme Left has no interest in the peace I have continually offered. I have therefore given the government negotiating panel until the end of the month to produce a ceasefire or terminate all further negotiation.

This morning I summoned the Cabinet to a special meeting. I directed all Cabinet Members to give me their resignations. Those who do not do so I shall nonetheless consider resigned. Almost all have tendered their resignations. I am expecting the remaining few to do so by the end of the day. This will give the government a chance to start all over again. I have accepted the resignation of Minister Enrile and have appointed Deputy Minister Rafael Ileto to be the new Defense Minister. General Ileto comes well recommended by his distinguished military and diplomatic record.

I shall be acting on the other resignations in the new few days. We need a fresh start.

The Chief of Staff, General Ramos, has taken preventive measures against the recklessness of some elements in the military.

I hereby give notice to all those who may be inclined to exploit the present situation that the sternest measures will be taken against them if they try.

I have appealed again and again to all sectors of our country to unite in the protection of our democracy and in the reconstruction of our country. In the same spirit in which we won our liberation, let us work as one for the preservation of our freedoms and the progress of our nation.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Statement: President Corazon Aquino on the announcement of ceasefire

Press Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino:
On the announcement of ceasefire

[Issued on November 27, 1986]

CEASEFIRE

President Aquino announces the ceasefire to take effect on December 10, 1986, to last 60 days. Substantive discussions are to start 30 days from December 10.

Today, the negotiating panels of both sides have signed a preliminary ceasefire agreement. It is the intention of the agreement that the ceasefire shall take effect on December 10, 1986, at noon. It will last for 60 days, but the talks on substantive issues must begin 30 days from the date.

Our final aim is a lasting and honorable peace wherein a nation united and free can work for its progress. If both sides work in the spirit of a genuine desire for peace, that aim is achievable. Although both sides have carefully reviewed the letter of the provisions of this agreement, in the end it is that spirit which will determine whether our nation will finally achieve the peace it desires and deserves.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Statement: President Corazon on revamping the Cabinet

Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino: On revamping the Cabinet

[Issued on November 28, 1986]

REVAMPING THE CABINET

President Aquino stresses the need to hammer government into an effective instrument of progress. She notes that a great measure of effectiveness and coordination has already been achieved in many areas of her government. The process of renewal includes her acceptance of the resignations of Mr. Ernesto Maceda and Mr. Rogaciano Mercado. Other changes will be announced shortly after due consultation with affected ministries.

A government without the willingness to change is without the means for its own conservation and increased effectiveness. Last Sunday, I began the process of renewal of our government. It has been a difficult, not to say, painful process for me in selecting the Ministers whose resignations I will accept. To a man and woman, the members of the Cabinet were stalwarts of the opposition, brave champions of Filipino freedom, loyal and dedicated servants of the people. But what they are and how they are perceived do not always tally. And in politics, one sadly recognizes, perception is critical for effective government. We gave you a Cabinet of strong-willed men and women, for how else could we have achieved victory, but it was not easy to get persons of such calibre to work well together. And so I am compelled by the national interest to make some changes in my government with a view to hammering it into an effective instrument of progress. A great measure of effectiveness and coordination has already been achieved in many areas of government, such as in the military establishment. My Chief of Staff, General Ramos, the Defense Minister Rafael Ileto and I are confident we have achieved a level of cooperation and dedication in the New Armed Forces that will enable us to achieve together in the coming years the goals of security and freedom for our nation.

Today I have accepted the resignations of Mr. Ernesto Maceda and Mr. Rogaciano Mercado and appointed in their places Mr. Vicente Jayme and Mr. Carlos Dominguez, Jr. as Minister of Public Works and Highways and Minister of Natural Resources, respectively. Mr. Ting Jayme will relinquish his post as PNB President and take on his duties as Public Works Minister only after he returns on December 9 from Washington where he will represent the PNB as a member of the loan negotiation mission. In the meantime, Public Works Deputy Minister Juanito Ferrer will discharge his functions. Mr. Ting Jayme will bring his dedication and managerial expertise to a critical component of our developmental effort. Mr. Carlos Dominguez has distinguished himself as Deputy Minister of Agriculture and, coming from Davao, will give a more representative cast to our Cabinet. The process of renewal will not stop there. Other changes will be announced shortly, after due consultation with the sectors affected by the ministries involved.

We must work with the energy and coordination of a single hand in order to achieve the goals we have set for ourselves.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Victory Statement of President Corazon Aquino on Reaffirming Democracy

Victory Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino: On Reaffirming Democracy

[Released on February 4, 1987]

REAFFIRMING DEMOCRACY

The people turned out in overwhelming numbers to ratify the 1986 Constitution, reaffirming their commitment to democracy and their faith in the democratic process. Nothing could sway that commitment, neither threats nor loyalty to political warlords. The massive turnout also indicates that the power that set the Filipino people free is the very same power that will prevent that freedom from being taken from them again.

President Aquino commends the soldiers and the teachers for the orderly conduct of the plebiscite.

The February 2 plebiscite completes the February Revolution. The millions who could not take part in the revolution that vindicated my electoral victory seized this chance to show their support of my victory and their commitment to democracy.

The February 2 plebiscite affirms the permanent presence and enduring power of the people in the politics of our country. It demonstrates again that the force that propelled me to power and our nation to freedom will always protect and sustain our new democracy. It shows the vigorous faith of our people in the democratic process and their hope in the future. It reconfirms their commitment to the ways of peace and democracy, and their total rejection of violence and terrorism whether from the left or the right.

The people lined up for hours to cast their ballots. One felt their pride as a free people holding the destiny of the nation in their hands.

Nothing could prevail against this pride and commitment to democracy. Not greed nor fear nor misguided loyalties to political warlords. Everywhere the people made their voices heard, even in the strongholds of political terrorism like Danao and Lanao del Sur. Much credit goes to the military for assuring a peaceful and orderly vote. I commend our teachers equally for their dedicated and exemplary efforts to give us a clean and orderly plebiscite.

Like everyone else, the soldiers voted according to their conscience. I respect them for it. Like everyone else, they now have a new constitution to which all are bound by the strongest bond of political obligation. And like everyone else, they now have a government twice empowered by a second mandate to address their needs and grievances.

The tremendous vote of confidence on February 2 reaffirms the now unquestionable legitimacy and democratic power of our government. It also places on our shoulders the greater responsibility to meet our people's high expectations of democracy. We shall do all in our power to meet those expectations, strengthened by the confidence that our people are with us all the way.

We have surprised the world again. We were told that people are indifferent to plebiscites, that the turnout will be low, and the result inconclusive. But this was not a time for indecision. Our people have spoken, and they have commanded us to rule by law. Anyone who challenges that law must answer to us, for we have to answer to the people.

Our people want peace, stability and order, as much as freedom. That is why they turned out in record numbers to give us both a Constitution to protect that freedom and a mandate to assure that justice and order shall prevail.

No words can convey the pride I feel today in being your President and a Filipino.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Statement: President Corazon Aquino on the Coup Attempt

**Press Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino:
On the Coup Attempt**

[Issued on August 28, 1987]

TERMINATE THIS MUTINY!

Following an attack by rebel soldiers on Malacañang, resulting in loss of life, the Commander-in-Chief orders the Chief of Staff and the Armed Forces “to terminate this mutiny as soon as possible.” There will be no terms, she stresses.

Last night, rebel soldiers attacked Malacañang. The Presidential Security Group, with tragic loss of lives, decisively defeated them. The rebels then fled to Camp Aguinaldo. Groups of rebels went on to try to seize Channel 4. This attempt has likewise failed.

As Commander-in-Chief, I order the Chief of Staff and the Armed Forces to terminate this mutiny as soon as possible.

There will be no terms.

I have nothing to say to these traitors.

Before noon today, I ordered an assault on the rebels in Camp Aguinaldo. We have opened up with artillery. This assault is to continue until the rebellion is crushed. There will be no terms.

The rebels say they mean the people no harm, but outside Malacañang this morning, they gunned down innocent civilians who had cheered for our Government. The majority of those hurt or killed by the rebels have been civilians.

Speaking as your President, let me assure our people that Government is firmly in control of the situation. We shall defeat and punish these traitors.

The Armed Forces and Police, true to their pledge of loyalty to flag, country and Commander-in-Chief, are at this very moment moving to destroy this threat. I commend their bravery.

Bilang inyong Pangulo, ako’y muling nananawagan at nakikiusap sa inyo. Huwag po nating kalimutan ang ating hirap, ang ating pagod at ang mga buhay na nawala upang ibalik ang ating kalayaan, upang ibalik ang demokrasya.

Ngayon po, naririto na naman itong mga taong ito, nagpapanggap, nagsisinungaling na naman na sila raw ang mag-aalaga sa ating kalayaan. Ginagawa daw nila ito upang pangalagaan ang ating mga anak. Ngunit kaninang umaga ng alas-dos, ang kaisa-isang anak kong lalaki na si Noynoy ay nabaril, nasugatan. At iyong mga kasama, apat na kasama niya, isa po malubha pa ngayon, yong tatlo ay napatay. Hindi ko po papayagan na itong mga taong ito na muling nagsisinungaling sa atin ay ibalik ang kanilang karahasan noong nakaraan na diktador.

Tayo pong lahat kung magsasama tayo – dahil alam ko po ang aking kapangyarihan ay galing sa inyo, minamahal kong mga kababayan – ito po ay lagi nating pag-iisipan, lagi po nating tatandaan: Na kung tayo’y magsasama-sama ay kaya po nating sugpuin itong mga dambuhalang ito. Alam po ninyo, malaki po ang pag-asa ko dahil alam ko, kayo, ako ay palaging magsasama upang pangalagaan ang ating kalayaan.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1987). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : April – October 1987*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Statement: President Corazon Aquino on the closing of the ASEAN Summit Meeting, December 15, 1987

**Closing
ASEAN
December 15, 1987**

Summit

**Statement
Meeting**

AN ACT OF FRIENDSHIP

President Aquino thanks the ASEAN heads of state for their determination to proceed with the meeting and to proceed smoothly with dispatch. This act of friendship and solidarity invigorates ASEAN and inspires everyone to work harder for the attainment of its goals.

As we approach the end of our meeting, it falls upon me, as your Chairman, to express my gratitude.

I wish to thank you, Your Majesty and Your Excellencies the heads of government, for entrusting me with the Chairmanship of our meeting.

I thank you for gathering in our country in this difficult moment in our history. This renewing act of friendship and solidarity invigorates ASEAN and inspires us all to work harder for the attainment of its goals and the preservation of the community we have so firmly established among our countries.

Your determination to proceed with our meeting underscores the spirit of resolve that is the honor and distinction of this Association which sets it apart from all others. To commensurate this signal act of leadership on all our parts, we have agreed to call the history document that we signed today, The Manila Declaration of ASEAN Resolve.

I thank you for your splendid cooperation, which has enabled our meeting to proceed smoothly and with dispatch.

I thank, on behalf of all of us, our ministers and senior officials and the members of the High-Level Steering Committee for their strenuous labors of over a year in the preparation of this meeting.

I thank also, on behalf of us all, the Secretary-General and the staff of the ASEAN Secretariat for the invaluable support and assistance which they extend to our work and that of our ministers and officials.

Finally, I am sure Your Majesty and Your Excellencies will join me in thanking the Secretariat of this meeting for their quiet and uncomplaining toil.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Statement: President Corazon Aquino on the Official Development Assistance Program of Japan to ASEAN

Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino: On the Official Development Assistance Program of Japan to ASEAN

[Released on December 15, 1987]

FOR GREATER CONCESSIONS

The President notes that Japan had effected part of its announced plan for the major recycling of its surpluses to the developing world. The Philippines having concluded loan agreements under this plan hopes for the acceleration of the process.

The Official Development Assistance program of Japan has been an important instrument for promoting economic cooperation with recipient countries in the ASEAN region. It has served as a major source of external assistance, mainly for the procurement of goods and services from Japan.

While the ODA program must have been carefully crafted to provide largely concessional loans and some grants, the rapid appreciation of the Yen in recent years has more than doubled the dollar value of the original Yen loans. The intended concession has been unwittingly displaced by an exorbitant debt. We therefore hope that Japan will find ways to preserve the concessional character of its assistance.

Currency risk, however, should not inhibit us from considering these loans. We hope that Japan will extend concessional terms sufficient to hedge against this risk.

The imperatives for growth, which in the Philippines means restoring the material welfare of its people to the level of the early Eighties, necessitate substantial external resource inflows. With its huge balance of payments surpluses, we have to look to Japan to meet a substantial part of our requirements. We note that Japan had effected part of its announced plan for the major recycling of its surpluses to the developing world. The Philippines has concluded loan agreements under this plan. We hope however that the process will be accelerated and that the operations of the ASEAN-Japan Development Fund will start as soon as possible.

The Philippines encountered severe delays in concluding its annual Yen Credit Program. We have to give priority attention to the elimination of these delays for the resource requirements of Philippine economic recovery are indeed critical.

The Philippines is the only ASEAN country that had to reschedule its external debts today. It would be imprudent for us to cover our financing gap entirely through more borrowings. Grants are what the Philippines needs. We therefore look forward to working with Japan for a significant increase in the grant component of ODA flows and an improvement in the quality of grants in order to maximize their value to the country. This can best be attained by cash grants and by providing flexibility in the procurement of goods and services in the recipient country.

In conclusion, Excellencies, allow me to briefly summarize my views on how the ODA program of Japan can be more responsive to our needs.

1. Adopt measures to alleviate the adverse impact of Yen appreciation on concessional Yen loans.
2. Increase substantially the amount of ODA flows from Japan.
3. Improve the processing of annual Yen credit programs.
4. Increase and upgrade the quality of ODA grants.

We are of course deeply appreciative of the development assistance extended by Japan in the past. The conditions today, particularly in the Philippines, require greater concessions, amounts, and efficiency in the extension of further

assistance. This would ensure the attainment of our common goals of economic progress in the ASEAN region and the material well-being of its populations, essential to the stability and peace of the Region.

In this regard, we welcome the pledge by Prime Minister Takeshita to establish an ASEAN-Japan Development Fund of no less than \$2 Billion and for his initiative in responding to our request for greater concessions. This Fund shall enhance the vitality of the private sector as the dynamic force in the ASEAN economies.

Excellencies, we all know that this is the first foreign visit undertaken by a newly elected Prime Minister of Japan. We are deeply appreciative of the significance of this visit to the ASEAN region. I am therefore confident that under the leadership of Prime Minister Takeshita we shall be having even closer economic cooperation and prosperity in Asia.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Statement: President Corazon Aquino upon her arrival in Beijing

Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino:
Upon her arrival in Beijing

[Released on April 14, 1988]

A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

President Aquino looks forward to her meetings with China's leaders so we can give more vitality and substance to the special friendship that has long existed between the two countries.

The warm and generous hospitality that my party and I are enjoying betokens the deep affection that marks the old friendship between China and the Philippines. My first stop on this visit was to the village where my family came from. It was important that this should be the sequence of my travels in China, for this is meant to be more than just the diplomatic call of a head of state on a foreign government. My visit to Hong Jian, the ancestral home of many Filipinos, is meant to say that China and the Philippines have more in common than mere membership in the system of sovereign states. I look forward to my meetings with China's great leaders so we can give more vitality and substance to this "special" relationship that has long existed between our two countries. In Hong Jian I said that there are certain foreign places to which one travels as though to a homecoming. The warm welcome that I have received marks China indeed as such a place for Filipinos. I am honored by the invitation of the People's Republic of China. I cannot express enough how deeply pleased I am to be here.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Departure Statement: President Corazon Aquino before leaving for Switzerland and Italy

Departure Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino:
Before leaving for Switzerland and Italy

[Released on June 13, 1988]

TO REAFFIRM FRIENDSHIP

I leave for Switzerland and Italy to reaffirm our friendship with these countries and with Europe as a whole, and to bring to them a corrected image of our country and a just appreciation of what we are all trying to do. I shall speak before the ILO, the center of international labor, and to European industry, finance and commerce, to find ways by which we can cooperate in hastening the recovery of our country.

We held a successful Conference of Newly Restored Democracies without incident. Now I leave for abroad without wild speculations about the stability of government. No one seriously doubts anymore the strength of democracy in our country.

The Congress has just been through a very difficult year but its presence has helped to stabilize us. The country is in good hands and I shall never really be away, because all my efforts will continue to be dedicated and committed to the greater interest of our people.

Ipagdasal po ninyo ang pagtatagumpay ng aking pag-lalakbay.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Arrival Statement of President Corazon Aquino in Manila, June 19, 1988

**Arrival Statement
Manila
June 19, 1988**

A REASON TO REJOICE

The President reports that her six-day visit to Switzerland far surpassed her expectations.

I am quite happy to report that my six-day visit to Switzerland and Italy equalled if not surpassed my expectations. The fact that it was the first by a Philippine head of state already lent its historic dimension.

But what made it doubly significant was the deep reservoir of goodwill for the Philippines. The spiritual renaissance of EDSA was often invoked. So was our courage and steadfastness against the attempts to topple our democracy. So was our commitment to human rights.

When they further learned that despite all the dangers, our economy moved forward, and dynamically at that, they readily volunteered to help.

In Switzerland, the prestigious World Economic Forum pledged to send a mission in October this year. The Forum underscored its determination to invest if this should prove promising.

In Italy, I met with the country's top businessmen, traders and financiers – the Confindustria – and they too will send a top level mission in several months.

Members of Confindustria indicated they would invest where investments would prove most rewarding to both countries. Indeed, we signed nine agreements in Italy and this augurs well for the future of our relations.

So we have reason to rejoice.

And now that we have returned, it's really nice to be back home. Back home to a Filipino people whose faith in God and whose faith in democracy continues to amaze the World, particularly those abroad who first spread the Gospel and freedom to the four corners of the earth.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Statement: President Corazon Aquino on her arrival from Brunei

Arrival Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino:
On her arrival from Brunei

[Released on August 31, 1988]

A FRUITFUL VISIT

The President reports to the people the outcome of her state visit to Brunei.

At the invitation of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanah Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, we paid a state visit to Brunei Darussalam from 29-31 August 1988. As I stated when we started this trip, this visit was a continuation of my goodwill visits to our Asean neighbors which I started with my visit to Indonesia and Singapore in August 1986.

My delegation and I were received very warmly by His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan and the people of Brunei Darussalam. In my meeting with His Majesty the Sultan, I sought the support of His Majesty for the proposed Philippine aid plan. In a spirit of true friendship, His Majesty the Sultan assured us of his support and participation in the Philippine aid plan. Brunei Darussalam will be a member of the Philippine Aid Plan Preparatory Committee.

His Majesty the Sultan and I also agreed to encourage joint efforts to facilitate greater interaction and cooperation between the two countries in bilateral trade, investments, communications, shipping and construction.

During our visit, I had the opportunity to meet with the Brunei National Chamber of Commerce and Industry. I extended our invitation to them to take advantage of the investment opportunities in the Philippines.

I also had the occasion to meet with our countrymen who have found employment in Brunei Darussalam. Meeting our countrymen who work abroad is always an inspiring experience. In response to their request, I have instructed Secretary Drilon to send a welfare officer there next month and assist in the establishment of a welfare center to look after the needs of our Filipino workers in Brunei Darussalam.

As I return from a fruitful state visit to Brunei Darussalam, I wish to thank the Filipino people for their prayers and support during our absence. I am happy to be home.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : June – December 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Statement: President Corazon Aquino on her departure in Europe

**Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino:
On her departure in Europe**

[Released on July 8, 1989]

**EUROPE'S NEW BEGINNINGS:
ALL NATIONS MUST HAVE A PART**

Recent events in Europe such as France taking lead in consolidating Europe and Germany's daring move in welcoming Glasnost are drawing these countries into making Europe a common home. And on this threshold of a new beginning, all nations must have a part.

We are visiting two countries that are pivotal in European affairs — the Federal Republic of Germany and France. There will be a brief visit to Belgium. I say this without meaning to diminish the importance of other European states to the future of Europe and to the affairs of the world at large. And our recent history is not complete without naming those who kept watch with us to the first light of freedom. The timely moral support extended by the European Community states is imprinted indelibly in our hearts.

Yet, unquestionably, Franco-German relations have determined the course of European and world events as no other set of relationships in the past. In recent years, France has taken the lead in quickening the consolidation of Europe, that it may shine in its own light. And Germany has daringly welcomed the progress of Glasnost by concrete measures of trust towards the Soviet initiative. So it appears that a new world is coming to life in the heart of the Old.

Europe is drawing together as a common home. This inward-looking development bodes well and ill for the rest of the world. The greater coordination of European economic and political affairs promises to release an unprecedented amount of capital and energy for development. Yet in looking inward for the power to become more, Europe may ultimately diminish rather than grow. We grow with the rest of the world or not at all. It is the nature of the international economy.

I hope that the presence of the Philippines—particularly in France at the Bicentennial celebration of an event of universal significance—and in Germany—with its immeasurable fund of goodwill towards the Filipinos—will remind a continent on the threshold of unity that it is not just turning a new leaf in its history but starting a new chapter in which all nations must have a part.

The invitation for the Philippines to grace the 200th anniversary of the French Revolution is a particularly great honor for us. On occasions like this, we are reminded again that the Philippines is singled out for special honor on the world's stage because of the unique accomplishments of its people. This must impress those of us in the public service with a deeper sense of duty to serve our people well.

Contingencies in my absence have been well provided for, but as I have always said, the greatest provision remains our people's unshakeable determination always to be free.

We leave confident that we shall return with yet stronger friendships and more meaningful relationships with the Federal Republic of Germany, with France, and with Belgium.

Kami ay nagpapaalam na taglay ang pagnanasang makabalik sa ating tinubuang lupa sa piling ng mga minamahal na kababayan na aming pinagsisikapang pagsilbihan nang mahusay at matapat.

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Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

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Contingencies in my absence have been well provided for, but as I have always said, the greatest provision remains our people's unshakeable determination always to be free.

We leave confident that we shall return with yet stronger friendships and more meaningful relationships with the Federal Republic of Germany, with France, and with Belgium.

Kami ay nagpapaalam na taglay ang pagnanasang makabalik sa ating tinubuang lupa sa piling ng mga minamahal na kababayan na aming pinagsisikapang pagsilbihan nang mahusay at matapat.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Statement: President Corazon Aquino on her arrival from Europe

Arrival Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino:
On her visit to Europe

[Delivered at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, July 15, 1989]

A FRUITFUL TRIP

Europeans have shown support for Philippine initiatives abroad and development efforts at home. There, the President discovered how deep and far ranging the global admiration was for the Filipinos. This visit to Europe has called attention to Philippine democracy, courage, honor, and heroism.

I am glad to be home.

In the span of a week, Germany, France, Belgium and the European Community learned more about the Philippines than they had in years.

They hailed our democracy and admired our courage and sense of honor.

They congratulated us for performing so well amidst difficulties so great.

As they listened, we told them of our heroism, of our humanity and of our hopes.

I asked for increases in trade and investments, not of their generosity but in their own interests no less than those of ours, I asked for debt relief, not as something we beg for, but as something we rightly deserve on the basis of sound economic performance.

I spoke of human rights and convinced them of our unrelenting commitment to effectively uphold them.

I invited them to share with us the rich future of the coming age of the Pacific.

They responded by saying that they had long awaited for this call. That henceforth they shall support our initiatives abroad and our development efforts at home.

They want us proven right – that democracy brings sustained economic gains for people in developing countries.

Together, we discovered the range and depth of global admiration for us, for what we did in EDSA and after EDSA.

I was ably helped by Senator Paterno and Congressman Ramon Bagatsing Jr., and the rest of my official party.

The Philippine business delegation did so well and met with unexpectedly large numbers of European businessmen all throughout.

I thank our flag carrier the Philippine Airlines, our embassy and consulate people in the host countries, and our Filipino communities with whom I met and who greeted us so warmly.

Sa inyong lahat na nanatili dito, at sa lahat na ating mga kababayan,

Maraming salamat at mabuhay!

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : January – July 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Statement: President Corazon Aquino on her departure in Manila

**Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino:
On her departure in Manila**

[Released on November 4, 1989]

SEEKING SUPPORT FROM FRIENDS

President Aquino is leaving for state visits to Canada and the United States. There, she will stress the economic and political progress the Philippines has achieved, and she will seek more support for the work ahead. Her enthusiasm is not dampened by the demonstration of Marcos loyalists on the eve of her departure which to President Aquino is a failed people power. For the President avers that “People Power is not a political technique, it is a selfless action for a moral purpose”.

For the next eight days, I shall be on state visits to Canada and the United States.

It will be the first state visit of a Philippine president to Canada. From November 4 to 7, I will visit Vancouver, Toronto, and the capital city of Ottawa. I shall meet with trade and business leaders of Canada as well as with the Filipino communities.

I shall seek from Canada increased trade and investments for the Philippines and discuss with the Canadian Prime Minister not only bilateral matters but also international and multilateral issues of common concern to us.

From November 8 to 11, I shall be in the United States.

In New York, I shall launch the First Philippine Fund to generate investments in Philippine equities from US-based investors – American, European, and Asian.

I shall meet with President Bush, in Washington, D.C., and we shall take up bilateral issues of trade and investments, as well as debt relief, and the Philippine Assistance Program. I shall also meet with the leaders of the US Congress and address Filipino communities.

I shall go to Dallas to promote Philippine-made products. I shall bid goodbye to the Filipino community in Los Angeles on my departure for home.

It is our aim to project the progress of the Philippines in the past three years– in the economy as well as in politics – and explain to the Canadian and US leaderships the challenges we still face.

In my first visit to the United States, I spoke of the promising beginning we had made, of the difficulties ahead, and of our determination to succeed.

Now I shall seek greater support from friends for the work that yet remains, so that the freedom we have won shall be truly meaningful to us all

I depart, as always, with confidence that the safety of the government is assured in the care of the people. Yesterday’s loyalist demonstration does not diminish that confidence. Most of the demonstrators had left before dawn, except for around 300 who insisted on staying on, leaving the police no alternative but to disperse them.

The events this morning underscore an important truth: people power is not a political technique, it is a selfless action for a moral purpose. It springs from a heritage of faith and freedom and will rise to the occasion only when these supreme values are threatened.

I call on all the people, regardless of their politics, to join us in a firm resolve to work for those goals that all of us must share as Filipinos: the progress of the economy, the upliftment of the people, and the heightened respect of the international community for our country.

Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Statement: President Corazon Aquino on her arrival in Canada

Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino:
On her arrival in Canada

[Released on November 6, 1989]

AN OLD AND TESTED FRIENDSHIP

Being the first Philippine President to visit Canada to strengthen the friendship between two peoples, the President has come to thank Canada for all the support in our struggle for freedom.

Thank you, Your Excellency, for the warm and generous welcome. I am fortunate to be honored as the first Philippine president to visit Canada and to strengthen, by a direct hand, the friendship between our two peoples.

That friendship is old and tested. It has risen beyond diplomatic courtesies to very substantial gestures of help and support from Canada to the Filipino people. In our struggle for freedom, Canada stood by us. In our uncertain triumph, Canada stood guarantee for the legitimacy of our new government and our new democracy. In those perilous days when all we had was faith in the lightness of our cause, Canada stepped forward to hail a new, free, and sovereign nation. The Canadian ambassador was the first to present his credentials to the new administration.

I have come to thank your country for its past support and express our confidence and desire to see the evolution of your unilateral generosity into a mutually advantageous cooperation through the expansion of our trade and in the joint development of the tremendous possibilities for shared prosperity that lie within my country and throughout the Pacific. Canada has expressed the desire to launch a Pacific initiative. The Philippines will be with her. Thank you.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Arrival Statement of President Corazon Aquino at the White House

Arrival Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino: At the White House

[Delivered on November 8, 1989]

REVIVING OLD TEES

President Aquino arrives in the United States full of hope that her country will achieve economic recovery and sustainable economic growth, with the help of friends. She hopes to discuss and explore ways by which the Philippines and the United States can cooperate to their mutual economic benefit. She will also renew her acquaintance with some members of the Congress, meet with officials of the International Monetary Fund, and renew contact with Filipino communities in the US.

Three years ago, I came to Washington as the head of a country reeling from two decades of misrule. With its economy just beginning to stir back to life, I stood here nonetheless, as the representative of the Filipino people, with a great deal of pride. For the Philippines had recovered its freedom and had become again a member in good standing, alongside the United States, in the club of democracies. It is true that authoritarian governments can be proud and often are excessively, but not their countries. Only free nations can truly feel pride.

Today, I stand here with a great deal of hope – hope for the full economic recovery of my country; a recovery that is well on its way to becoming sustainable economic growth, with some help from our friends.

I come to Washington at the invitation of President George Bush. With him and with Vice President Dan Quayle, State Secretary James Baker, Treasury Secretary Nicolas Brady, and other officials, I hope to discuss a wide variety of issues affecting Philippine-American relations in line with the United States' long efforts to maintain stability, foster peace, encourage freedom, and uplift the living standards of peoples throughout the world. We will raise particularly the means by which the Philippines and the United States can cooperate in more areas to our mutual economic benefit. We shall explore the means to increase trade between two countries with long historic ties and deep cultural affinities. We shall do these things so that, by the economic improvement of the one, these two oldest allies in Asia can be stronger together.

These issues will not be easily or quickly resolved. But it is good, for the sake of a friendship that we would want to deepen further, to begin their discussion with face to face meetings, the establishment of personal rapport, and an affirmation of the values that we shall never compromise and ever uphold.

While in Washington, I also expect to renew my acquaintance with various members of the Congress that received me so warmly on my first visit. And to get down to serious discussions with the officials of the International Monetary Fund. And, equally important, I shall be renewing contacts with the Filipino communities in the cities I shall visit; for they represent in the most vivid way for Americans the other side of the longest standing alliance for peace in the Pacific.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Departure Statement of President Corazon Aquino in Washington, D.C.

Departure Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino: In Washington, D.C.

[Delivered on November 10, 1989]

A HOPEFUL ENDING

President Aquino ends her fruitful visit to the nerve center of the world's most powerful nation — Washington. She leaves with great hope that her talks with key US figures will ultimately have beneficial results for both countries.

Washington is the nerve-center of the most powerful nation in the world. Over the past two days, I was privileged to sit down with some of the key figures in that center: President Bush, Vice President Quayle, State Secretary Baker, Treasury Secretary Brady and Speaker Foley. The conversations I had with all of them were very cordial. Even more important, they were fruitful. We discussed a wide range of subjects involving Philippine-American relations.

I also met with officials of the International Monetary Fund and with business leaders of both the Philippine and American communities. I am hopeful that the talks I had with them will ultimately have beneficial results for the Philippines and for America.

I leave this great American capital with happy memories of the warmth and goodwill shown to me by my hosts. Goodbye, and may the good Lord bless us all.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Statement: President Corazon Aquino upon arrival in Manila

Arrival Statement of President Corazon C. Aquino:
Upon arrival in Manila

[Released on November 13, 1989]

OPENING DOORS ALL OVER THE WORLD

The trip to Canada and the United States was most rewarding. Not only were new friendships made and economic doors opened, but international relations were strengthened and goodwill was generated as well. Most importantly, the Filipinos, through the People Power revolution, have made a universal connection with other peoples hoping to establish democracy in their own nations.

I need not tell you that I am truly happy to be back.

My visit to Canada and the United States was hectic – seven cities in eight days – but I can tell you that it has been productive in many ways.

In Vancouver, I met with Canadian businessmen. With them, I held fruitful discussions during which I informed them of the advantages and benefits they would get by investing in the Philippines and its glowing economic future.

In Toronto, where there is a significantly large Filipino community, I sat down with our countrymen and I urged them to stretch their hands across the seas and reach out to us here. The Canadian-Filipinos are in a position to help, and they expressed their willingness to do so.

In Ottawa, where I had the privilege of meeting Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and Governor General Jeanne Sauve, I received repeated assurances of Canada's continuing friendship with the Philippines. I can report to you now that we signed a number of significant agreements with Canada including an extradition treaty that should soon enable us to secure the return to the Philippines of individuals who have broken our laws so that they can answer for their offenses. Furthermore, Canada is sending a trade delegation to the Philippines in February next year. We got from Canada \$127M in assistance, plus debt restructuring.

In New York, I presided over the launching of the Philippine Fund. The sale of these shares, I am confident, will help generate the revenues that we need for our economic development. I also met with eminent leaders from Wall Street, the Chamber of Commerce in New York and the RP-US business council. I believe I succeeded in impressing upon them the long-term stability of our country and the permanence of our political institutions.

In Washington, I had serious conversations with President Bush, Vice President Quayle, State Secretary Baker, Treasury Secretary Brady and Defense Secretary Cheney. They came away from our meetings with a deeper appreciation of our achievements and of our requirements for further economic development. The U.S. Congress restored the full commitment of \$200M to the MAI/PAP.

I have impressed on the IMF the urgency of poverty alleviation and of allowing this as a major factor in the fund's prescriptive reforms.

In Dallas, I saw how the department store chain, JC Penney, is promoting Philippine products. I have every confidence that as a result of the promotional efforts of this prestigious chain, the market for Philippine handicrafts will expand, to the lasting benefit of the Philippines.

I addressed the leaders of the American oil industry on the prospects of Philippine oil discovery and development and outlined the support they can expect from the government. Their response was very positive. And in this and the other meetings I had with business groups, I was so ably supported by the Philippine business delegation.

And my stopover in Los Angeles, which was the last in my itinerary, I spent in prayer and communion with our countrymen there.

It was, all in all, a most rewarding trip. Rewarding, not just in terms of new friendships made and new economic doors opened, but, more importantly, in terms of the strengthening of international relations and in the goodwill generated.

What stood out, however, in the trip was the universal connection that was made at every official function between the startling and hopeful events in central Europe and what will be the Philippines' most remembered contribution to mankind – the people power revolution which continues to reverberate throughout the world. It was a proud time to be Filipino.

To the Filipinos in Canada and the United States: we are all so proud of you.

Again, it's good to be home. God bless us all.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1989). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August – December 1989*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

HISTORICAL PAPERS AND DOCUMENTS

R.C.C. NO. 23 Thursday, July 3, 1986

R.C.C. NO. 23

Thursday, July 3, 1986

OPENING OF SESSION

At 5:22 p.m., the President, the Honorable Cecilia Muñoz Palma, opened the session.

THE PRESIDENT: The session is called to order.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE PRESIDENT: Everybody will please rise to sing the National Anthem.

Everybody rose to sing the National Anthem.

THE PRESIDENT: Everybody will please remain standing for the Prayer to be led by the Honorable Wilfrido V. Villacorta.

Everybody remained standing for the Prayer.

PRAYER

MR. VILLACORTA: A reading from the Book of Psalms: Show Your power, O God, the power that You have used on our behalf, from Your temple in Jerusalem where kings bring gifts to You.

Rebuke Egypt — that wild animal in the reeds. Rebuke the nations — that herd bulls with their calves — until they bow down and offer You their silver. Scatter those people who love to make war.

Ambassadors will come from Egypt; the Sudanese will raise their hands in prayer to God.

Sing to God, kingdoms of the world; sing praise to the Lord, to Him who rise in the ancient sky. Listen to Him shout with a mighty roar. Proclaim God's power; His Majesty is over Israel; His might is in the skies.

How awesome is God as He comes from His sanctuary, the God of Israel. He gives strength and power to His people. Praise God.

Almighty Lord, You have given us this gift of having the historic opportunity to frame the new Constitution of our people. Please will it that we may reciprocate Your kindness and generosity by giving our people a worthy gift: a liberative document that will restore the freedom and dignity of which they have been deprived for four centuries.

Please make us worthy of the people's trust. While in the past, we have in our humble ways tried to help the less fortunate of our brothers and sisters, we have largely been concerned with ourselves, our family, our interests.

Please inspire and give us strength, O Lord, to transcend our selfish needs and aspirations so that we can fully offer ourselves towards the obliteration of exploitation in our land — exploitation coming from within as well as from without.

As we remember tomorrow our special relations with a giant power, enlighten us with Your Holy Spirit so that we can reflect thoroughly on the issues concerned and arrive at the best approach that would maximally serve the paramount national interest of our beloved Philippines; so that when we face the judgment of history, our descendants will look back to this Constitutional Commission with pride and admiration, and not with shame and derision; and so that we, all in this Commission, can contribute to Your Glory and that of our people. Amen.

ROLL CALL

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary-General will call the roll.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Abubakar	Present	Jamir	Present
Alonto	Present *	Laurel	Present
Aquino	Present	Lerum	Present
Azcuna	Present	Maambong	Present
Bacani	Present	Monsod	Present
Bengzon	Present	Natividad	Absent
Bennagen	Present	Nieva	Present
Bernas	Present	Nolledo	Present
Rosario Braid	Present	Ople	Present
Brocka	Present	Padilla	Present
Calderon	Present	Quesada	Present
Castro de	Present	Rama	Present
Colayco	Present	Regalado	Present
Concepcion	Present	Reyes de los	Present
Davide	Present	Rigos	Present
Foz	Present	Rodrigo	Present
Garcia	Present	Romulo	Present
Gascon	Present*	Rosales	Absent
Guingona	Present	Sarmiento	Present
Suarez	Present	Treñas	Present
Sumulong	Present	Uka	Present
Tadeo	Present	Villacorta	Present
Tan	Present	Villegas	Present
Tingson	Absent		

The President is present.

The roll call shows 43 Members responded to the call.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

MR. CALDERON: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Assistant Floor Leader is recognized.

APPROVAL OF JOURNAL

MR. CALDERON: Madam President, I move that we dispense with the reading of the Journal of the previous session and that we approve the same.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

MR. CALDERON: Madam President, I move that we proceed to the Reference of Business.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Secretary-General will read the Reference of Business.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary-General read the following Proposed Resolutions on First Reading and Communications, the President making the corresponding references:

Proposed Resolution No. 374, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING TO INCREASE FROM SIXTY TO SEVENTY-FIVE PER CENTUM CAPITAL OWNERSHIP OF FILIPINO CITIZENS IN CORPORATIONS AND OTHER ENTITIES FOR THESE CORPORATIONS TO QUALIFY AS GRANTEES OF FRANCHISES OR CERTIFICATES TO OPERATE PUBLIC UTILITIES AND TO DISALLOW FOREIGNERS FROM SITTING IN THE GOVERNING BODY OR BOARD OF ANY PUBLIC UTILITY.

Introduced by Hon. Calderon, Alonto, Tingson, Maambong, Nolleto and Rama.

To the Committee on the National Economy and Patrimony.

Proposed Resolution No. 375, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING TO SET ASIDE LANDS OF PUBLIC DOMAIN AS PERMANENT SETTLEMENT AREAS FOR CULTURAL MINORITIES.

Introduced by Hon. Tingson.

To the Committee on the National Economy and Patrimony.

Proposed Resolution No. 376, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION AFFORDING MORE PROTECTION TO LABOR AND GUARANTEEING BASIC HUMAN AND TRADE UNION RIGHTS.

Introduced by Hon. Gascon and Garcia.

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Proposed Resolution No. 377, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCLUDE IN THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION THREE, ARTICLE THIRTEEN, OF THE 1973 CONSTITUTION, AS AMENDED, WITH MODIFICATION, PROVIDING FOR AUTOMATIC INITIATION OF IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS AFTER THE ONE-FIFTH VOTE.

Introduced by Hon. Treñas.

To the Committee on Accountability of Public Officers.

Proposed Resolution No. 379, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCLUDE IN THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION A PROVISION TO EMPHASIZE AND STRENGTHEN THE CONSTITUTIONAL BASE FOR A SOCIAL HOUSING PROGRAM.

Introduced by Hon. Treñas.

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Proposed Resolution No. 380, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCLUDE IN THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION THE FIXING OF THE MINIMUM ELECTION PERIOD.

Introduced by Hon. Treñas.

To the Committee on Constitutional Commissions and Agencies.

Proposed Resolution No. 381, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION MANDATING THE ELIMINATION IN THE POLITICAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL LIFE OF THE NATION.

Introduced by Hon. Davide, Jr.

To the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles.

Proposed Resolution No. 382, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION RECOGNIZING HUMAN RIGHTS AS INVOLABLE AND INALIENABLE.

Introduced by Hon. Davide, Jr.

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights

Proposed Resolution No. 383, entitled:

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE RIGHT OF A CITIZEN TO REFUSE TO RENDER WAR SERVICE ON GROUNDS OF CONSCIENCE.

Introduced by Hon. Davide, Jr.

To the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles.

Proposed Resolution No. 384, entitled:

RESOLUTION AFFIRMING THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE, WHETHER EMPLOYED BY THE STATE OR NOT, TO FORM ASSOCIATIONS OR UNIONS WHOSE PURPOSE IS NOT CONTRARY TO LAW.

Introduced by Hon. Lerum.

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights.

Proposed Resolution No. 385, entitled:

RESOLUTION STRENGTHENING THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS BY INCORPORATING IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION EXPRESSLY PROHIBITING CENSORSHIP.

Introduced by Hon. Davide, Jr.

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights.

Proposed Resolution No. 386, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO IMPRESS WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVENESS THE RIGHTS GUARANTEED BY THE BILL OF RIGHTS BY INCORPORATING IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION THAT SAID RIGHTS BIND THE LEGISLATURE, THE EXECUTIVE, AND THE JUDICIARY AS DIRECTLY ENFORCEABLE LAW.

Introduced by Hon. Davide, Jr.

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights.

Proposed Resolution No. 387, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCLUDE A SECTION ON EDUCATION IN THE ARTICLE ON HUMAN RESOURCES.

Introduced by Hon. Rosario Braid.

To the Committee on Human Resources.

Proposed Resolution No. 388, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCLUDE IN THE ARTICLE ON NATIONAL ECONOMY AND PATRIMONY OF THE NATION A PROVISION TO INCLUDE AIRWAVES AS PART OF THE NATIONAL PATRIMONY.

Introduced by Hon. Rosario Braid and Bacani.

To the Committee on the National Economy and Patrimony.

Proposed Resolution No. 389, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING A PROVISION ALLOWING FOREIGN INVESTORS TO ACQUIRE, HOLD OR OWN LOTS WITH LIMITED AREA, REQUIRED FOR THE OPERATION OF EXPORT-ORIENTED INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES.

Introduced by Hon. Padilla.

To the Committee on the National Economy and Patrimony.

Proposed Resolution No. 390, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION THAT THE CHURCH AND THE STATE ARE INDEPENDENT OF EACH OTHER BUT MUST WORK TOGETHER HARMONIOUSLY FOR THE COMMON GOOD.

Introduced by Hon. Nollado.

To the Committee on General Provisions.

Proposed Resolution No. 391, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE ARTICLE ON THE LEGISLATURE PROVISIONS DEFINING THE FUNCTIONS AND POWERS OF THE LEGISLATURE TO EXEMPT FROM TAXATION CHARITABLE AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS AND TO PROHIBIT THE APPROPRIATION OF PUBLIC MONEY OR PROPERTY AND OTHER RESOURCES FOR THE USE, BENEFIT OR SUPPORT OF ANY CHURCH OR SYSTEM OF RELIGION.

Introduced by Hon. Rigos.

To the Committee on the Legislative.

Proposed Resolution No. 392, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION THAT THE COMMISSION OF GROSS VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES RESULTING IN A NATIONAL FAILURE OF JUSTICE AMONG THE GROUNDS FOR IMPEACHMENT.

Introduced by Hon. Sarmiento.

To the Committee on Accountability of Public Officers.

Proposed Resolution No. 393, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION REQUIRING THE STATE TO PROMOTE POLITICAL PLURALISM AND PROHIBIT ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND REPRESSION BY REASON OF POLITICAL CONVICTION.

Introduced by Hon. Sarmiento.

To the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles.

Proposed Resolution No. 394, entitled:

RESOLUTION INCORPORATING IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION AN ARTICLE RECOGNIZING AND DEFINING THE RIGHTS OF POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS TO LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Introduced by Hon. Sarmiento.

To the Committee on Local Governments.

Proposed Resolution No. 395, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES PROVISIONS ON THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE.

Introduced by Hon. Aquino and Quesada.

To the Committee on General Provisions.

Proposed Resolution No. 396, entitled:

RESOLUTION INCORPORATING IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION AN ARTICLE ON THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

Introduced by Hon. Sarmiento.

To the Committee on the Legislative.

Proposed Resolution No. 397, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION CREATING AN AGENCY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES' UNIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS.

Introduced by Hon. Sarmiento and Tan.

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Proposed Resolution No. 398, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION GRANTING THE RIGHT TO FORM UNIONS AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING TO GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.

Introduced by Hon. Sarmiento and Tan.

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Proposed Resolution No. 399, entitled:

RESOLUTION EMBODYING SECTION 1, ARTICLE XII, B, OF THE 1973 CONSTITUTION IN THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION BUT WITH AN AMENDMENT THAT THE COLLEGE DEGREE REQUIRED OF MEMBERS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION SHALL PREFERABLY BE IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION BUT THE CHAIRMAN AND A COMMISSIONER MUST HAVE BEEN MEMBERS OF THE PHILIPPINE BAR FOR AT LEAST TEN YEARS AND WITH FURTHER AMENDMENTS REGARDING THE FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMISSION.

Introduced by Hon. Foz.

To the Committee on Constitutional Commissions and Agencies.

Proposed Resolution No. 400, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR A BICAMERAL LEGISLATURE, WHICH SHALL BE KNOWN AS CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES, WHOSE UPPER HOUSE SHALL BE A SENATE OF TWENTY-FOUR

(24) MEMBERS ELECTED AT LARGE AND WHOSE LOWER HOUSE SHALL BE COMPOSED OF REPRESENTATIVES ELECTED BY DISTRICT.

Introduced by Hon. Calderon, Uka, Alonto, Rodrigo, and Tingson.

To the Committee on the Legislative.

Proposed Resolution No. 401, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A SEPARATE ARTICLE ESTABLISHING THE FRAMEWORK FOR A NATIONALIST, SELF-RELIANT AND PROGRESSIVE ECONOMY FOUNDED ON GENUINE INDUSTRIALIZATION GUIDED BY THE PRINCIPLES OF NATIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION AND EQUITABLE SHARING.

Introduced by Hon. Tadeo, Suarez, Quesada, Brocka, Jamir, Bennagen, Sarmiento, Villacorta, Gascon, Garcia, and Aquino.

To the Committee on the National Economy and Patrimony.

Proposed Resolution No. 402, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES PROVISIONS ON PEACE, NEUTRALITY, AND NONALIGNMENT.

Introduced by Hon. Aquino, Azcuna, Bennagen, Brocka, Garcia, Gascon, Quesada, Sarmiento, Suarez, Tadeo, Tan, Villacorta, Rosario Braid, Davide, Jr., Uka and Regalado.

To the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles.

Proposed Resolution No. 403, entitled:

RESOLUTION URGING THE CONSTITUTIONAL COMMISSION TO CONSIDER THE ADOPTION OF A PARLIAMENTARY FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

Introduced by Hon. Suarez, Tadeo and Bennagen,

To the Committee on the Legislative.

Proposed Resolution No. 404, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING A PROVISION IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION PROHIBITING GAMBLING AND OTHER SIMILAR VICES.

Introduced by Hon. Tingson.

To the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles.

Proposed Resolution No. 405, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION ON SUFFRAGE.

Introduced by Hon. Tingson.

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights.

Proposed Resolution No. 406, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR A SECTION OF EDUCATION IN THE ARTICLE ON THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

Introduced by Hon. Rosario Braid, Villacorta and Gascon.

To the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles.

Proposed Resolution No. 407, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCLUDE IN THE ARTICLE ON DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES AND STATE POLICIES A PROVISION CONSTITUTING COMMUNICATION RESOURCES AS A VITAL NATIONAL RESOURCE.

Introduced by Hon. Rosario Braid.

To the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles.

Proposed Resolution No. 408, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROVIDING THAT A SEPARATE ARTICLE ON MASS MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION BE INCLUDED IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION.

Introduced by Hon. Rosario Braid, Villacorta, Gascon, Foz and Brocka.

To the Committee on General Provisions.

COMMUNICATIONS

Letter from the People's Panel for a Nationalist and Democratic Constitution signed by Mr. J. Virgilio Bautista, submitting politico-legal, sociocultural, and economic proposals.

(Communication No. 103 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Steering Committee.

Letter from the People's Panel for a Nationalist and Democratic Constitution signed by Mr. J. Virgilio Bautista, requesting information on the schedule of public hearings to enable them to participate.

(Communication No. 104 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Ad Hoc Planning Committee on Public Hearings. Letter from Concerned Churches for Christian Liberty signed by Rev. Luis Reunilla, submitting a position paper on Christian Education.

(Communication No. 105 — Constitutional Commission of 1986).

To the Commission on Human Resources.

Communication from Solidarity, Padre Faura, Manila, presenting a program for cultural renewal.

(Communication No. 106 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Human Resources.

Letter from Paralegal Training Services Center, Tribal Filipino Desk, signed by Ms. Donna B. Zapa, enclosing a resolution for the recognition of national minority people's rights.

(Communication No. 107 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Human Resources.

Letter from the Veterans' Federation of the Philippines signed by Mr. Emmanuel V. de Ocampo, submitting a resolution requesting a constitutional provision that the state shall provide compensation for services rendered by war heroes and freedom fighters.

(Communication No. 108 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on General Provisions.

Letter from the Family Planning Organization of the Philippines, Iloilo Chapter, signed by Ms. Perfecta D. Tamayo, requesting the inclusion of a policy statement on planned population growth.

(Communication No. 109 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on General Provisions.

Letter from Mr. Juan de la Cruz of Bacolod City, submitting proposed provisions regarding the executive department, among others.

(Communication No. 110 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on the Executive.

Letter from Mr. Alfredo J. Quemada of Suerte Heights, Kidapawan, Cotabato, suggesting, among others, a review of the land reform policy.

(Communication No. 111 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Letter from Mr. Alvaro P. Villar of Hagonoy, Tagig, Metro Manila. suggesting provisions on graft and corruption.

(Communication No. 112 — Constitutional Commission of 1986) To the Committee on Accountability of Public Officers. Letter from Concerned Young Filipinos from the South signed by Mr. Rogelio V. Paglomutan and six others, suggesting proposals on the form of government, national economy and local governments, among others.

(Communication No. 113 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Steering Committee.

Letter from Mr. Juanito M. Acanto of Iznart Street, Iloilo City, suggesting synchronization of elections, among others.

(Communication No. 114 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Constitutional Commissions and Agencies.

Communication from the Nationalist Movement for a Progressive Philippines giving answers to questions relevant to our heritage in land.

(Communication No. 115 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on the National Economy and Patrimony.

MS. AQUINO: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 263
(Article on National Territory)
Continuation

PERIOD OF AMENDMENTS

MS. AQUINO: Madam President, I move that we proceed to the continuation of consideration on Second Reading of Committee Report No. 3 on Proposed Resolution No. 263.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

MS. AQUINO: To set some order in the floor deliberations, we would like to request the Commissioners to please register with us first whenever they seek recognition; and also to respect the five-minute time limit.

Madam President, we are now in the period of amendments.

We ask that Commissioner Davide be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Davide may proceed.

MR. DAVIDE: Thank you, Madam President. The proposal is an amendment to the individual amendment of Commissioner Azcuna on line 3 of the draft on the National Territory, and it consists merely in the deletion of the words “now or hereafter” between the words “territories” and “belonging.”

THE PRESIDENT: What does the sponsor say?

MR. AZCUNA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Azcuna is recognized.

MR. AZCUNA: As far as I am concerned, I accept the deletion of the said words, but I would like to ask the sponsor if he shares the same view.

MR. NOLLEDO: Madam President, the Committee accepts the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: The Committee has accepted the amendment.

Is there any objection to the amendment proposed by Commissioner Davide? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the proposed amendment to the individual amendment is approved.

MR. DAVIDE: Thank you, Madam President.

MS. AQUINO: Madam President, we ask that Commissioner Bernas be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Bernas is recognized.

FR. BERNAS: Madam President, I propose to delete the phrase “belonging to the Philippines by sovereign right or legal title” and in lieu thereof insert OVER WHICH THE GOVERNMENT EXERCISES SOVEREIGN JURISDICTION.

So lines 3 and 4 of the proposed draft will now read: “and all other territories OVER WHICH THE GOVERNMENT EXERCISES SOVEREIGN JURISDICTION consisting of the terrestrial, fluvial and aerial domains. . . .”

MR. AZCUNA: Madam President, I regret that I cannot accept the amendment.

MR. NOLLEDO: The Committee likewise regrets that it cannot accept the amendment.

FR. BERNAS: May I say a few words in support of this amendment?

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Bernas may explain his proposed amendment.

FR. BERNAS: When I spoke three days ago, the proposition I made was that, if we must have an Article on National Territory at all, it must be one which does not contain any phrase, clause or word which may harm our diplomatic relations with other nations. The phrase “legal title,” as I pointed out the other day, has acquired a very definite historical meaning since the explanation for it was recorded in the annals of the 1971 Constitutional Convention. This phrase was put in for the purpose of covering the claim to various parts of the world like Sabah, the Marianas, et cetera, over which the Philippines was not actually exercising jurisdiction. But as I said, it was meant to be a coverall provision. So, if we keep this together with the meaning it has acquired as now known among our neighbors, the irritation will continue. For that reason, I would prefer that this phrase be deleted.

THE PRESIDENT: Is Commissioner Bernas through?

FR. BERNAS: Yes.

MS. AQUINO: Madam President, we ask that Commissioner de Castro be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner de Castro is recognized.

MR. DE CASTRO: Thank you, Madam President.

I would like to ask Commissioner Azcuna why the word “history” on line 4 was changed to “sovereign.”

MR. MAAMBONG: Madam President.

MS. AQUINO: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

MS. AQUINO: Commissioner Bernas is presently proposing an amendment to which Commissioner de Castro's point is not yet responsive. May we request that Commissioner Guingona be recognized?

THE PRESIDENT: Is he going to speak regarding the proposed amendment of Commissioner Bernas?

MS. AQUINO: Yes, it is on the proposed amendment of Commissioner Bernas.

THE PRESIDENT: The Gentleman may proceed.

MR. GUINGONA: Madam President, with due respect to the honorable Commissioner Bernas, I strongly object to his proposed amendment. In my opinion, such an amendment might be misconstrued to mean that we are dropping our claim over Sabah. I have mentioned in my previous talk that our proposed provision on National Territory should be as flexible as possible.

So, we should not close the door to any future claim, whether foreseen or unforeseen, of our government.

FR. BERNAS: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Is Commissioner Guingona through?

MR. GUINGONA: Not yet. May I please continue.

I regret that this abandonment might even be suggested even before a thorough, unbiased and searching review or evaluation of our claim is made and completed. I also regret that this abandonment would give the presumption that this Commission has lost faith in our officials; that it believes our officials will act without integrity and responsibility, that they would, on our behalf, present unsupported and illegal claims. I also regret that mention has been made of its damage or danger to the Philippines. Assuming these were true, Madam President, does this mean that anytime in the future we may want to claim or study a claim we should desist or hide ourselves in fear simply because there is danger of irritation or damage or because of the hostility of the other party or state concerned? Besides, Madam President, I do not believe that the picture presented to us is an accurate one, with due respect to those who presented it. They presented to us that Malaysians are hostile, vengeful and unfriendly. I have been to Malaysia several times, Madam President. I had the privilege of inviting personally the then Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman to the Philippines which led to his first visit to our country. I had, have and still have a lot of Malaysian friends. The only Malaysians who might be hostile to us are the overzealous, ultranationalistic officials of the government, particularly those in the foreign office. I, for one, can affirm even under oath that Malaysians are good, understanding and friendly and, therefore, I very strongly object to the proposed amendment, because of a possible misconstruction of what we mean in this proposed provision.

Thank you, Madam President.

FR. BERNAS: Madam President, may I be allowed a brief response.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Bernas may proceed.

FR. BERNAS: With similar due respect, I would like to say that while the amendment does not include Sabah, it does not exclude it either. We adhere to the generally accepted principle of international law which enables the

nation to acquire territory by cession, purchase and so forth. The phrase I suggest is: "All other territories OVER WHICH THE GOVERNMENT EXERCISES SOVEREIGN JURISDICTION . . ." because if at some future time the Philippine government exercises jurisdiction over Sabah or Russia, or the United States, it will be part of our territory. So, this is a very, very flexible concept. We claim as part of our territory any territory over which the government exercises sovereign jurisdiction. Madam President, it will be noted that I do not say: "over which the present government exercises jurisdiction." I just say: " . . . OVER WHICH THE GOVERNMENT EXERCISES SOVEREIGN JURISDICTION." As I said, if at some future time our government exercises jurisdiction over, say, Russia, then it will be included in our territory.

THE PRESIDENT: We are now in the process of approving amendments to the proposed amendment on the Article on National Territory.

MR. NOLLEDO: Yes, Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: So, we really should not be entering into a prolonged debate on this matter. But in order that the Commissioners could vote intelligently on the amendment, the Chair is permitting some comments on or objections to the proposed amendment of Commissioner Bernas, subject to limitation.

Commissioner Bernas proposed an amendment which the Committee and Commissioner Azcuna rejected. Commissioner Guingona is also against the proposed amendment. So, I think we still have one more speaker, after which we will vote on the matter.

MR. MAAMBONG: Madam President.

MR. DE CASTRO: Madam President.

MS. AQUINO: Madam President, I ask that Commissioner Maambong be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Maambong is recognized.

MR. MAAMBONG: Madam President, I know that we are adopting liberality in the Rules, and I am not raising a point of order. Since we are in the period of amendments, I would just like to state for the record, without raising a point of order, the interpretation of the five-minute rule when it comes to amendments: Any Member shall be allowed five minutes to explain any amendment he may offer after which the Member who shall first obtain the floor (like Commissioner Guingona) shall be allowed five minutes to speak in opposition to it and there shall be no further debate thereon.

Madam President, of course, we can always relax the Rules but I am saying that the proponent of an amendment has five minutes to explain his amendment, and the opponent to the amendment has also five minutes to speak against it. But if we relax the Rules, that is perfectly all right.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think Commissioner Guingona has consumed the five minutes. According to the timekeeper, Commissioner de Castro had only one minute to explain.

Commissioner Maambong is calling our attention to the Rules.

MR. DE CASTRO: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner de Castro is recognized.

MR. DE CASTRO: When this Rules was first sponsored and debated upon, there were so many people against it. Since yesterday, about five spoke for and against the subject in question, in contradiction with our Rules. Now, I want to speak on something, but the Chair gave me only one minute. Madam President, let us be fair in this hall.

I regret that on line 4, “historic” was changed to “sovereign,” because according to those who proposed the change, Sabah does not like it. Madam President, this is a municipal law. It is effective within our country. If I want to befriend a certain person or a certain state, and I extend my hand and he extends his also only on condition that I take away the word “historic” in the provision on National Territory, that is blackmail to me. I insist that the word “historic” stay just as the framers of the 1973 Constitution did. I understand it is already on record that the word “historic” does not include Sabah, so I am surprised why we still talk of Sabah when we discuss our national territory.

Madam President, thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

MR. NOLLEDO: Madam President, as the sponsor of the committee report, may I be given only two minutes to make a statement opposing the amendment of Commissioner Bernas?

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection to give the sponsor two minutes? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the sponsor is given two minutes.

MR. NOLLEDO: Madam President, I made mention in the last meetings that the term “legal title” does not only refer to our claim to Sabah but also to the boundaries set forth in the Treaty of Paris and in other related treaties. I know there are areas beyond the 12-mile limit which are recognized as national waters under the Treaty of Paris over which we really do not exercise effective jurisdiction. The term “OVER WHICH THE GOVERNMENT EXERCISES SOVEREIGN JURISDICTION” may be susceptible to different interpretations. So, I state that to eliminate the term “historic right or legal title” will be retrogression of the highest order.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: I believe the body is now ready to vote on the amendment of Commissioner Bernas.

MS. AQUINO: Madam President, there being no other interpellators on the amendment proposed by Commissioner Bernas, I move for a vote on the amendment to the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: We will have a voting by the raising of hands instead of by viva voce.

FR. BERNAS: Madam President, may we restate the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, please.

FR. BERNAS: The amendment is: after the phrase “and all other territories” add OVER WHICH THE GOVERNMENT EXERCISES SOVEREIGN JURISDICTION.

VOTING

THE PRESIDENT: As many as are in favor of the amendment of Commissioner Bernas, please raise their right hand. (Several Members raised their hand.)

As many as are against, please raise their right hand. (Few Members raised their hand.)

The results show 21 votes in favor and 14 against; the proposed amendment is approved.

MR. GUINGONA: Madam President, I respectfully move for nominal voting.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE PRESIDENT: The session is suspended.

It was 6:07 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:16 p.m., the session was resumed.

NOMINAL VOTING ON BERNAS AMENDMENT

THE PRESIDENT: The session is resumed. When we called a suspension of the session, there was a motion of Commissioner Guingona that we proceed to a nominal voting on the amendment.

The Chair rules that the nominal voting can proceed under Section 39, Rule VIII of the Rules of the Constitutional Commission. The Secretary-General will please call the roll, but I appeal to the Members who want to explain their votes to make their explanation as brief as possible.

FIRST ROLL CALL

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Abubakar

THE PRESIDENT: What is the pleasure of Commissioner Abubakar?

MR. ABUBAKAR: As former Philippine Ambassador to Malaysia, I have been intimately connected with this problem.

THE PRESIDENT: Does the Commissioner desire to explain his vote?

MR. ABUBAKAR: Yes. My vote is for the withdrawal of our claim to Sabah. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair would like to remind Commissioner Abubakar that what is now before the body is the proposed amendment of Commissioner Bernas.

MR. ABUBAKAR: Madam President, I now understand the issue. I vote yes.

THE PRESIDENT: So, Commissioner Abubakar is in favor of the amendment.

Thank you.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Alonto

MR. ALONTO: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Alonto is recognized.

COMMISSIONER ALONTO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. ALONTO: I vote yes to the amendment proposed by Commissioner Bernas because I am most concerned with the interest and welfare of this country.

Thank you.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Aquino

MS. AQUINO: Madam President, may I be allowed to explain my vote?

THE PRESIDENT: Please proceed.

COMMISSIONER AQUINO EXPLAINS HER VOTE

MS. AQUINO: I vote yes on the clear and unmistakable understanding that the contemplation of the proposed amendment does not exclude the possibility of a claim to Sabah.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Azcuna

MR. AZCUNA: I vote no, Madam President.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Bacani

BISHOP BACANI: I vote no, and may I explain my vote, Madam President?

THE PRESIDENT: Please proceed.

COMMISSIONER BACANI EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

BISHOP BACANI: I vote no, first, on the understanding that the formulation proposed by Commissioner Azcuna, while not excluding our claim to Sabah, does not say we are claiming Sabah.

Second, I want to ask, and I doubt whether we can always determine, whether or not we exercise sovereign jurisdiction over a particular piece of land. Perhaps we can determine, but can we always do this at some future time? Suppose the country is temporarily unable to exercise sovereign jurisdiction over a part of its territory, does that mean that that ceases to be part of the Philippines? I doubt whether we can always ascertain, and for that reason, I vote no.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Bengzon

COMMISSIONER BENGZON EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. BENGZON: I vote yes, first, because the amendment does not only preclude the government from pursuing but also from not pursuing its claim to any territory.

Second, if any part of the Philippines is invaded or taken by force by any other foreign nation, that is not contemplated as lost under the amendment. These are the two reasons I am in favor of the proposed amendment.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Bennagen

COMMISSIONER BENNAGEN EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. BENNAGEN: I vote yes but on the assumption that the provision will not preclude some other future claims, not necessarily Sabah.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Bernas

COMMISSIONER BERNAS EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

FR. BERNAS: I have not change my mind. I vote yes and I just would like to give the assurance that this amendment does not preclude the Philippines from exercising whatever right it might have under international law.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Rosario Braid

COMMISSIONER ROSARIO BRAID EXPLAINS HER VOTE

MS. ROSARIO BRAID: I vote yes on the assumption that the Philippines has an open claim in the future and that this amendment does not preclude our possible negotiation vis-a-vis Sabah.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Brocka

COMMISSIONER BROCKA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. BROCKA: I vote yes in agreement with the perceptions of Commissioners Abubakar and Alonto.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Calderon

MR. CALDERON: My vote is no.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Castro de

COMMISSIONER DE CASTRO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. DE CASTRO: I vote no for the reason that the amendment seems to state that we exercise sovereign jurisdiction at present.

I also vote no because according to our caucus, it seems to convey that the word “historic” is against what Malaysia wants. To them, the word “historic” means our claim to Sabah. “Historic” not only to Sabah but to what we had in the past and what we can have in the future. If our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren will, in fifty years, find some historic documents which would show we have a claim to a certain territory, then they may lose it because we are taking from them their right to claim it. Also, the word “historic” will put to naught the different treaties upon which our national territory has been based.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

COMMISSIONER COLAYCO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

Colayco

MR. COLAYCO: All the good reasons in favor of the amendment have been heard, and wish to add this one. Because of this long pending claim, we have not been able to foster a full commercial relationship with Malaysia.

I, therefore, vote for the amendment.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Concepcion

COMMISSIONER CONCEPCION EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. CONCEPCION: I vote no, the reason being that the expression “OVER WHICH THE GOVERNMENT EXERCISES SOVEREIGN JURISDICTION” implies a waiver to whatever rights we have over Sabah. I am positive that at present we are not exercising sovereign jurisdiction over Sabah. So, in that belief I feel that the amendment is already a renunciation of our claim to Sabah.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Davide

COMMISSIONER DAVIDE EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, I vote no and my explanation is that the proposal casts a cloud of doubt on the validity of our claim to Sabah. It is not for us to vote for a waiver. We would be depriving the generations to come of a basis for a claim to a territory over which we have a historic right. We will have difficulty selling our work to our people, if we now waive our claim to Sabah.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Foz

COMMISSIONER FOZ EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. FOZ: I vote yes, because the amendment has nothing to do with Sabah. We should allow the national leadership to address the question.

Thank you.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Garcia

MR. GARCIA: I vote yes.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Gascon

Guingona

COMMISSIONER GUINGONA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. GUINGONA: Madam President, I have already expressed my views, but with your kind permission I would like to add something to explain my vote. I said earlier that we should make our provision on National Territory as flexible as possible, principally by not using ambiguous or unclear terms which may be subject to misconstruction. I am afraid that by attempting indirectly, impliedly or inadvertently our claim to Sabah as some of us believe would be the effect of this amendment, we would be outdoing the Malaysians; we would be more Malaysians than the Malaysians themselves.

Madam President; under Article XII of the Manila Accord entered into among the Federation of Malaysia, the Republic of Indonesia, and the Republic of the Philippines, the Ministers said, and I quote:

The Ministers took note of the Philippine claim and the right of the Philippines to continue to pursue it in accordance with international law and the principle of pacific settlement of disputes. They agreed that the inclusion of North Borneo, now Sabah, in the Federation of Malaysia would not prejudice either the claim or any right thereunder.

My vote, therefore, Madam President, is no.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Jamir

MR. JAMIR: I vote yes.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Laurel

COMMISSIONER LAUREL EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. LAUREL: With the assurance of the proponent of the amendment, Commissioner Bernas, that this does not do away with our future claim to any particular territory, including Sabah, I vote yes.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Lerum

MR. LERUM: My vote is yes.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Maambong

COMMISSIONER MAAMBONG EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. MAAMBONG: I vote yes, Madam President, but in so doing, in the assumption that this proposed amendment will be carried, I would like to suggest to the honorable sponsor and to the honorable proponent of the substitute amendment in advance that there should be some realignment of words since the amendatory phrase reads: “OVER WHICH THE GOVERNMENT EXERCISES SOVEREIGN JURISDICTION,” and in the latter part of the substitute amendment, on line 7, it also reads: “areas over which the Philippines has sovereignty or jurisdiction.”

Thank you, Madam President.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Monsod

MR. MONSOD: I vote yes.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Natividad Nieva

MS. NIEVA: I vote yes.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Nolledo

COMMISSIONER NOLLEDO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. NOLLEDO: I vote against the amendment because it, in effect, drops our claim to Sabah, just like dropping a hot potato.

Elimination of the term “legal title” may imperil our right to our waters under the Treaty of Paris and other treaties. I adhere to the well-taken arguments of Commissioner Roberto Concepcion.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Ople

COMMISSIONER OPLE EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. OPLE: Thank you, Madam President. I vote yes. First of all, I do not think the Bernas amendment forecloses any just claim of this country on any part of the earth, whether in the past, in the present or in the future, because all such claims are duly protected by international law which, in fact, we have agreed to adopt in this Constitution.

I was very supportive of the Azcuna amendment. I think the amendment can stand. But there was another amendment which I thought addressed the concern of Commissioner Guingona — that there should be as few ambiguities in the Constitution as possible, and I think the Bernas amendment is definitely more unambiguous than the earlier amendments that had been presented.

Madam President, this may look an innocent provision on National Territory. After all, it does not transcend municipal law. On the other hand, when we define our national territory, any part thereof becomes sacred to this generation and all other generations of Filipinos, and to that, under the American Declaration of Independence which Filipino children like to quote until now, “we pledge our life, our fortune and our sacred honor.”

I do not mind sending my children to the Kalayaan Island in order to defend that part of our national territory. I do not mind sending my grandchildren to Palawan to die there in defense of Palawan. I do not mind sending them to Tawi-Tawi to offer their lives in defense of Tawi-Tawi. But I certainly will mind if some future Napoleon in Malacañang decides to invoke the ambiguities in this territorial provision and send an army, including my grandchildren, to Sabah. I would regret that very much. I would not want them to die for strange places, like Sabah or any other territory over which we may have a claim or assert future claim, which, in any case, is not foreclosed.

One of the reasons I am voting for this amendment is that I do not think any of our rights is unduly threatened.

And so, Madam President, in the interest of clarity as to what constitutes our national territory which will claim, if need be, our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor to be passed on to our posterity, and also in the interest of safety and the security of my own mind about what I will lay down my life for, I vote yes.

Thank you.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

COMMISSIONER PADILLA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

Padilla

MR. PADILLA: Madam President, the Bernas amendment would change the clause “belonging to the Philippines by historical sovereign right or legal title” with the phrase “over which the Philippines exercises sovereign jurisdiction.”

I notice that what is accepted and what appears in the amendment, as in the substitute amendment, as well as in the 1973 Constitution, reads: “over which the Philippines has sovereignty or jurisdiction.” This amendment will contradict what is already accepted, and I quote: “over which the Philippines has sovereignty or jurisdiction.” The words “sovereignty” and “jurisdiction” are separated by the disjunctive “or,” but they are now being joined, and “jurisdiction” is even qualified by the adjective “sovereign.”

Madam President, what is accepted is “sovereignty or jurisdiction.” The amendment specifies “sovereign jurisdiction.”

So, I vote against the amendment because it will be confusing and even contradictory. Moreover, if this amendment does not foreclose any claim — and I would not want to specify Sabah — why then change the present provision? If there is no purpose for the amendment, why accept the amendment? I also wish to concur with the observations of Commissioner Concepcion..

Thank you.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Quesada

COMMISSIONER QUESADA EXPLAINS HER VOTE

MS. QUESADA: I vote yes with the understanding and the assurance of the proponent that this amendment will not preclude any future claim on Sabah or any other territory.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Rama

COMMISSIONER RAMA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. RAMA: Despite the assurances of the proponent that this does not preclude the Philippines from pursuing its claim to Sabah, it seems that even among the Members of the Commission we have differing views and interpretations of the amendment.

I am reminded, Madam President, of the legal principle that the author of an ambiguity in a phrase or a provision suffers such ambiguity. In other words, an ambiguity shall be resolved against the author which in this case will be the Commission, if we adopt the amendment.

Therefore, I vote no.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Regalado

COMMISSIONER REGALADO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. REGALADO: Madam President, I vote yes not because of any so-called assurances of Commissioner Bernas, but because of the intendment and the purpose such an amendment is intended to subserve, it being understood that the word “exercises” is used in its durative verb form and the term “sovereign jurisdiction” is used in the sense of its present concept under the principles of public international law, in accordance with the rule of contemporaneous construction.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Reyes de los

MR. DE LOS REYES: Madam President, may I be allowed to explain my vote?

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner de los Reyes may proceed.

COMMISSIONER DE LOS REYES EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. DE LOS REYES: Madam President, when the Constitutional Convention of 1971 included the phrase “historic right or legal title,” it was not specifically intended to claim Sabah. As I understood it, the term refers to territories like Batanes and/or other territories included in the Treaty of Paris and other international agreements.

If we did not have a constitutional amendment in 1972, there would have been no need to place that phrase “historic right or legal title,” now changed to “sovereign rights.” But because we were amending the Constitution of 1972, and the Sabah issue was a very hot issue at that time, we had to put a safety valve provision in the Constitution or we

might be held in estoppel from claiming other territories, not necessarily Sabah, which historically and legally belong to us. To my mind, therefore, there is no cause for alarm in maintaining the present provision changing the term “historic right” to “sovereign right.” Also, there is no harm in accepting the Bernas amendment in the light of his explanation that it will not preclude us later on from claiming Sabah. Since I do not attach much significance on this issue one way or the other, I, therefore, abstain, Madam President.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Rigos No Rodrigo

COMMISSIONER RODRIGO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. RODRIGO: Madam President, for the reasons already given by those who voted yes, I also vote yes. But I would like to add something. I want to comment on the misgivings expressed by some who voted no — that if we adopt this amendment, then we lose sovereign jurisdiction over a portion of the present Philippine territory. This means that if, for example, Batanes is temporarily invaded and conquered by a foreign nation, then we lose sovereign jurisdiction over Batanes if this amendment is approved. That is not so, Madam President, because this amendment “over which the government exercises sovereign jurisdiction” does not refer to any portion of the Philippines which we now have. Let me read the first sentence of the Article:

The national territory comprises the Philippine archipelago, with all the islands and waters embraced therein, and all other territories . . . over which the Philippines has sovereignty or jurisdiction.

“All other territories” refers to territories other than the islands presently comprising the Philippine archipelago. So, sovereign jurisdiction applies to or modifies only other territories and not any land or island or sea which is now considered part of the Philippine archipelago.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Romulo

COMMISSIONER ROMULO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. ROMULO: I vote yes, on the grounds that we have enough problems on what is clearly now our territory, more so when we claim somebody else’s territory. Also, I vote yes on the assumption that the amendment does not bar our claims to some future territory.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Rosales Sarmiento

COMMISSIONER SARMIENTO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. SARMIENTO: The Bernas amendment will not, in any way, diminish our sovereignty over any territory. As a matter of fact, even without a provision on National Territory or even without the Bernas amendment, our sovereignty over any territory will not be affected. The Bernas amendment should cause no fear among our brethren because it will not prevent now or hereafter the Aquino government or future governments to pursue its claim over any territory.

I, therefore, vote yes for the Bernas amendment.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

COMMISSIONER SUAREZ EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. SUAREZ: I might as well start with my vote. I vote against the amendment. As a simple citizen of this country, I find it presumptuous to waive our nation's historic rights and legal title.

Thank you.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Sumulong

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Sumulong is recognized.

COMMISSIONER SUMULONG EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. SUMULONG: It is a well-established rule of international law that a state can claim as its national territory only that territory over which it has sovereignty or jurisdiction. If the Philippines has sovereignty or jurisdiction over Sabah, then Sabah is a part of our national territory. If we do not exercise sovereignty or jurisdiction — and sovereignty or jurisdiction means control of internal as well as external affairs — how can we claim it as part of our territory? We may put in our Constitution that we are claiming Sabah, but we cannot say that it is part of our national territory as long as we do not exercise sovereignty or jurisdiction. That is why our national territory is defined in our 1935 Constitution as:

. . . all the territory ceded to the United States by the Treaty of Paris . . . together with all the islands embraced in the treaty concluded at Washington . . . and all territory over which the present Government of the Philippine Islands exercises jurisdiction.

The last phrase was added upon the strong suggestion of President Recto because he knows that we can only claim as part of our national territory only those territories over which we exercise control, sovereignty or jurisdiction.

I agree with Commissioner Bernas. This will not stop us if someday Sabah should come under our control internally and externally or we can claim Sabah to be a part of our national territory.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Tadeo No Tan

COMMISSIONER TAN EXPLAINS HER VOTE

SR. TAN: Madam President, I have no legal reasons for voting yes that have not already been stated, but I choose to vote in the affirmative because I feel that this amendment would hasten peace and harmony among our Asian neighbors. And to me this is primary to a claim to a foreign land.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Tingson Treñas

COMMISSIONER TREÑAS EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. TREÑAS: I vote no and I adopt the reasons of those who voted in the same manner.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

COMMISSIONER UKA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. UKA: Madam President, I vote yes because the Bernas amendment is very clear. It will not, in any way, preclude us from claiming any territory over which we have a valid claim. By said amendment, we can even claim the moon in the future. I do not think Astronaut Armstrong will ever object. I vote yes.

Thank you very much.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Villacorta

COMMISSIONER VILLACORTA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. VILLACORTA: Madam President, I vote no in the absence of an unmistakable assurance that will be universally understood, that the term “sovereign jurisdiction” is not an oath to limitation that could not compel the Philippines in asserting her future territorial claims to satisfy all the stringent requirements of claims to sovereignty; namely, effective occupation, historic rights, legal title, and the right of national self-determination. I also vote no because twice, last night and tonight, my express intention to exercise my right to seek clarification duly registered with the Floor Leader was stifled by inflexible parliamentary rules.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Villegas

COMMISSIONER VILLEGAS EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. VILLEGAS: I vote no because as far as I can gather from my contacts with the Malaysians, their objection has been to the word “historic,” and I think “sovereign right” and “legal title” will not be objectionable to them.

THE PRESIDENT EXPLAINS HER VOTE

THE PRESIDENT: Before the Secretary-General conducts a second call for those who have not registered their votes, the President desires to vote.

I examined the Rules and there is actually no prohibition against the President voting. The Rule says:

The President or the Presiding Officer shall not be obliged to vote except to break a tie.

In other words, I can exercise my option to vote and I would like to vote.

I vote no because if, as stated here by the honorable proponent and the other Members of the Commission, the amendment would not foreclose any possible claim on any territory including Sabah, then I believe there is no reason why we should change the phrase that is present in the amendment proposed by the sponsor and by Commissioner Azcuna. I believe that the phrase “belonging to the Philippines by sovereign right or legal title” is more embracing and flexible to include all possible situations concerning the national territory of the Philippines. So, I vote no.

SECOND ROLL CALL

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary-General will conduct a second call for those who have not registered their votes.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Gascon Yes Rosales

Natividad Tingson

THE PRESIDENT: The results show 27 votes in favor, 17 against and 1 abstention; the Bernas amendment is approved.

MS. AQUINO: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

MS. AQUINO: We ask that Commissioner de Castro be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner de Castro is recognized.

MR. DE CASTRO: Madam President, please allow me to read the amendment of the Honorable Bernas. It states, and I quote: "The national territory comprises the Philippine archipelago, with all the islands and waters embraced therein, and all other territories OVER WHICH THE GOVERNMENT EXERCISES SOVEREIGN JURISDICTION . . ." After the word "jurisdiction," I propose to add AS WELL AS THOSE UNDER HISTORIC RIGHT OR LEGAL TITLE, then continue the rest of the sentence.

MR. AZCUNA: Madam President, I regret I cannot accept the amendment. I would rather throw it to the body.

THE PRESIDENT: What does the sponsor say?

MR. NOLLEDO: The Committee has the same decision as Commissioner Azcuna.

THE PRESIDENT: The amendment is not accepted?

MR. RODRIGO: This, in effect, is practically a motion for reconsideration.

THE PRESIDENT: It has not been accepted by the sponsor.

MR. DE CASTRO: May I know the reason why?

MR. AZCUNA: It is because we precisely would like to avoid the word "historic" because of the particular connotation of that word during the debates in the 1971 Constitutional Convention. We want this Commission to be free from those connotations; therefore, we adopted the word "sovereign" so that it can mean what we wanted it to mean rather than what the Delegates in 1971 wanted "historic" to mean. That is the reason we want to avoid "historic" although "sovereign" covers the same thing.

MR. DE CASTRO: Madam President, may I ask a question of the one who objected to the amendment?

THE PRESIDENT: The Gentleman may proceed.

MR. DE CASTRO: The Gentleman is quite — I will not say afraid — not in favor of the word "historic" because it is a word which had been objected to, as I understand, by Malaysia. Let us be frank about this. It is a word objected to by Malaysia because it is a manifestation of our claim to Sabah. As I said before, this is a municipal law which

affects us only. Why should some other people, some other nation, get involved in our use of the term “historic right”? As I said before, if we want to be friends and we want amity among nations, with all other nations, that amity must also be answered with amity. It is not that one is friendly to another because he wants something or his friendly action is conditional to not using the word “historic.” Madam President, I am not talking about its possible consequences on our relations with other nations; I insist that this is a municipal law and it has nothing to do with any other nation. If the sponsor will not accept my amendment, I will request a division of the House on this.

MR. CONCEPCION: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Concepcion is recognized.

MR. CONCEPCION: One question occurs to me. A substantial number of those who voted yes said, “I vote yes in reliance upon the accuracy of the opinion expressed by Mr. So and So that this amendment does not affect our claim to Sabah.” The question is: Can that answer be considered a yes vote? What kind of a vote is it? Can we cast a conditional vote? When “yes” is conditional or predicated upon the express assumption that the opinion or conclusion expressed by another is correct, does not the giver of the answer manifest his lack of adequate knowledge to answer without qualification?

MS. AQUINO: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

What is the pleasure of the Acting Floor Leader?

MS. AQUINO: May I be recognized in reply to the position made by Justice Concepcion?

THE PRESIDENT: The Acting Floor Leader may proceed.

MS. AQUINO: I voted yes and the contemplation of my affirmative vote was the clear and unmistakable understanding that a vote in favor of the amendment does not exclude any claim by way of historic right or legal title. If it includes Sabah, that is fine. But it was not based on an assurance given by any other proponent of the amendment. And I believe I speak on behalf of the other colleagues who voted the same.

MR. PADILLA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Vice-President is recognized.

MR. PADILLA: What I heard from the many statements of the distinguished Commissioners who voted yes was that their votes were conditional based on the understanding or the assurance or whatever is being assured that this does not conflict with the previous term, and would not preclude the possible claim over Sabah.

I have heard many explanations of the votes, and to me, they are conditional. Worse, this is based on the assurance of some other Members. I cannot understand a vote that is based on assurance and is, therefore, conditional.

I concur with the -correct observation of Commissioner Concepcion.

MR. OPLE: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Ople is recognized.

MR. OPLE: In the interest of symmetry, I hope the Chair will allow me to say a few words in reply to some of the misgivings just expressed.

THE PRESIDENT: Please proceed.

MR. OPLE: Yes. On the part of those who voted yes to the amendment, I, of course, recognize that there is no equality of legal perceptions in a disparate body of this kind, and there are some who may feel they are more gifted about legal issues to the extent of being able to divine the authentic intent of those who cast a vote in these proceedings. But I think those who make up this Commission are entitled to a certain benefit of the doubt, that they do not cast their votes without having achieved an inner degree of conviction; that, in fact, these votes are meaningful to them and are expressive of their true intent.

I just wanted to say that, Madam President.

Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Insofar as the Chair is concerned, the votes of the Commissioners who voted yes are positive affirmative votes and whatever has been stated is an explanation of the vote that has been given and, therefore, the votes, as already reported, stand.

MR. GUINGONA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Excuse me. There is an amendment of Commissioner de Castro which is before us and which has not been accepted by the sponsor. So that we will have to vote on this particular amendment of Commissioner de Castro.

Will Commissioner de Castro please repeat his proposed amendment?

MR. DE CASTRO: On line 4, Madam President, insert the words AS WELL AS THOSE UNDER HISTORIC RIGHT OR LEGAL TITLE.

On my proposed amendment, the whole sentence now reads: "The national territory comprises the Philippine archipelago, with all the islands and waters embraced therein, and all the other territories over which the government exercises sovereign jurisdiction AS WELL AS THOSE UNDER HISTORIC RIGHT OR LEGAL TITLE."

VOTING

THE PRESIDENT: As many as are in favor of the proposed amendment, please raise their hand. (Few Members raised their hand.)

As many as are against, please raise their hand. (Several Members raised their hand.)

There are 9 votes in favor and 24 against; the proposed amendment of Commissioner de Castro is lost.

MR. GUINGONA: Madam President, just for clarification. Regarding the assurance given by the honorable proponent on his amendment, what effect would it have as far as the provision is concerned? Would it have a binding and persuasive effect?

THE PRESIDENT: Is the question directed to me or to the proponent?

MR. GUINGONA: It is directed to Commissioner Bernas.

FR. BERNAS: I regret I was not listening. Could the Gentleman kindly repeat the question?

MR. GUINGONA: Madam President, I wanted to be clarified. Since the Gentleman has made the assurance that his amendment would not affect any claim of the Philippines either now or hereafter, including presumably our claim to Sabah, what would be the effect of such a statement? As far as the provision is concerned, not as far as those who voted are concerned, would it have a binding and persuasive effect?

FR. BERNAS: Madam President, before I answer the question, may I just raise a point of order? We have voted on the proposition; we have gone beyond the interpellation period; we have gone through the amendment process. Now, we are having interpellation again for clarification.

THE PRESIDENT: So, the statement of Commissioner Guingona is out of order.

FR. BERNAS: It is my contention that it is out of order. If he wants me to answer that, I will answer him in private.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair believes that the manifestation of Commissioner Guingona is out of order.

Let us proceed. Is there any other amendment?

MR. MAAMBONG: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Maambong is recognized.

MR. MAAMBONG: I do not want to sound like a broken record, Madam President, but I stated earlier that in the period of amendments, the one who proposed the amendment and the one who opposed it each had five minutes to speak for or against the proposal. There is no rule which says that anybody can just stand up here and start talking about other matters other than the amendment being considered. I am just trying to relay that again, Madam President, so that we can have some sanity in these proceedings.

Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much for lecturing to us and to the Commissioners.

Is there any other amendment?

MS. AQUINO: Madam President, Commissioner Davide has manifested his intention to introduce another amendment. We ask that he be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Davide is recognized.

MR. DAVIDE: Thank you, Madam President.

The amendment would be after the Bernas amendment, and it reads: OR WHICH BELONG TO IT SINCE TIMES PAST.

THE PRESIDENT: Where is that to be inserted?

MR. DAVIDE: After the Bernas amendment, Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection?

MR. AZCUNA: We do not accept the amendment Madam President.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, may I be allowed to explain?

MR. AZCUNA: We throw it to the floor, Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Will Commissioner Davide please explain his amendment?

MR. DAVIDE: As could easily be determined from the votes in favor of the Bernas amendment, it is very clear that these votes were because of the interpretation by the proponent himself that it will not foreclose any claim over Sabah. But that particular interpretation is not borne out by the language. So, the proposal now is to put on record, to place it in black and white, that the interpretation given by the Bernas proposal is really not to foreclose any claim over Sabah. The intention is to clarify the confused situation on the issue. So, I plead to those who voted in favor of the Bernas proposal because of the interpretation given that we must now make it very clear in the language of the definition of the national territory that, indeed, we have not foreclosed or waived a claim.

I submit to a vote by the body.

THE PRESIDENT: Is the proposed amendment accepted or not accepted? I did not hear Commissioner Azcuna.

MS. AQUINO: It is not accepted. I move for a vote, Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: We are now ready to vote on the proposed amendment of Commissioner Davide. Will Commissioner Davide kindly read that again.

MR. DAVIDE: After “sovereign jurisdiction,” add the following: OR WHICH BELONG TO IT SINCE TIMES PAST and then put a comma (,).

VOTING

THE PRESIDENT: As many as are in favor of the proposed amendment of Commissioner Davide, please raise their hand. (Few Members raised their hand.)

As many as are against, please raise their hand. (Several Members raised their hand.)

There are 12 votes in favor and 18 votes against; the proposed amendment is lost.

MR. CONCEPCION: Madam President, I was out when the votes were counted. I would want to register my vote in favor of the amendment of Commissioner Davide.

THE PRESIDENT: So, there will now be 13 votes in favor of the amendment.

MR. MAAMBONG: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Maambong is recognized.

MR. MAAMBONG: I would not propose an amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: Please proceed.

MR. MAAMBONG: On line 4 of the draft of the substitute amendment of Commissioner Azcuna, delete the word “the” and in its place, insert the word ITS. Then, on line 7, after the word “areas,” insert the word THEREOF, then place a period (,).

MR. DAVIDE: Anterior amendment, Madam President.

MR. MAAMBONG: Madam President, if I will not be allowed to finish my amendment, it will not be understandable.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, please continue.

MR. MAAMBONG: On line 7, after the insertion I just mentioned, delete the words “over which the Philippines has sovereignty or jurisdiction.” So that the provision, as amended, would now read: “Consisting of its terrestrial, fluvial, and aerial domains, including the territorial sea, the seabed, the subsoil, the insular shelves and the other submarine areas THEREOF.”

MR. AZCUNA: I would accept the amendment.

MR. NOLLEDO: The Committee accepts the amendment.

MR. MAAMBONG: Thank you, Madam President.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Anterior amendment of Commissioner Davide.

MR. DAVIDE: I have two anterior amendments. The first is on line 6, and is just a deletion of the article “the” between “and” and “other.”

THE PRESIDENT: The deletion of the word “the” between “and” and “other”?

MR. DAVIDE: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: How will it read?

MR. DAVIDE: On line 7, delete the “s” in “submarines.”

MR. AZCUNA: It is just “submarine.”

MR. DAVIDE: So, it should be “submarine areas.”

MR. AZCUNA: Yes, that is how it reads now; there is no “s” there.

MR. DAVIDE: My text has an “s” on “submarine.”

MR. AZCUNA: It is a typographical error, Madam President. I am sorry.

THE PRESIDENT: Does Commissioner Davide have any other amendment?

MR. DAVIDE: So, if the word is “submarine” without an “s,” I would have no amendment on line 7.

My only amendment would be the deletion of “the” on line 6, between the words “and” and “other” at the end of the line.

MR. AZCUNA: So, how does that part read now?

MR. DAVIDE: It will read: “and other submarine areas.”

MR. AZCUNA: I accept that, Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Let us proceed first with the amendment of Commissioner Maambong. So, is that clear?

Commissioner Maambong, how will it read now after the Bernas amendment?

MR. MAAMBONG: After the Bernas amendment, it will read: “consisting of its terrestrial, fluvial, and aerial domains, including the territorial sea, the seabed, the subsoil, the insular shelves and other submarine areas THEREOF,” then put a period (.).

THE PRESIDENT: Was this accepted by the Committee?

MR. AZCUNA: Yes, we accepted.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection to the proposed amendment of Commissioner Maambong? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the amendment is approved.

With respect to the amendment of Commissioner Davide to delete the word “the” on line 6, between the words “and” and “other,” which was also accepted by the Committee, is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the amendment is approved.

Is there any other amendment?

MS. AQUINO: Madam President, if there are no other amendments, I move to close the period of amendments.

MR. MAAMBONG: I second the motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE PRESIDENT: The session is suspended for a few minutes.

It was 7:20 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 7:23 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE PRESIDENT: The session is resumed.

MS. AQUINO: Madam President, we ask that Commissioner Azcuna be recognized to read the Article, as amended.

MR. AZCUNA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Azcuna is recognized.

MR. AZCUNA: The Article now, as amended, will read as follows:

ARTICLE I The National Territory

Section 1. The national territory comprises the Philippine archipelago, with all the islands and waters embraced therein, and all THE other territories over which the government exercises sovereign jurisdiction, consisting of its terrestrial, fluvial, and aerial domains, including the territorial sea, the SEABED, the subsoil, the insular shelves and other submarine areas thereof. The waters around, between and connecting the islands of the archipelago, irrespective of their breadth and dimensions, form part of the internal waters of the Philippines.

THE PRESIDENT: The Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

MS. AQUINO: Madam President, I move that we proceed to vote on Second Reading on Proposed Resolution No. 263.

THE PRESIDENT: Does the Acting Floor Leader move that the body proceed to vote on Second Reading on this provision on National Territory as read by Commissioner Azcuna?

BISHOP BACANI: May I just ask a question of the Acting Floor Leader? Does it mean then that after three calendar days, we have to vote on this on Third Reading?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, this voting is only on Second Reading and then afterwards, the copies will be printed.

BISHOP BACANI: When will the copies be distributed? I myself would like to register an objection to the motion. I would like to get the people's idea on this also. As it is proposed, we can float this first to the people and see what its implications may be.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE PRESIDENT: The session is suspended for a few minutes.

It was 7:26 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 7:23 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE PRESIDENT: The session is resumed.

MS. AQUINO: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Acting Floor Leader is recognized.

MS. AQUINO: We ask that Commissioner Azcuna be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Azcuna is recognized.

MR. AZCUNA: Madam President, the sponsor and this humble Member have no objection to suspend the voting on Second Reading on Article I on the National Territory until Monday for the reasons stated by Commissioner Bacani.

MR. DE CASTRO: No, no; we already have the time now and I see no reason to postpone it till Monday.

MS. AQUINO: We submit to the ruling of the President.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection?

MR. PADILLA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Vice-President is recognized.

MR. PADILLA: After the remark of Commissioner Bacani to delay the voting by trying to get the reaction of the people, I think, as I understand it, he withdrew that desire to delay. And so, we might as well vote instead of waiting till Monday.

MS. AQUINO: Madam President, earlier, I moved to proceed to vote on Second Reading; I am withdrawing my motion for the record.

THE PRESIDENT: The Acting Floor Leader is withdrawing her motion.

MR. DE CASTRO: Madam President, then I move that we proceed to vote on Second Reading. We still have the time and we have many, many things to do on Monday. In fact, we will be working on a holiday. We want to finish this. In fact, we have to limit the period of debate; we have to limit the time of a speaker and I see no reason why, so early at night, we cannot proceed to vote on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE PRESIDENT: The session is suspended.

It was 7:36 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 7:37 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE PRESIDENT: The session is resumed.

MS. AQUINO: Madam President, point of order. Since I have previously withdrawn my motion, the Rules requires that only the sponsor can move to proceed to vote on Second Reading.

THE PRESIDENT: So, the motion of Commissioner de Castro is out of order. The motion that we vote on Second Reading having been withdrawn, then the Second Reading is hereby postponed to Monday, the next session.

MR. DE CASTRO: Madam President, please.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner de Castro is recognized.

MR. DE CASTRO: We have a time constraint. We are working from eight o'clock in the morning, moving from one room to another up to this time; and we are trying our best to work that hard because we have a time constraint up to September. At this point we still have time to work on this, and I see no reason why we should delay it because by Monday, we have more work to do than vote on Second Reading on this matter.

MR. RODRIGO: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Rodrigo is recognized.

MR. RODRIGO: Considering that about 20 Members are no longer in the session hall, I think, in fairness to them, we should not vote on this very important matter. So, I move to adjourn until Monday.

MS. AQUINO: I object to the motion to adjourn, Madam President. First, there is an overwhelming request to reset the schedule of plenary session on Monday back to five o'clock in the afternoon. That is the request of some of the committee chairmen. So I move that we reset our schedule of the plenary session on Monday back to five o'clock.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

THE PRESIDENT: The session is adjourned until Monday at five o'clock in the afternoon during which we will vote on Second Reading on the Article on the National Territory.

It was 7:39 p.m.

Source: Supreme Court E-Library

Transcript of panel discussion with President Corazon C. Aquino on her first 100 days in office, June 4, 1986

Counting The Freedoms (Culled from a television panel discussion)

Freedom regained is the government's greatest achievement in its first 100 days. But President Aquino warns that it might also be its greatest danger since some sectors are taking that freedom for granted. "Let us remain vigilant," she urges.

Minister Ramon Mitra of Agriculture cites liberalization of credit for small farmers as another achievement of Government. NEDA Chairman Solita Monsod cites the removal of export taxes on agricultural goods, an import liberalization program and an emergency employment scheme. Minister Augusto Sanchez of Labor states that the incidence of strikes in the industrial sector since he took over has decreased and these are of short duration. Minister Jaime Ongpin of Finance lists the 85% build up in foreign exchange reserves as a result of people selling their dollar holdings to the Central Bank, reflecting a return in confidence in Government; the stabilization of the peso at a P20.50 to \$1 exchange rate, the decrease in interest rates for loans, and the offers of foreign assistance.

President Aquino: During the election campaign, I gave a speech outlining what my government would do in the first 100 days. It was wildly applauded, even if not completely believed. How? Could there be a first 100 days of an Aquino Administration? That today we should be assessing what we have achieved in our first 100 days; that, far, from being dreams, it has been a down-to-earth reality of how to deal with a legacy of debt, a bankrupt government, poverty, corruption and insurgency should not be forgotten. We have come a long way very quickly.

The first 100 days were entered into with so much expectation and with so much to be done, 14 long years of a seemingly irreversible slide to disaster had ended in a snap. Reversing it was the work of brave people committed to our freedom and whose example finally drew the millions to that cause. The events of February did not happen by magic and from nowhere. There is no instant revolution nor, I must tell you are the instant answers. We had a snap election; then, we had a snap revolution but I never promised you snap solutions.

Our country needs your hard work, your patriotism, and your faith more than ever. Your government can, and is, creating the conditions for recovery but that recovery can only be carried forward by your efforts. Our revolution taught us two truths: first, that what the Filipino people want they must seek on their own. Others are not going to save us. Second, People Power is exactly that: it is people acting together, not government alone, to press through change. Don't sit back and think that because there is now a People's Government the nation's problems are taken care of. That is a dangerous delusion. Now let us look not to government but to ourselves for the next step.

Are we prepared to put aside differences and commit ourselves to the common task: national revival? In this first 100 days you have rightly asked the question: "What has the government done for you?" Today I shall try to answer that, but may I also put a question to you: "What are you going to do for your country in the second 100 days?"

My Presidency was an invitation to everybody to bury their differences and work together, I fear some have seen this new freedom, not as the privilege of a common commitment to rebuild the nation, but as a license to rake up old, or light up new, quarrels. Let us all be sure of the highest standards of honesty and accuracy in what we do and say. Perhaps the greatest achievement of the first 100 days is also its greatest danger: we are taking freedom for granted.

I am particularly anxious that there should be no abuse of our precious freedom because ours was no ordinary revolution. We rejected the revolutionary's normal course of change: violence, because that was not our way. Where others would have pointed a gun we held out our hand in peace and reconciliation. The price of that restraint is that we must remain vigilant.

The other price of a peaceful revolution is that it appears to raise questions about how far we mean to go. It is almost as though a revolution without violence is not to be taken seriously. The blood in the streets is the test of political determination. Well, let me give this assurance. We will go all the way it takes to build a society free from

corruption, oppression and poverty, where every Filipino has the chance to fulfill his or her potential. There will no longer be one Philippines for the rich and one for the poor, one for the strong and another for the weak.

Let me turn to what we meek revolutionaries have already achieved: the record of the first 100 days. This has been a 100 days of freedom:

First, freedom under the law. We have freed our courts from political interference; restored habeas corpus, and released political prisoners. Under the present temporary Freedom Constitution, as it is known, we have guaranteed full protection of human rights and the authority of our courts.

Second, freedom of the press. In this short 100 days we have seen the blooming of the freest press in our region. Amongst none of our neighbors does media enjoy the same unlimited free speech.

Third, freedom for our farmers. Seventy per cent of our people live in rural areas. They have been enslaved by government imposed cartels that have kept down the prices for what they grow at the same time that they have had to pay inflated prices for inputs such as fertilizer. We have dismantled cartels and lowered the price of fertilizers. Above all we must free our farmers from the cycle of indebtedness, poverty, underemployment and landlessness that has been their lot. We are examining how to make more cheap credit available to the farmers themselves. The DBP is establishing a P500 million facility for small and medium scale industries in the countryside and for agriculture. And we are implanting land reform in the poorest areas. The rural sector is the focus of our concern. It is where we must make our principal investment for recovery. The oil price cuts, amounting to one peso per liter, that I have ordered have had particular impact on the rural economy. This year the price of oil has been cut by 27 percent.

Fourth, freedom of labor. I have repealed those aspects of the labor laws that are repressive and aggravate rather than enhance labor relations. I have sought to lay the foundations for a system of labor relations that is compatible with our people's vision of a just society and the imperative of a swift recovery before the justice in progress that we seek recedes completely beyond our reach.

Fifth, freedom of the military. We have freed the military to play their proper role of protector of the Filipino people. By the brave actions of their leaders in starting the revolt, the military began the process that is enabling them to recover the nation's respect. Both through the retirement of overstaying generals and through the extensive program of military reform that is being embarked on we are restoring our military to top fighting form.

Sixth, freedom from the hills. For those insurgents who now want to take advantage of it, there is the possibility of returning to normal life. When I was in Davao I met the 168 insurgents who had recently sought amnesty and rehabilitation there under the so-called the Davao project. We will expand such regional initiatives and I still hope the insurgent leadership will respond at the national level to my offer of a negotiated amnesty.

*Seventh, freedom of our economy. You know the magnitude of our debt problem and the bankruptcy of our government following the previous regime's election fraud but let me today tell you the good news. Our foreign exchange reserves have increased by 85 per cent since the revolution; the value of the peso has strengthened. Our inflation rate which was 50 per cent in 1984 and 23 per cent in 1985 has now come down to a rate of 2.1 per cent. Interest rates have fallen sharply. Our economic problems remain huge. Indeed one reason inflation is so low is because there is so little demand in our economy. One can only hope that private investors will soon take the initiative and show confidence in the power of the people, of which they are a part, to transform our country. It is clear that recovery will be through our own efforts or not at all. We must help ourselves. So our 1986 budget is a budget for growth. It is aimed at job creation in the rural sector, particularly by an effort to use labor intensive methods in infrastructure programs. There is a 60 per cent increase in capital expenditures. This will allow large-scale job creation.

There are so many further freedoms I could name. Those that come from the improvement in medical services; or from the revived tourist industry or our emphasis on protecting the natural environment. By stopping illegal logging and launching on June 6th a national reforestation scheme we are determined to preserve and restore our natural habitat.

I have kept until the last constitutional freedom because the writing of the constitution lies immediately before us. My part is done. After wide consultations I have named the members of the Con-Com and it has started work. We kept to the tight timetable to ensure that as soon as possible we would again have an elected legislature, and constitution we can all honor and respect. It alone can provide the permanent framework for our freedoms.

I have laid today how your government has used the first 100 days to restore and guarantee freedoms and remove obstacles from our national progress. But a People's Government could not have done all this if the people had not, in the first instance, overthrown the dictatorship in its path. So much was achieved by the power of the people. And it is that power I wish to summon again in the revival of our economy and the establishment of peace. The freedom you have won requires unflagging responsibility. May I end by repeating my earlier question: What are you going to do for your country in the next 100 days?

And now I would like to ask the four ministers whom I invited here to tell you what their respective offices have accomplished during the first one hundred days. Since the main thrust of our economic recovery program is agriculture, I think it's fitting to ask the Minister of Agriculture Ramon Mitra to start the discussion.

Mitra: The farmer today enjoys more opportunities to earn. In the past there were too many regulations, the farmer was at a loss. He didn't know where to begin, whom to approach. All that has been changed.

In the past, farmers didn't know where to borrow money to buy, say, a carabao or fertilizer. Now they know where they can get credit. Not only that, they know where to get advice as to what they should plant and where they could bring their produce after harvest. In relation to the latter, the President has mentioned that the Government is improving farm-to-market roads to enable farmers to move their goods with greater speed and ease.

President: Perhaps Minister Monsod can elaborate on how we can help farmers by abolishing taxes on exports.

Monsod: One of the major policy reforms that we have undertaken or agreed by the Cabinet as has been mentioned earlier, the removal of export taxes on agricultural goods, also the Cabinet has approved an import liberalization program that will be phased. Essentially this import liberalization program removes the quantitative restrictions in imports but it transfers the protection to a tariff system. This sort of situation will make it easier for exporters who use imported products, for example. And these exporters are mostly agricultural products, to be able to be more competitive with foreign goods that they are competing with in the markets abroad. With respect to job creation itself the government is committed to launch in the immediate future an emergency employment scheme which is based on the rural sector that will create in the next one and a half years, one million jobs. Now, is that realistic? And the answer is yes. What have we done about it? We have translated commitment into a budgetary allocation that as the President said increased our maintenance and operating expenditure, increased our capital expenditure, and also approved a supplemental program for a national government assistance to local government units. Four projects which are going to be chosen and identified on the local level themselves not only Mrs. President, by the local government units but in consultation with non-government organizations and private volunteer organizations. This is the essence of consulting with the people and this is the essence of people power. We have regional development councils which are composed of regional officials and also of representatives from private organizations and non-government organizations have already been getting together since the President issued her memorandum order stating that the medium term development plan had to be formulated. They have gotten together and they're identifying projects on a consultation process. And what is more important, the implementation is already committed by the budget but the regional offices of NEDA but also we have gotten commitment from the non-government organizations and the private volunteer organizations their commitment to monitor to make sure the money, which is the people's money, is going to be used properly. All these budgetary allocations for projects which are site specific and region specific are all going to be based on labor-based methods and are all going to have the objective of: 1) providing employment, 2) these projects themselves are going to increase the productivity of the rural sector. What are these projects going to be? An example would be rural roads, water supply, communal irrigation system, etc. So at the same time that you are creating jobs, you are also laying the foundation for an increased productivity for growth in the country.

President: Thank you, Winnie. Now let's hear from our Minister of Labor and employment Augusto Sanchez what is being done in that sector.

Sanchez: May I clarify that the Ministry of Labor is not only concerned with labor but also with employment – those without jobs. So we have two concerns: labor relations with management and finding placements for the jobless. Labor relations include strikes. You can see from statistics that the Ministry has done much in resolving strikes since we assumed office. Since March 10 up to the end of May, there have been 228 strikes; of these, 150 had been settled—67 percent—in such a short period of time. Whereas compared to last year, 37 percent was the rate of their solution of strikes. And on top of this, we settled the strikes within seven days average rate. In the past years, the strikes would last up to 35 days on the average. Of 1,000 corporations only around 20 had strikes. But these were solved immediately. We have four employment programs. Besides our POEA or overseas programs, during the period since we got into office up to end of May, we have found jobs overseas for 67,000 workers and we have been able to place 2,400 in local jobs, meaning we have also been able to do a lot in this area. In July, as Minister Monsod has revealed, we are launching four self-employment programs—entrepreneurial development programs. We will be developing entrepreneurship in the rural areas. Besides, we will be encouraging cooperatives and giving seed capital to those in need of this. Involved are small-scale, medium scale and large-scale industries. The money to be used will be domestic or Filipino money. We will not be using foreign money. His will be a totally Filipino program.

President: I would like to call on Minister Ongpin to tell our people what his ministry has accomplished during the last one hundred days.

Ongpin: I would like to focus on four major areas in the financial arena. Where I feel that major accomplishments have been achieved. The President referred to this in her introductory remarks but I feel they deserve a little explanation. The first major area has to do with the foreign exchange reserves of the country. The president mentioned that they have increased by 85% since the end of February. In a very short period of about three months we have built up our reserves from \$911 million to, as of last count, close to 1.7 billion dollars. That is an increase of some 800 million dollars in a very short period of time and you know, if you look at it only in terms of the statistics it may not seem like a lot. But an 85% increase is very meaningful in my opinion. Precisely if you look at the source of the increase, this increase did not come about as a result of a trade surplus. This came about because many people have been selling their dollar holdings to the Central Bank of The Philippines. And for me that is very significant because that really symbolizes a return of confidence. People have been steadily and consistently willing to give up their dollar holdings and to exchange it for pesos. For me there is no better sign of confidence, that it has returned to the Philippines.

The second area has to do with the exchange rate and it is a natural result of the increase of... very significant increase, of our foreign exchange reserves just before the revolution, the official rate has gone as high as 22 to 1. Presently it has strengthened to 20.50 to 1 and perhaps more significantly the black market rate which had increased to over 25 pesos to 1 just before the revolution is now back at 21 pesos. And really when you count the cost of bank charges you will find that the official interbank rate and the black market are practically the same. The third major area has to do with interest rates. I guess everyone will recall that just before the elections, interest rates rose very sharply and have risen to, in some cases, over 30 per cent. And treasury bill rates were likewise increased to 28 percent. Again, in a very short space of time, within the past three months, these rates have been brought down to about half of what they used to be and presently the treasury bill rates of 30 days is now down to 14 per cent and there are banks who are now lending to their prime clients at 15 per cent and we feel this is a very significant improvement because at these levels of interest in business would be motivated to expand and to think of new investments. The final area which I feel is equally important in terms of what we are trying to do in the countryside and in terms of improving the rural infrastructure investment of the government, Has been in the form of the foreign assistance that we have been able to obtain.

We just returned from Tokyo last week, and we had a meeting with the consultative group for the Philippine attended by the World Bank, the IMF, the Asian Development Bank, and by the representatives of the governments of Japan, the US, Germany and Australia, and there we reviewed the foreign aid commitments to the Philippines in terms of official development assistance and soft loans, and we feel that for this year we are assured of at least 70% of our target of 1.1 billion dollars. In addition to that in our discussion last week, we were able to obtain support from our donor nations that as soon as we are able to put together a standby program with the IMF and complete the

package of reforms in the areas mentioned by Minister Monsod, in tax reforms, in restructuring our government financial institutions, and in the area of trade reforms. They have pledge to us that they will at that point in time, approach their governments to formalize the balance of their commitments that we are seeking. In lay man's language what was really the basic message to us last week when we were in Tokyo is that additional help will be forthcoming as soon as we demonstrate that we are going to be able to help ourselves by introducing a very specific package of reforms that will enable the economy to recover and to be able to sustain that recovery so that in the long run we will no longer have to become a permanent receiver of aid. They do not want us to become dependent. They want this aid to be strictly a transitional thing to help us during our crisis or for our budget deficits this year.

President: All of us don't want to forever be begging. All of us believe that we can become self-reliant. But to achieve self-reliance, we need everybody's help — the citizens and those of us in government. Minister Mitra, do you have anything to add?

Mitra: About foreign assistance: many other nations are eager to help us. But such assistance need not be in the form of money. This can also assistance for our exports. For instance, our coconut exports products. We have already touched on this in our talks with American representatives of the coconut oil industry as well as with the European community. If possible, they should not levy too high taxes on our coconut oil to help out our coconut oil mills. The mills should be in a position of buy copra at higher prices and be competitive in this regard. The foreign buyers wouldn't hear of this before. But now they sympathize more with our concern and there has been some progress in this area. I think you have also discussed this with the representatives of Tokyo as well.

Monsod: Mrs. President, I think it should be noted that one of the most significant accomplishments of this government in the first 10 days is the agreement by the Cabinet, the consensus of the Cabinet on this package of very much needed structural reforms that are needed for economic recovery and long term growth. I would also like to report to you that this structural reform package is a mutually consistent package. What happened before in the previous government is that the policy measures were always taken in an *ad hoc* manner so that, when it would be helping one sector, it was at the same time hurting another sector. And perhaps that the net effect would be negative to the economy as a whole. And it is this structural reform package that we need the cooperation of all the economic ministries. We have been able to come up with a structural reform package that is our own, based on what we know is necessary for us to grow and develop and it is this structural reform package that the Cabinet and the President has approved in principle this morning. And with this it will serve already as the basic framework. It will give the guidelines for all ministry and agency activities because these activities are now going to be measured against the framework. And so we hope that we are now going to be all pulling together for the same objective — economic recovery, sustainable long term growth but with equity and poverty alleviation as the final goal.

Mitra: We should inform the people that when the economic recovery program was being studied and drafted, all the ministries were involved. So it can be said that the program will benefit not just one sector but all sectors.

President: Which is the reason it took some time to draw up the program. Whenever I would be asked, why it was taking so long to draw up the program, I would replay that, as Mrs. Monsod suggested, it should be done as a whole and not sector by sector, unlike what the previous administration did.

Monsod: Not only the ministries were involved. The private sector was also invited to participate. And as a matter of fact, there were groups that went around the regions to explain the package and to get the consensus in the opinions of the different sectors that were affected. Because we are trying to put meat, or flesh and blood into the policy statement of the President that this government is not going to be a government by mandate, you know by fiat, but rather consultation with the people who have essentially put this government in power. It is people power.

Mitra: It is also probably important that people will know that while these policies are being all put together, there were certain policies which already were being implemented. And all of these were blended together to form this economic recovery program which the President announced today.

President: Well, anyway, before we end this, I would just like again to invite our people to attend the June 12 Independence Day celebration. And let's have delayed telecast coverage on the event. Because I have noticed that

those who know they can watch it on television, appear to become somewhat lazy about attending. We want everybody to be there at the Luneta.

Well, you have heard some of our ministers on their work and plans. You realize it is not easy to run a government. There are no easy solutions or answers to some of our problems. We have big problems, and we need everybody's cooperation in solving them. Last February we were able to free ourselves through a peaceful revolution. During the last 100 days on the other hand we have tried to make this freedom fruitful to our people. Now and in the forthcoming days we should turn people power into a force behind a second revolution: a revolution to bring about development. Be assured that I will try my best to serve you faithfully. Your government will exert all efforts to solve the problems we face. But I am asking you in turn: what can you do to help your government in its efforts? What can you do to bring our country back on its feet?

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). Counting the Freedoms : culled from a television panel discussion, *Speeches of Corazon C. Aquino 1986, RP Policy Statements, Malacanang Museum. Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino, March 22 – August 5, 1986.* (pp. 79-91). Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines.

R.C.C. NO. 24 Monday, July 7, 1986

R.C.C. NO. 24

Monday, July 7, 1986

OPENING OF SESSION

At 5:14 p.m., the President, the Honorable Cecilia Muñoz Palma, opened the session.

THE PRESIDENT: The session is called to order.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE PRESIDENT: Everybody will please rise to sing the National Anthem.

Everybody rose to sing the National Anthem.

THE PRESIDENT: Everybody will please remain standing for the Prayer to be led by the Honorable Ma. Teresa F. Nieva.

Everybody remained standing for the Prayer.

PRAYER

MS. NIEVA: O good and loving Father, You created men and women as brothers and sisters, and as co-creators of the world. You gave the riches of creation for each and everyone's use so that we Your children made in Your image and likeness may live lives of human dignity.

Yours is the earth and the fullness thereof; we are only Your stewards. We humbly ask You to cleanse us from self-centeredness and pride, and empty us of greed and intolerance. Fill us with Your Spirit so that we may have the collective wisdom and courage to frame a Magna Carta that will lay the firm foundations for the building of a truly just and humane society.

Heavenly Father, we praise and thank You that like the Israelites of old, You freed us from slavery and bondage, and led us to the Promised Land.

Continue to protect us and guide us so that in the crucial days ahead we may be Your faithful instruments in securing to our people and our country the blessings of democracy under a rule of law and a regime of truth, justice, love, equality and peace.

All these we ask of You in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, and through the intercession of our Blessed Mother Mary. Amen.

ROLL CALL

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary-General will please call the roll.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading:*

Abubakar	Present *	Natividad	Present
Alonto	Present	Nieva	Present
Aquino	Present	Nolledo	Present
Azcuna	Present	Ople	Present *
Bacani	Present	Padilla	Present
Bengzon	Present *	Quesada	Present
Bennagen	Present	Rama	Present
Bernas	Present	Regalado	Present
Rosario Braid	Present	Reyes de los	Present
Brocka	Present	Rigos	Present
Calderon	Present	Rodrigo	Present
Castro de	Present	Romulo	Present
Colayco	Present	Rosales	Absent
Concepcion	Present	Sarmiento	Present
Davide	Present	Suarez	Present
Foz	Present	Sumulong	Present
Garcia	Present	Tadeo	Present
Gascon	Present	Tan	Present
Guingona	Present	Tingson	Present
Jamir	Present	Treñas	Present
Laurel	Present *	Uka	Present
Lerum	Present *	Villacorta	Present
Maambong	Present	Villegas	Present
Monsod	Present		

The President is present.

The roll call shows 42 Members responded to the call.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

MR. ALONTO: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Assistant Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. ALONTO: I move that we dispense with the reading of the Journal of the last session.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection to the motion of the Assistant Floor Leader? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

APPROVAL OF JOURNAL

MR. ALONTO: Madam President, I move that we approve the Journal of the last session.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection to the motion of the Assistant Floor Leader? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

MR. ALONTO: Madam President, I move that we now proceed to the Reference of Business.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection that we proceed to the Reference of Business? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Secretary-General will read the Reference of Business.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary-General read the following Proposed Resolutions on First Reading, Communications and Committee Reports, the President making the corresponding references:

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS ON FIRST READING

Proposed Resolution No. 409, entitled:

RESOLUTION CREATING AUTONOMOUS REGIONS FOR THE MUSLIMS OF MINDANAO AND THE PEOPLE OF THE CORDILLERA HIGHLANDS AND PROVIDING FOR OTHER AREAS OF AUTONOMY WITHIN LARGER POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.

Introduced by Hon. Ople.

To the Committee on Local Governments.

Proposed Resolution No. 410, entitled:

RESOLUTION MAKING THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS THE SOLE JUDGE OF ELECTIONS, RETURNS AND QUALIFICATIONS OF ALL ELECTIVE LOCAL OFFICIALS.

Introduced by Hon. Davide, Jr.

To the Committee on Constitutional Commissions and Agencies.

Proposed Resolution No. 411, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE CREATION OF A SEPARATE ARTICLE IN THE CONSTITUTION INSTITUTIONALIZING THE CONCEPT OF PEOPLE POWER.

Introduced by Hon. Rosario Braid.

To the Committee on the Legislative.

Proposed Resolution No. 412, entitled:

RESOLUTION LIMITING THE PRACTICE IN THE PHILIPPINES OF THE VARIOUS PROFESSIONS TO FILIPINO PROFESSIONALS.

Introduced by Hon. Rosario Braid.

To the Committee on the National Economy and Patrimony.

Proposed Resolution No. 413, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING FOR A CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT OF THE STATE TO ASSIST THE DISABLED INTO BECOMING PRODUCTIVE AND USEFUL MEMBERS OF SOCIETY.

Introduced by Hon. de los Reyes. S

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Proposed Resolution No. 414, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO RESTORE THE PRE-MARTIAL LAW POLICY OF ALLOWING VOTERS IN HIGHLY URBANIZED CITIES TO VOTE FOR PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS.

Introduced by Hon. Rama.

To the Committee on Local Governments.

Proposed Resolution No. 415, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROVIDING IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION THAT THE STATE SHALL ENCOURAGE THE ESTABLISHMENT AND GROWTH OF POLITICAL PARTIES ORGANIZED ALONG SECTORAL LINES AND WHICH SHALL STAND FOR WELL-DEFINED PRINCIPLES AND PROGRAMS OF GOVERNMENT.

Introduced by Hon. Sarmiento and Brocka.

To the Committee on General Provisions.

Proposed Resolution No. 416, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION AN ARTICLE TO UPGRADE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION.

Introduced by Hon. Guingona.

To the Committee on Human Resources.

Proposed Resolution No. 417, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING TO ADOPT SECTION 4, ARTICLE XV OF THE 1973 CONSTITUTION IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION AND INSERTING THE WORDS 'RIGHTS AND' BEFORE THE WORD 'DUTIES' AND 'FAMILY LIVING AND' BEFORE 'CITIZENSHIP.'

Introduced by Hon. Tan, Rigos and Villacorta.

To the Committee on Human Resources.

Proposed Resolution No. 418, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT SECTIONS 4 AND 5, ARTICLE II OF THE 1973 CONSTITUTION AND ADD THE WORDS 'IN THE NURTURE AND CARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH FOR THEIR SURVIVAL AND TOTAL DEVELOPMENT AND' AND 'MORAL, EMOTIONAL,' RESPECTIVELY.

Introduced by Hon. Tan, Villacorta and Rigos.

To the Committee on Human Resources.

Proposed Resolution No. 419, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION GUARANTEEING A DECENT SHELTER FOR EVERY FILIPINO, PROTECTION AGAINST ARBITRARY AND INHUMAN DEMOLITION OF DWELLINGS AND AN ASSURANCE FOR PROPER RESETTLEMENT UNDER A COMPREHENSIVE SHELTER PROGRAM.

Introduced by Hon. Tan, Villacorta and Rigos.

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Proposed Resolution No. 420, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING THE CREATION OF A CITIZENS' ARMY THAT SHALL TAKE ON THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY OF DEFENDING THE STATE AGAINST FOREIGN AGGRESSION.

Introduced by Hon. Suarez and Tadeo.

To the Committee on General Provisions.

Proposed Resolution No. 421, entitled:

RESOLUTION INCORPORATING IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION TO INSURE THAT THE STATE SHALL UNDERTAKE AND IMPLEMENT AN URBAN LAND REFORM AND SOCIAL HOUSING PROGRAM.

Introduced by Hon. Nieva, Monsod, Tan, Bacani and Gascon.

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Proposed Resolution No. 422, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION ESTABLISHING A SYSTEM OF FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE.

Introduced by Hon. Nieva.

To the Committee on General Provisions.

Proposed Resolution No. 423, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSUMER PROTECTION IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION.

Introduced by Hon. Suarez, Bennagen, Quesada, Tan, Rosario Braid, Sarmiento, Aquino and Tadeo.

To the Committee on General Provisions.

Proposed Resolution No. 424, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSUMER PROTECTION IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION.

Introduced by Hon. Suarez, Bennagen, Quesada, Tan, Rosario Braid, Sarmiento, Aquino and Tadeo.

To the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles.

Proposed Resolution No. 425, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION GUARANTEEING INALIENABILITY AND INSURANCE OF A MINIMUM PATRIMONY OF EACH FAMILY THAT ENSURE DECENT FAMILY LIFE.

Introduced by Hon. Sarmiento, Quesada and Tadeo.

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Proposed Resolution No. 426, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION ESTABLISHING WORK AS A RIGHT AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, A STATE ENDEAVOR TO ACHIEVE FULL PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND THE CREATION OF A CENTRALIZED MONITORING SYSTEM AND UNEMPLOYMENT WELFARE PROGRAM.

Introduced by Hon. Sarmiento, Quesada, Tadeo and Bennagen.

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Proposed Resolution No. 427, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE ARTICLE ON TRANSITORY PROVISIONS A PROVISION FOR THE DEMONETIZATION OF ALL CURRENCY ISSUED UNDER THE PREVIOUS REGIME.

Introduced by Hon. de Castro and Suarez.

To the Committee on Amendments and Transitory Provisions.

Proposed Resolution No. 428, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING THE MECHANICS FOR A SYSTEM OF MULTISECTORAL REPRESENTATION IN THE NATIONAL LEGISLATURE.

Introduced by Hon. Villacorta, Aquino, Ople, Suarez, Sarmiento, Quesada, Tadeo, Garcia, Azcuna, Uka, Bennagen, Jamir, Nieva, Davide, Jr., Brocka, Rosario Braid and Villegas.

To the Committee on the Legislative.

COMMUNICATIONS

Letter from the Honorable Salvador H. Laurel, Vice-President and Minister for Foreign Affairs, recommending the restoration of the specific provision in the 1935 Constitution that the President shall have the power to appoint “Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls.”

(Communication No. 116 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on the Executive.

Letter from Mr. Potenciano M. Alcala, Sr. of KBakyas, Bacolod City, proposing provisions on free education up to high school level, land reform, the Sabah issue, among others.

(Communication No. 117 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Steering Committee.

Letter from Mr. Gonzalo (Lito) Puyat of Manila, requesting a constitutional mandate on youth and sports development.

(Communication No. 118 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles.

Letter from Commissioner Mario D. Ortiz of the Commission on Elections, transmitting the draft of proposals on election matters discussed by the COMELEC en banc.

(Communication No. 119 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Constitutional Commissions and Agencies.

Letter from Mr. Antonio A. Lobitaña, proposing the elevation of the Bureau of Internal Revenue to a constitutional body.

(Communication No. 120 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Constitutional Commissions and Agencies.

Letter from the Senior Citizens Government Retirees Association of Agusan del Norte and Agusan City, signed by Ms. Caridad V. Atega, proposing a presidential form of government, bicameral legislature, retention of the US bases, and limited autonomy of Muslim regions, among others.

(Communication No. 121 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Steering Committee.

Report of the “mini Con-Com” assigned to Iloilo City composed of President Cecilia Muñoz Palma, Commissioners Ma. Teresa F. Nieva, Efrain B. Treñas and Wilfrido V. Villacorta, entitled “Highlights of the Public Hearing held at the University of San Agustin Auditorium in Iloilo City on June 28, 1986.”

(Communication No. 122 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Steering Committee.

Letter from the Sangguniang Pangwika sa Edukasyon ng Pilipinas, with enclosures, signed by Mr. Alfonso O. Santiago, requesting that the Constitution be written and promulgated in the national language.

(Communication No. 123 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Style.

Letter from Mr. Oscar N. Rivera of San Miguel Village, Makati, Metro Manila, proposing the adoption of the jury system in our courts of law.

(Communication No. 124 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on the Judiciary.

Letter from Mr. Julian Makabayan ng Masa ng Pilipinas, urging various political, social and economic reforms.

(Communication No. 125 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Communication from Mr. Ismael P. Sevilla of Cofradia, Malolos, Bulacan, urging that the establishment of a cooperative society be made a national policy.

(Communication No. 126 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles.

Letter from Mr. Norberto Cahete of Project 4, Quezon City, Metro Manila, requesting the inclusion of provisions on the role of science and technology in the attainment of national goals, among others.

(Communication No. 127 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Human Resources.

Letter from Kilusang Mayo Uno signed by Mr. Roberto T. Ortaliz, requesting the extension of the period of drafting the Constitution and the holding of more public hearings.

(Communication No. 128 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Steering Committee.

Letter from the Filipino Community Board of Sydney signed by Mr. Oscar R. Landicho, requesting the inclusion of a provision on dual citizenship.

(Communication No. 129 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights.

Letter from the Association of TOWNS Awardees signed by Ms. Corazon S. de la Paz, proposing as an additional sentence of Section 1, Article IV of the Constitution: "Women shall enjoy equal rights with men."

(Communication No. 130 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights, and Obligations and Human Rights.

Letter from Mr. Teodoro Padilla, expressing deep appreciation to the Commission for adopting Resolution No. 5 expressing profound condolence on the death of Hon. Sabino Padilla, former Justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

(Communication No. 131 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Archives.

Letter from Management Trend Company of Tarzana, California, with enclosures, signed by Mr. David E. Phillippe, stating that the United States Constitution falls short of expressing acceptable goals for business and social conduct, pointing to inequities in the judicial system of the United States and suggesting a rule and code of conduct between human beings to avert the same problems.

(Communication No. 132 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights.

Letter from Kilusan sa Kapangyarihan at Karapatan ng Bayan (KAAKBAY) signed by Mr. Jose Mario C. Bunay and Ms. Lynn R. Enriquez, submitting proposals on science and technology.

(Communication No. 133 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Human Resources.

Letter from Kilusan Sa Kapangyarihan at Karapatan ng Bayan (KAAKBAY) signed by Ms. Maria Teresa I. Diokno, submitting proposals on national economy and patrimony.

(Communication No. 134 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on the National Economy and Patrimony.

Communication from Mr. Benedicto Aza Gonzales of Capitol Bliss, Quezon City, proposing the incorporation in the Constitution of a provision on the Filipinization of the retail trade industry. Sponsored by Hon. Sumulong and Davide, Jr.

To the Steering Committee.

Committee Report No. 11 on Proposed Resolution No. 234, as reported out by the Committee on the Executive, entitled:

RESOLUTION FOR THE INCLUSION IN THE ARTICLE ON THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT A SPECIFIC PROVISION REDEFINING THE POWER OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OVER LOCAL GOVERNMENTS,

recommending its approval with amendments.

Sponsored by Hon. Sumulong and Regalado.

To the Steering Committee.

Committee Report No. 12 on Proposed Resolution No. 435, prepared by the Committee on the Executive, entitled:

RESOLUTION REQUIRING CONCURRENCE OF THE MONETARY BOARD TO LOANS CONTRACTED OR GUARANTEED AND FOR THE SUBMISSION BY THE MONETARY BOARD OF REPORTS TO THE LEGISLATURE,

recommending its approval in substitution of Proposed Resolution Nos. 59 and 124.

Sponsored by Hon. Sumulong, Regalado and Maambong.

To the Steering Committee.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE PRESIDENT: The session is suspended.

It was 5:33 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:36 p.m., the session was resumed with the Honorable Lorenzo M Sumulong presiding.

(Communication No. 135 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The session is resumed.

To the Committee on the National Economy and Patrimony.

The Assistant Floor Leader is recognized.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee Report No. 10 on Proposed Resolution No. 118, as reported out by the Committee on the Executive, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION REQUIRING THE APPROVAL OR CONSENT OF THE LEGISLATURE FOR THE EFFECTIVITY AND VALIDITY OF TREATIES, EXECUTIVE AGREEMENTS AND RECOGNITION OF STATES OR GOVERNMENTS,

recommending its approval with amendments.

Sponsored by Hon. Sumulong and Davide, Jr.

To the Steering Committee.

Committee Report No. 11 on Proposed Resolution No. 234, as reported [out by the Committee on the Executive, entitled:

RESOLUTION FOR THE INCLUSION IN THE ARTICLE ON THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT A SPECIFIC PROVISION REDEFINING THE POWER OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OVER LOCAL GOVERNMENTS,

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Sponsored by Hon. Sumulong, Regalado and Maambong.

To the Steering Committee.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 5:36 p.m., the session was resumed with the Honorable Lorenzo M. Sumulong presiding.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The session is resumed.

The Assistant Floor Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 263 (Article on National Territory) *Continuation*

MR. ALONTO: I move that we proceed to the voting on Second Reading of Proposed Resolution No. 263, the Article on National Territory.

MR. DE LOS REYES: Mr. Presiding Officer, parliamentary inquiry.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner de los Reyes is recognized.

MR. DE LOS REYES: Suppose the no vote prevails, what happens? We shall have no more provision on National Territory, or will the provision of the 1973 Constitution be deemed reinstated?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Will the Gentleman please repeat his point of inquiry?

MR. DE LOS REYES: If the no vote prevails, in other words, the proposal is rejected, does it mean that we will have no provision on National Territory as earlier proposed or is the provision of the 1973 Constitution on National Territory deemed reinstated since it was made the draft model?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): I suppose that if the voting on Resolution No. 263 results in more negative votes, then the resolution is disapproved.

MR. DE LOS REYES: Then we will have no provision on National Territory?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): No, because the 1935 or the 1973 Constitution has to be presented for incorporation in the new Constitution in order to be considered.

MR. DE LOS REYES: I submit, Mr. Presiding Officer.

APPROVAL OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 263 ON SECOND READING (Article on National Territory)

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): There was a previous motion to proceed to the voting on Second Reading of Proposed Resolution No. 263.

As many as are in favor of the resolution, please raise their hand. *(Several Members raised their hand.)*

As many as are against, please raise their hand. *(Few Members raised their hand.)*

The results show 27 votes in favor and 8 against.

Proposed Resolution No. 263, as amended, is approved on Second Reading.

MR. ALONTO: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The Assistant Floor Leader is recognized.

Per our knowledge and information, the last public hearing will be on July 12 and 13. However, some of the Commissioners have been receiving requests from other provinces such as Baler, Aurora, Zambales, Daet, Camarines Norte and Masbate for the holding of public hearings in those areas. May I know from the Chair if we are going to accommodate these requests? Secondly, who will handle the transportation expenses of the Commissioners in the event that we accommodate this request?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): I think we have to accommodate this request. I would rather refer this matter to the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Public Hearings, Commissioner Garcia.

MR. GARCIA: I would like to suggest that if there are Commissioners who are willing to undertake the task of going to those respective provinces, we would like to receive those willing volunteers. Secondly, we would also like to request the Budget Committee of the Commission if it is possible to ask for additional funds, or in the absence of such funds, we would like to request that those Commissioners who are going take the amount or the funds from their allowance.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Is the Commissioner satisfied?

MR. GUINGONA: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Guingona is recognized.

MR. GUINGONA: Insofar as the query raised by Commissioner Garcia is concerned, there is nothing in the budget that provides for these extra public hearings. However, the Committee could look into this and we could try to provide for these extra hearings. But we would have to know how much would be the amount requested.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The Assistant Floor Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED
RESOLUTION NO. 7
(Article on Citizenship)
Continuation

PERIOD OF AMENDMENTS

MR. ALONTO: Mr. Presiding Officer, I move that we continue the period of amendments on Committee Report No. 4 on Proposed Resolution No. 7, the Article on Citizenship.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong) Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

MR. ALONTO: Mr. Presiding Officer, I ask that Commissioner Bernas be recognized to sponsor the amendments.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Bernas is recognized.

FR. BERNAS: Mr. Presiding Officer, ladies and gentlemen of the Commission:

The sponsor is prepared to entertain amendments. May I request all those who desire to present amendments to register their turn with the Floor Leader. And I am asked to remind everyone that the proponent of an amendment has a maximum of five minutes to fight for his amendment.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): According to the Rules, we have to begin with the committee amendments.

FR. BERNAS: The committee amendments have already been put in the committee report. Proposed Resolution No. 7, as amended by the Committee, is on the third page of Committee Report No. 4.

THE PRESIDING OFFICE (Mr. Sumulong): The first committee amendment is on line 7: Put a period (.) after the word "law."

FR. BERNAS: What is the amendment?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Yes, the sponsor will submit the committee amendments.

FR. BERNAS: On line 7 of Proposed Resolution No. 7, page 2, put a period (.) after the word "law." Therefore, the sentence will read: "Those who are naturalized in accordance with law." Delete the rest of the paragraph starting with the semicolon (;).

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the amendment is approved.

MR. MAAMBONG: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Maambong is recognized.

MR. MAAMBONG: I just want to raise a point of parliamentary inquiry.

Considering that I have here a copy of Committee Report No. 4, and attached to it is Proposed Resolution No. 7, the provisions are already very clear. For example, the provision indicated by the honorable sponsor on paragraph 4 is very clear in Committee Report No. 4. The provision reads: "Those who are naturalized in accordance with law." I think the sponsor is reading the original copy of the proposed resolution of Honorable Davide which has been considered and reported out by the Committee with some portions deleted, and so, we are now in possession of the Article on Citizenship. I do not see any need, therefore to go back to the proposed resolution of Commissioner Davide. To save time, what we should do is to consider the proposed resolution as submitted by the Committee, not the proposed resolution as submitted by the author, Commissioner Davide.

FR. BERNAS: I completely agree with the Gentleman, and I submit to the ruling of the Presiding Officer. I was going to start with the committee report but I was told to go back by the Presiding Officer.

MR. MAAMBONG: Then, in that case, Mr. Presiding Officer, may I suggest now to the sponsor to consider the Article on Citizenship as reported out by the Committee and not the original proposed resolution as filed by the author; otherwise, we will be going back to the deliberations of the Committee.

Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): So, we will take up the resolution as amended.

FR. BERNAS: Yes. So, we begin with Section 1.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Yes. We will consider all the committee amendments as already approved by the Committee. And, therefore, what is now before the Commission is the resolution as amended. Is that correct?

FR. BERNAS: Yes. Mr. Presiding Officer, after this committee report was formulated and after having listened to the Members of the Commission, the Committee is prepared to accept the recommendation that on line 9 of the first page of Resolution No. 7, as amended by the Committee, the word “ratification” be changed to ADOPTION.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Is there any objection?

MR. DAVIDE: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Davide is recognized.

MR. DAVIDE: Mr. Presiding Officer, I wish to be enlightened on what could be the difference between “ratification” and “adoption.”

FR. BERNAS: There is no difference. The only wish that was expressed by those who wanted to use “adoption” was that it is a reversal to the 1973 version.

MR. DAVIDE: Yes, I have to ask that question because in the previous amendments to the Constitution we really had two sets of facts: One, the COMELEC announcing the result that the Constitution is ratified, and then a proclamation by the President that the Constitution which was ratified be deemed adopted.

FR. BERNAS: I think that was because in that exercise, the decree calling for the plebiscite said that these amendments be effective upon the announcement of the ratification.

MR. DAVIDE: That may be proper if the Article on Amendments, for instance, on the new Constitution, will merely state that any amendment or revision of the Constitution shall be deemed ratified upon the votes of so many of the electorate as determined by the COMELEC after a plebiscite. But if it is not, I think “ratification” is the proper word.

FR. BERNAS: I submit that to the vote of the body. For the Committee, it is either way.

VOTING

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The amendment is on line 9. The word “ratification” shall be changed to ADOPTION.

As many as are in favor of the amendment, please raise their hand. (Several Members raised their hand.)

As many as are against, please raise their hand. (Few Members raised the hand.)

The results show 16 votes in favor and 11 against. So, the amendment to change “ratification” to ADOPTION is approved.

FR. BERNAS: The Committee has no further changes to make on the committee report.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner de los Reyes be recognized for an amendment.

MR. DE LOS REYES: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner de los Reyes is recognized.

MR. DE LOS REYES: May I propose that on page 2, line 2, after the word “law,” the following be added: NATURALIZATION OBTAINED BY EXECUTIVE DECREES SHALL BE SUBJECT TO JUDICIAL CONFIRMATION IN THE MANNER AND WITHIN THE TIME PRESCRIBED BY LAW. FAILURE TO OBTAIN SAID CONFIRMATION SHALL BE A GROUND FOR REVOCATION OF SAID CITIZENSHIP. In other words, I am for the restoration of the Davide amendment.

FR. BERNAS: The Committee took this into consideration and the Committee does not amend.

MR. DE LOS REYES: May I explain my amendment, Mr. Presiding Officer?

Many aliens succeeded in securing Filipino citizenship under liberalized naturalization laws created by presidential decrees. The basic rationale for the liberalization of the laws on naturalization was to absorb, among others, Chinese aliens who have resided in the Philippines for many years and preferred being Filipinos to being considered citizens or subjects of the People’s Republic of China.

It should be remembered that the liberalized naturalization laws came about because of presidential decrees after our country severed its diplomatic ties with the Republic of China in Taiwan and established diplomatic ties with the People’s Republic of China. Thus, the process of naturalization under presidential decrees was less demanding; we might even say accommodating. There were no searching inquiries on the motives of the applicants and their past activities to show their sincere desire to become Filipinos.

This amendment would only provide that future laws may be enacted in order to subject to judicial confirmation the naturalization of this class of Filipino citizens.

Mr. Presiding Officer, under the naturalization law, after an alien is naturalized, he is required to stay in the country, and when it is found that he transfers to another country and establishes his residence there, his certificate of naturalization may be cancelled.

In case of a woman, upon her marriage to a foreigner and by virtue of the laws in force in her husband’s country, she acquires her husband’s nationality.

In other words, this amendment would serve to purify. We will go on some sort of a purifying process for those citizens who obtain citizenship through a liberalized method of naturalization by presidential decrees.

The reason given by the sponsor is that this will clutter our court dockets. I do not believe that this will unnecessarily clutter the dockets of our courts because future laws may simply provide for summary proceedings.

just to see to it that this class of citizens who obtained citizenship by naturalization through presidential decrees are really sincere in becoming Filipino citizens and are not out to take advantage only of the privileges of a Filipino.

That is all, Mr. Presiding Officer.

FR. BERNAS: May I be allowed to say a few words?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Yes, the sponsor has the floor.

FR. BERNAS: In opposing the amendment, we have several reasons. We begin with the presumption of regularity of official action. I do not think that it is the purpose of anybody to junk this principle that official action is presumed to be regular. Therefore, we begin with the presumption that those 29,722 adults who were naturalized through this process are validly citizens of the Philippines. And I do not believe in the proposed amendment if the intention of the proponent is to deny the validity of their citizenship.

Second, we do not make a distinction between natural-born citizens and naturalized citizens except in those instances when the Constitution itself makes a distinction. In this particular amendment, the intention is to refer to the Constitution to make a distinction between two classes of naturalized citizens — those judicially naturalized and those naturalized by decree, specifically, during what we might call the “open flood gate years.” Should we make this distinction? I believe we should not; I say this principally for those who truly deserve Philippine citizenship. I ask the proponent not to compel them to go through a demeaning process of begging for citizenship again. One will probably say that the process will be summary, but what will be the nature of this summary procedure? We do not yet know. We do not know yet what future legislatures will consider summary procedure and whether or not it is the type that we envision. And even if indeed the provision is summary, we do not know how those who will implement it will actually behave.

Admittedly, there may be some who indeed are unworthy, but we have laws for them, and if they are not adequate, then they can be improved. After all, it is also a principle embodied in our jurisprudence that the grant of citizenship is never *res judicata*. It can always be reopened for valid reasons. But let us not reopen them *en masse*. Let us reopen only those cases where there is perceived evidence or grounds for reopening the case. For these reasons, I oppose the proposed amendment and that remedial measures be left to ordinary legislation within the limits of the Constitution.

Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

MR. DE LOS REYES: Mr. Presiding Officer, one last word. Precisely, that is the amendment: **SUBJECT TO JUDICIAL CONFIRMATION IN THE MANNER AND WITHIN THE TIME PRESCRIBED BY THE LAW.** In other words, we agree that it should be left to future legislation.

FR. BERNAS: But the basic opposition we have is to the reopening of all the cases *en masse*.

MR. DE LOS REYES: No, no, we are not reopening. Future legislation shall decide whether we shall reopen or not. There is nothing in the amendment which says that those who obtain naturalization by decrees shall have their naturalization reopened. 343 2

FR. BERNAS: In which case, the amendment is unnecessary because the legislature can do it, anyway, even without that amendment.

MR. DE LOS REYES: No, but the purpose of this amendment is to express the intent of this Commission that future legislation should do that.

FR. BERNAS: Yes. In the opinion of the Committee, the matter is covered by Section 3 — “Philippine citizen — ship may be lost or reacquired in the manner provided by law.”

MR. DE LOS REYES: I respectfully submit that we put this to a vote.

FR. BERNAS: I would agree with the proponent of the amendment.

MR. RODRIGO: Mr. Presiding Officer, may I add something?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Are there any further remarks?

MR. RODRIGO: Mr. Presiding Officer, may I say something before we vote? The use of the word “confirmation” means that the naturalization is not complete and, as the sponsor says, this applies to all these naturalization cases by presidential decrees. It means that we will declare all of them now as not yet complete, and that is why judicial confirmation is needed. The added phrase “provided by law” only means that the way it will be confirmed will be provided by law.

MR. MAAMBONG: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Maambong is recognized.

MR. MAAMBONG: I am intending to propose a related amendment and in order not to go back and forth, considering that this is related to the proposed amendment of Commissioner de los Reyes, I wonder if the sponsor could just clarify certain points so that I do not have to propose an amendment to this particular section.

FR. BERNAS: The sponsor will make every effort to clarify.

MR. MAAMBONG: The wording here is “Those who are naturalized in accordance with law.” I am intending to propose an amendment to the word “law,” but to obviate that possibility, probably the sponsor could reply to some questions. I am referring now to the sponsor’s Philippine Constitution, A Reviewer — Primer, which is the only book I can afford. The sponsor’s other book is rather expensive.

Does the term “law” cover the Mass Naturalization Law provided in the Philippine Bill of 1902?

FR. BERNAS: Those naturalized under the Mass Naturalization Law of 1902 are covered not by paragraph 4 but by Section 1, paragraph 1 of the 1935 Constitution.

MR. MAAMBONG: That is clear enough. Does the term “law” cover the general law of naturalization through judicial process under the Revised Naturalization Law, Commonwealth Act No. 473, which was approved on June 17, 1939?

FR. BERNAS: It includes that but it also includes any other law.

MR. MAAMBONG: I am going to that, Mr. Presiding Officer.

Does the term “law” apply to special naturalization law enacted by the old Congress or through a decree; for example, as the sponsor has stated clearly in his book, the republic act which made Father James Moran a citizen or a presidential decree which made Mr. Ronnie Nathanielz a citizen?

FR. BERNAS: That is included.

MR. MAAMBONG: The last point, Mr. Presiding Officer. Does this term “law” cover a general law on naturalization which was applied in a summary manner through LOI No. 270, dated April 11, 1975, promulgated on July 9, 1975, and LOI No. 491, promulgated on December 29, 1976, by which a good number of aliens were naturalized not through the LOIs but through a decree?

FR. BERNAS: "By law," we mean here the decrees, not the LOIs referred to.

MR. MAAMBONG: Yes, Mr. Presiding Officer, I wanted that clarified because I seem to recall that there was a statement made here that there were aliens who were naturalized by letters of instructions, and that is not really a correct statement. The letters of instructions which I mentioned only created a special committee on naturalization which processed the applications and on the basis of its recommendation, decrees were issued by the President later on.

FR. BERNAS: I am in agreement.

MR. MAAMBONG: Finally, I have here the June 23, 1986 issue of the Malaya which says:

President Aquino has directed the justice ministry and the solicitor general's office to look into pending applications for naturalization by decree which were left unacted upon by the ousted Marcos administration.

The President's order was issued to Justice Minister Neptali Gonzales and Solicitor General Sedfrey Ordenez

The President told newsmen that depending on the results of the joint study, meritorious cases may be given due course and the rest mothballed until the Constitutional Commission drafting the new charter has laid down new policies and guidelines on naturalization of deserving aliens.

The June 30, 1986 issue of the Philippine Tribune practically contains the same thing. The question is that when one says "those who are naturalized in accordance with law," does this include those applicants who filed application for naturalization through the LOIs mentioned — LOI Nos. 270, 292 and 491? Probably, in a few days' time, President Aquino might act on the applications of previous applicants and when she issues a decree to this effect, will they be covered by the provision "Those who are naturalized in accordance with law," considering that the applications were filed during the time of President Marcos under a letter of instructions issued by the President, but this time, the decree would be issued by President Aquino based on those previous applications? Would they be covered by the term "law"?

FR. BERNAS: Yes.

MR. MAAMBONG: In that case, I have no amendment to propose.

Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

FR. BERNAS: Incidentally, there are still 9,131 pending cases.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Are there any further remarks?

MR. DE LOS REYES: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner de los Reyes is recognized.

MR. DE LOS REYES: May I just insert in the record the definition of naturalization.

Naturalization is the judicial act of adopting a foreigner and clothing him with the privileges of a native-born citizen. It implies the renunciation of a former nationality and the fact of entrance into a similar relation towards a new body politic. (Volume 2, Am. Jur., p. 561, par. 188)

FR. BERNAS: May I just say that that is a definition of one type of naturalization. There is also direct naturalization by legislation.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Will Commissioner de los Reyes kindly repeat the amendment he proposes.

MR. DE LOS REYES: My proposed amendment is to add: NATURALIZATION BY EXECUTIVE DECREES SHALL BE SUBJECT TO JUDICIAL CONFIRMATION IN THE MANNER AND WITHIN THE TIME PRESCRIBED BY LAW. FAILURE TO OBTAIN SAID CONFIRMATION SHALL BE A GROUND FOR REVOCATION OF SUCH CITIZENSHIP.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): What does the sponsor say?

FR. BERNAS: We do not accept the proposed amendment and we submit it to a vote.

VOTING

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Those in favor of the amendment proposed by Commissioner de los Reyes, please raise their hand. (Few Members raised their hand.)

Those against the proposed amendment, please raise their hand. (Several Members raised their hand.)

The results show 5 votes in favor and 30 against; the amendment is lost.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer, I ask that Commissioner Davide be recognized for an anterior amendment.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Davide is recognized.

MR. DAVIDE: Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

The proposed amendment is on line 1, page 2 of the amended resolution which consists in the insertion of Is the word JUDICIALLY between the words “are” and “naturalized,” so that the entire paragraph would read: “Those who are JUDICIALLY naturalized in accordance with law.”

FR. BERNAS: The Committee would rather leave that to the body.

MR. DAVIDE: Before it is left to the body for determination, may I be allowed to explain, Mr. Presiding Officer?

In the course of the interpellation by Commissioner Concepcion when we took up this proposal under a freewheeling discussion, and as stated earlier by Commissioner de los Reyes, naturalization is a judicial act because admission to Philippine citizenship is a matter of privilege. And the determination then of who should be considered or admitted as a Filipino citizen must be the prerogative of the court; hence, this proposal. We should prevent any other person from admitting an alien as a Filipino citizen to preempt a judicial function or authority. I submit, Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Are there any further remarks?- Are we now ready to vote?

MR. RODRIGO: May I ask the proponent a few questions?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The Gentleman from Bulacan, Commissioner Rodrigo, is recognized.

MR. RODRIGO: In the 1935 Constitution, the provision is “Those who are naturalized in accordance with law.” In the 1973 Constitution, the provision is exactly the same: “Those who are naturalized in accordance with law.” Now, what is the reason for adding the word “JUDICIALLY” in the present Constitution?

MR. DAVIDE: I will answer that, Mr. Presiding Officer. The issue of naturalization by decree affected so many and, of course, it resulted in the admission of aliens as Filipino citizens without undergoing the rigorous process of presenting their qualifications for admission and providing them before a court.

We now would seek to prevent any further action by any other agency of the government to admit aliens by a mere decree or a letter of instructions. This proposed amendment is the only way we can prevent future actions of such kind as was done in the past regime.

MR. RODRIGO: If the amendment is approved, does this mean that those who were naturalized by the presidential decree of President Marcos will lose their citizenship?

MR. DAVIDE: No, Mr. Presiding Officer, because this; to be construed to operate prospectively.

MR. RODRIGO: Prospectively. So, this is not aimed at a particular group of persons?

MR. DAVIDE: No, Mr. Presiding Officer, but this is to govern future action. Henceforth, no naturalization can be done by decree, only by judicial action.

MR. RODRIGO: With that clarification, thank you very much.

FR. BERNAS: Mr. Presiding Officer, may I say a few words?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The sponsor is recognized.

FR. BERNAS: I would oppose although not very vigorously, the amendment for this reason: The background of the proposed amendment is the situation of the Marcos regime when legislation was in the hands of one man. The reason we had this mass naturalization by decree was because one man possessed legislative power. If we insure that legislative power will not be exercised by one person, then the abuses which resulted from the possession of this legislative power by decree will no crop up in the future.

For that reason, I prefer to leave the provision as it is and allow the legislature to naturalize directly.

I ask for a vote, Mr. Presiding Officer.

VOTING

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Those in favor of the amendment proposed by Commissioner Davide, please raise their hand. (*Few Members raised their hand.*)

Those against the proposed amendment, please raise their hand. (*Several Members raised their hand.*)

The results show 14 votes in favor and 19 against; the amendment is lost.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer, I ask that Vice-President Padilla be recognized.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The Vice-President is recognized.

MR. PADILLA: Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

Section 3 states: "Philippine citizenship may be lost or reacquired in the manner provided by law." Will the sponsor agree to change the words "in the manner" to FOR ANY CAUSE? The reason is, the phrase "in the manner" speaks

more of the procedural aspect, whereas 'FOR ANY CAUSE provided by law' will consider the substantial reason for either loss or reacquisition.

FR. BERNAS: In my understanding of this proposal, the word "manner" includes both substance and procedure. So, I would not accept the amendment.

MR. PADILLA: After that line "provided by law," will the sponsor consider this addition: CERTIFICATES OF NATURALIZATION MAY BE CANCELLED FOR ANY OF THE CAUSES PROVIDED BY LAW AS GROUNDS FOR DISQUALIFICATION OF APPLICANTS FOR NATURALIZATION.

I will explain briefly. Section 18 of the Revised Naturalization Law, otherwise known as Commonwealth Act No. 473, provides for grounds for cancellation of a certificate of naturalization, but most of these refer to naturalization certificates obtained illegally or irregularly or for some other causes existing at the time of the application or during the proceedings for naturalization. Moreover, the Revised Naturalization Law provides grounds for qualification (Section 2) and for disqualification (Section 4). An applicant for a naturalization certificate must have all the qualifications and none of the disqualifications.

It may happen, Mr. Presiding Officer, that after an alien obtained a certificate of naturalization, assuming the regular procedure under the Revised Naturalization Law, he may, however, return to his old customs as an alien, such that he will not mingle socially with Filipinos or he will not send his children to our schools where Philippine history and other subjects are taught.

In other words, he might not have had the disqualification at the time of the application, but may acquire or go back to some cause for disqualification after he had secured the certificate of naturalization. So that in addition to the grounds under Commonwealth Act No. 63, we should recognize not only those under Section 18 of Commonwealth Act No. 473, but also the disqualifications for naturalization under Section 4.

FR. BERNAS: Mr. Presiding Officer, on general principle, I hold the proposition not to make a distinction except on those cases where the Constitution specifically makes a distinction between natural-born citizens and naturalized citizens.

The proposal to my mind, in effect, allows the legislature to create laws prejudicial to validly naturalized citizens, but not applicable to natural-born citizens.

I am opposed to that, Mr. Presiding Officer.

MR. PADILLA: No, I am referring to the grounds presently provided for by the Revised Naturalization Law on disqualifications.

FR. BERNAS: Yes, Mr. Presiding Officer, but if the applicant passed the test with all regularity, then he enjoys that citizenship as firmly as a natural-born citizen does.

MR. PADILLA: Even if, subsequently, he returns to his old ways, would that have constituted disqualification?

FR. BERNAS: Yes, because those old ways could also be the ways of natural-born citizens, and yet we do not disqualify them.

MR. PADILLA: It is hardly possible that a natural-born citizen would have any of those disqualifications for naturalization.

FR. BERNAS: Some of the disqualifications are moral disqualifications; it is quite possible for natural-born citizens to be immoral.

MR. PADILLA: No, the disqualifications are not exactly on moral standards; they are more on social behavior.

FR. BERNAS: Mr. Presiding Officer, one of the qualifications is they must be of good moral character.

MR. PADILLA: That is a qualification, but the opposite is not mentioned among the disqualifications, I am now referring to disqualifications.

FR. BERNAS: I submit the matter to a vote, Mr. Presiding Officer.

MR. RODRIGO: Was there a proposed amendment? I think the Vice-President was only asking if the sponsor would be amenable to such an amendment.

FR. BERNAS: No, I am not amenable.

MR. RODRIGO: I do not think the Vice-President has already proposed his amendment.

FR. BERNAS: Commissioner Rodrigo is correct.

MR. PADILLA: My questions are proposals for an amendment.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Will Vice-President Padilla please repeat his proposed amendment?

MR. PADILLA: The amendment is, after "by law" on Section 3, add: CERTIFICATES OF NATURALIZATION MAY BE CANCELLED FOR ANY OF THE CAUSES PROVIDED BY LAW AS GROUNDS FOR DISQUALIFICATION OF APPLICANTS FOR NATURALIZATION.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): What does the sponsor say?

FR. BERNAS: The sponsor does not accept the amendment, and he asks for a vote.

VOTING

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Those in favor of the amendment proposed by the Vice-President, please raise their hand. (Few Members raised their hand.)

Those against the proposed amendment, please raise their hand. (Several Members raised their hand.)

The results show 5 votes in favor and 19 against; the amendment is lost.

MR. PADILLA: Mr. Presiding Officer, may I propose a more basic amendment.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The Vice-President is recognized.

MR. PADILLA: The 1935 Constitution has Section I (3) and (4) – the third paragraph refers to fathers and the fourth, to mothers. The 1973 Constitution joined them together. We have previously discussed that the situation of a Filipino man who marries an alien is somewhat different from that of a Filipino woman who marries an alien. I would propose that we return to the provisions of Section, 1 (3) and (4) of the 1935 Constitution, instead of Section 2 of the 1973 Constitution.

FR. BERNAS: Does the Vice-President mean Section 1, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the 1935 Constitution?

MR. PADILLA: Yes, Section 1, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the 1935 Constitution.

I would not argue against the demand for equality of sexes, but the situation of a Filipino man who marries an alien is sometimes quite different from the situation of a Filipino woman who marries an alien. As we stated during the period of interpellations, a Filipino wife usually accompanies her alien husband and they reside abroad. The child is born usually abroad and takes the surname of the alien father. On the other hand, a Filipino man who marries an alien usually resides in the Philippines. The child bears the surname of the Filipino father and is like any other Filipino born in the Philippines. Because of the merger of the provisions on the citizenship of the father and the mother in the 1973 Constitution, there is no provision for election by the child upon his reaching the age of majority. And that has given rise to many problems of dual citizenship, and it is quite strange that under the 1973 Constitution, paragraph 3 thereof, we make reference to:

Those who elect Philippine citizenship pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution of nineteen hundred and thirty five.

I believe we have discussed this on several instances before, and I would not repeat further.

MR. SUAREZ: Mr. Presiding Officer, may I be recognized for one question to the proponent?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Suarez is recognized.

MR. SUAREZ: Thank you.

Mr. Presiding Officer, I share the concern about the situation which would develop in the event the Commission approves the proposed resolution. But what happens to those born after January 17, 1973, because according to the proponent, the Honorable Bernas, he would limit the application of Section 3 only to those born on or before January 17, 1973? How would we consider their status, Mr. Presiding Officer?

MR. PADILLA: I suppose that period mentioned which does not appear in the law or in the Constitution has reference to the effectivity of the 1973 Constitution. If the children were born after the adoption of the 1973 Constitution and before the adoption of the 1986 Constitution, their status would be determined by the laws and the Constitution then in force. In other words, even if we retroact or return to the 1935 Constitution, there would be no situation where we could disturb the status already acquired under the 1973 Constitution.

MR. SUAREZ: In other words, Mr. Presiding Officer, even those born after January 17, 1973 and before the adoption of this Constitution could opt to elect Philippine citizenship under appropriate circumstances?

MR. PADILLA: No, because they were born after the effectivity of the 1973 Constitution, so the 1973 Constitution applies.

MR. SUAREZ: Meaning, if their fathers or mothers are citizens of the Philippines, automatically they also become Filipino citizens, Mr. Presiding Officer?

MR. PADILLA: Yes, because we cannot change that status anymore by any subsequent provision, even if it were included in the Constitution.

MR. SUAREZ: Thank you for the clarification.

MR. SARMIENTO: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Sarmiento is recognized.

MR. SARMIENTO: The proponent is suggesting that we revert to the provision of the 1935 Constitution, his reason being that the situation of a Filipino woman who marries an alien is different from that of a Filipino man who marries an alien. He stated that normally the Filipino woman resides in the country of her alien husband, unlike a Filipino man who marries an alien who resides in the Philippines together with his alien wife. However, I know of an instance where a Filipino husband resides in the country of his alien wife. One example is that of my relative who, together with his alien wife, resides in his wife's country. May I ask the Vice-President's comment on this.

MR. PADILLA: There is always such a situation. If the husband is "under the saya," then he follows the wife. But it is the husband — especially a Filipino husband — who is the head of the family under the Civil Code, and who chooses the residence or domicile after marriage.

MR. SARMIENTO: What if the husband is not "under the saya"? They both love each other and they both decide to stay in that foreign place because of "greener pasture."

MR. PADILLA: That is all right. It will be covered -even by the 1935 Constitution, that a child whose father is a citizen of the Philippines is a Filipino. Of course, under the American law on citizenship, the principle of jus soli is recognized, such that even if both parents are Filipinos if the child is born in the United States, that child has a right to American citizenship.

MR. RODRIGO: Mr. Presiding Officer, will the Gentleman yield to a few questions?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Rodrigo is recognized.

MR. RODRIGO: These provisions both of the 1935 and the 1973 Constitutions are based on jus sanguinis, is that right?

MR. PADILLA: Yes.

MR. RODRIGO: We want to follow this principle of jus sanguinis. There is a saying, which is a little naughty, that maternity is a certainty, paternity is an act of faith. So, 'it is surer that the blood of the mother is in the child than the other way around. So, is it not surer if we are to follow jus sanguinis, that is, giving the child of a Filipino mother Philippine citizenship?

MR. PADILLA: The fact of birth, definitely, is even a ground for recognition because the relation of maternity between mother and child is clear and even conclusive. As regards the father, the relation of paternity and filiation may not, as the Gentleman says, be very clear. But if they are married, that is not only disputable or prima facie but also conclusive. I recall Commissioner de los Reyes asked me before if this would discourage marriage because a child born of a Filipino mother not married to the father may not have legal paternity and filiation, so that the child adopts the citizenship of the mother.

MS. AQUINO: Mr. Presiding Officer, may I be recognized?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Aquino is recognized.

MS. AQUINO: Mr. Presiding Officer, I interpose vigorous objection to the proposal of the distinguished proponent. Despite the blandishments of purism in citizenship, there is read into that proposal a very distinctive trend towards discrimination against women. It is bad enough that the Constitution is replete in language and formulations with sexual connotations, and it is doubly tragic for us to constitutionalize this bias by way of a proposal after we have practically enshrined in unmistakable formulations the principle of jus sanguinis in the 1973 Constitution. This is, in fact, a recognition that women have made relative successes in terms of having recognition of their equal rights with men. For us to delete this provision would be retrogression, nothing less. I believe that we have the opportunity now to expunge the Constitution of all vestiges of sexual discrimination and of sexism.

MR. PADILLA: Mr. Presiding Officer, I was warned that in proposing the 1935 Constitution, I would be misunderstood by the feminist movement for equal rights. But I am convinced that when the learned and illustrious delegates who framed the 1935 Constitution had that distinction made between fathers and mothers, they were not discriminating against the fairer sex. I do not believe that we can accuse them of discrimination, of inequality and other unfair criticisms.

I admit that the 1973 Constitution had changed or, rather, combined together “fathers and mothers.” But I do not believe that such a change was an improvement over the 1935 Constitution, especially when we consider that there are some relevant differences in the case of a father marrying an alien and a mother marrying a foreigner. I believe in equal rights, especially before the law, but not necessarily in equality. But by the very nature of man and woman, there are certain differences that cannot be denied. One important virtue or attribute of a woman, we might say, is that she is the only one who can become pregnant and give birth to a child, not a man. Therefore, we must give our mothers, our wives, our sisters and our daughters due recognition, and even preferential respect.

FR. BERNAS: Mr. Presiding Officer, may I be allowed to say something in defense of the Committee’s proposal?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): What does the sponsor say?

FR. BERNAS: We do not accept the proposed amendment.

The purpose of the committee report is to elevate the Filipino mother to a level of equality with the Filipino father. First, we do not wish to punish the Filipino mother and her child simply because she married an alien, in the same way that we do not punish the Filipino father and his child when he marries an alien. Second, the child has two options. In many cases, he will have dual citizenship — he may either choose the citizenship of his mother or the citizenship of the father. He should be allowed to choose. The choice must not be imposed on him. True, this can give rise to dual citizenship but the naturalization law can provide that the child with dual citizenship must make a choice within a certain period of time.

Finally, I think the principal argument against the existing provision is that these mestizos, if we may call them, may occupy positions reserved for natural-born citizens. But let us remember that a mestizo can be such because he is either the child of a Filipino father and an alien mother or the child of a Filipino mother and an alien father. Both of them are mestizos. If we want to exclude mestizos, then let us exclude all mestizos, including the children of Filipino fathers, and let us treat this in the appropriate article. For instance, if the Gentlemen really wants to be a purist about this, he can say in the Article on the President that the President must be a child of a Filipino mother and father. But let us not handle that here.

Therefore, I request a vote on this, Mr. Presiding Officer.

MS. AQUINO: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Aquino is recognized.

MS. AQUINO: For all of the protestations of the proponent of his belief in the ideals of sexual equality even as he would say that we should deny the status of citizenship to the children of Filipino mothers married to aliens, I would have to take exception to this monumental hypocrisy.

The issue here is, why do we have to discriminate against children of Filipino mothers who are married to aliens? It does not fit well with the idea of equality.

When the 1973 Constitution incorporated the phrase “or mothers,” it was already a bonanza in terms of the manifold successes of women in their struggle for equality, and to deny the children of Filipino mothers this right now would be nothing less than oppression.

MR. PADILLA: Mr. Presiding Officer, in connection with the remark of the honorable sponsor that his proposed amendment does not seek to distinguish between the natural-born and otherwise, as far as I am concerned, a child born of a Filipino mother is a natural-born citizen, in the same way that a child born of a Filipino father is a natural-born citizen. The distinction is not intended to deny or deprive the children of Filipino mothers their status as natural-born.

In other words, the objection seems to give this interpretation to my proposed amendment which merely restores the wisdom of the Members of the 1935 Constitutional Convention — that a child born of a Filipino father is a natural-born citizen whereas the child born of a Filipino mother is not a natural-born citizen. That is not the intention of the amendment.

FR. BERNAS: May we know what the amendment of the Gentleman is?

MR. PADILLA: As stated, instead of Section 1 (2) of the 1973 Constitution, we revert to Section 1 (3) and (4) of the 1935 Constitution.

FR. BERNAS: Mr. Presiding Officer, may I suggest that we start with Section 1 (2) because it will not be necessary to move to Section 1 (3), if we settle Section 1 (2). Therefore, as I understand it, the proposed amendment is, Section 1 (2) should read: THOSE WHOSE FATHERS AND MOTHERS ARE CITIZENS OF THE PHILIPPINES. Is that correct?

MR. PADILLA: No, no; it is not correct.

FR. BERNAS: What is the Gentleman's amendment?

MR. PADILLA: Section 1 (2) of the 1973 Constitution should be amended to read as provided in Section 1 (3) and (4) of the 1935 Constitution, and I quote: "Section 1 (3). Those whose fathers are citizens of the Philippines. (4) Those whose mothers are citizens of the Philippines and, upon reaching the age of majority, elect Philippine citizenship."

FR. BERNAS: We do not accept the Gentleman's amendment, Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): What is the pleasure of the Floor Leader?

MR. RAMA: Commissioner Concepcion would like to speak in favor of the amendment.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Concepcion is recognized.

MR. CONCEPCION: Mr. Presiding Officer, my remarks are not based on gender but I start from the assumption that we still want to protect our natural resources and the operation of our public utilities by reserving a big portion thereof to Filipino citizens. Contrary to the allegation that the amendment will result in inequality, perhaps it will result in equality, but adversely for the children whose fathers and mothers are citizens of the Philippines. Why? It is because the child whose mother is a Filipino but whose father is a foreigner has two choices, and may avail of them at different times for different purposes; whereas the Filipino will be left bereft of such choice.

Secondly, I think I can describe this better by referring to parity rights. We granted parity rights to the Americans but did they really have the same rights as the Filipinos? The Americans apparently have better rights than the Filipinos since they have the capital which the Filipinos do not have. The Americans are well-organized; we do not have that organization — wherever you go, the Filipinos always split. It is not perhaps the Americans but some other nationalities who are better organized or are better financed than the Filipinos. If the woman should follow the nationality of the husband, the husband cannot avail of the nationality of the woman in order to exploit our natural resources and operate public utilities. But if we maintain the citizenship of the woman — presumed from the very beginning to have retained her citizenship — then she is most likely to be exploited by the husband.

And that is true with respect to the child. The child will have two choices. When it suits him, he could invoke the nationality of his mother; but if it suits him in some other respect, he can invoke the nationality of the father. It is precisely against this inequality that I stand before this body tonight. Of course, I should like to point the Commission's attention to the need of correlating these provisions on Citizenship with the provisions on Natural Resources. Are we still requiring preferential rights for Filipinos in connection with the exploitation of our natural resources and the operation of public utilities?

If this Constitutional Commission will eliminate the preference for Filipinos, I would have no objection to the report of the Committee. But as long as we give some preference for the Filipinos to the aliens, I would prefer the amendment proposed by Commissioner Padilla. Why? I think it is no secret that before 1935, there was barely any petition for naturalization. As soon as the 1935 Constitution was approved, petitions for naturalization swarmed the courts of justice because of the provision that Filipinos shall have preference over the utilization and exploitation of natural resources. And that is still so now. Their petitions did not only swarm our dockets but they found themselves desirous to become Filipinos or else they would not have enjoyed the right of preference for Filipinos over the conservation and utilization of natural resources, and the operation of public utilities. However, since that policy was abandoned by the 1973 Constitution, how many of our former foreigners have sought naturalization either by judicial or some other process which has increased their predominance over the Filipinos? So that now, the list of the presidents of the Rotary club or the Lions club shows that the names are foreign names. The overwhelming majority of those who go to the movies, to the golf clubs and other clubs are of foreign parentage or foreign nationality, before at least.

So, it is precisely to prevent the Filipinos from being discriminated against that I favor the idea that only in case the father is a Filipino citizen should the child be considered a citizen of the Philippines. When the mother is a Filipino but she wants to follow the citizenship of her husband, let her say so. Let us not presume that he would want to do so. But remember, he is not likely to do that. In many cases, foreigners marry Filipino women precisely to enjoy the benefits of the national law.

Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

FR. BERNAS: Mr. Presiding Officer, I request a vote on the proposal.

MR. GUINGONA: Mr. Presiding Officer, before we take a vote, may I request clarification from the distinguished Vice-President?

Would his proposal requiring election upon reaching the age of majority make the newly born child a Filipino citizen or not? And would he be considered a citizen between the time of birth and the time of election of citizenship?

MR. PADILLA: What I would say is, after election that retroacts.

MR. GUINGONA: I see. Would the Vice-President propose a corresponding provision similar to the one found in the proposal of the Committee which says that

MR. CONCEPCION: Mr. Presiding Officer, may I just those who elect Philippine citizenship shall also be say a word in reply to the remarks of Commissioner deemed natural-born citizens?

MR. PADILLA: I can agree to that.

MR. GUINGONA: Thank you.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Bengzon be recognized.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Bengzon is recognized.

MR. BENGZON: I just would like to say something in connection with what Commissioner Concepcion said with respect to the intention of some foreigners who marry Filipino women with the sole purpose of exploiting our natural resources, which inevitably affects the children.

I think we should remember that there are a lot of Filipino children born of Filipino mothers and foreign fathers who do not know any other country but the Philippines. They have no other friends but Filipinos and they have not known any other education but Filipino education.

It may be true in some instances, although not in all, that perhaps the intention of a foreigner in marrying a Filipino woman is to be able to pursue activities reserved for Filipinos by putting the business in the name of his wife. But we should also remember that in the pursuit of these activities, not only did that particular foreigner improve the economic situation in the Philippines, but also improved the lot of his Filipino wife and his children to a point that in the end such an alien becomes a Filipino and has become more of a Filipino than some other Filipinos.

So in that respect, it may not be fair to say, and it may not be fair to punish and discriminate against the children of a Filipino woman married to a foreigner, because those children are truly Filipinos, educated in the Philippines and who know no other country but the Philippines.

Thank you.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Is the Commission ready to vote?

MR. CONCEPCION: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Concepcion has the floor.

MR. CONCEPCION: Mr. Presiding Officer, may I just say a word in reply to the remarks of Commissioner Bengzon that we are not trying to punish anybody. Marriage has its own effects and we have to accept its effects. But the question is: Are we willing to give up the preference for Filipinos over our natural resources?

That is the point I would want to stress.

VOTING

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The Chair now puts the amendment proposed by the Vice-President to a vote.

Those in favor of the proposed amendment, please raise their hand. *(Few Members raised their hand.)*

Those against, please do the same. *(Several Members raised their hand.)*

The results show 10 votes in favor of the amendment and 29 against; the amendment is lost.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Treñas be recognized to present an amendment.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The Gentleman is recognized.

MR. TREÑAS: Mr. Presiding Officer, may I propose an amendment to subsection (3) of Article 1 which reads:

Those who elect Philippine citizenship pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution of nineteen hundred and thirty-five . . .

I understand that the purpose of inserting this provision is to give a chance to those born of Filipino mothers on or before January 17, 1973. Am I right?

FR. BERNAS: Before January 17.

MR. TREÑAS: Yes, and this is merely a transitory provision.

FR. BERNAS: Yes.

MR. TREÑAS: Those who may not be lawyers or who may not really understand the purpose of incorporating this section in our new Constitution, by merely reading this where it makes reference to the Constitution of 1935 will, therefore, refer to paragraph (4) which says:

Those whose mothers are citizens of the Philippines and, upon reaching the age of majority elect Philippine citizenship. The proposed amendment is to make this provision clear by going directly to the purpose of this section, and shall read as follows: THOSE BORN BEFORE JANUARY 17, 1973 WHOSE MOTHERS ARE CITIZENS OF THE PHILIPPINES, AND UPON REACHING THE AGE OF MAJORITY, ELECT PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP.

FR. BERNAS: Mr. Presiding Officer, may I request that we defer consideration of this amendment until we settle the proviso in Section 4. If that is understood as retroactive, paragraph (3) of Section 1 will even become unnecessary.

MR. TREÑAS: It is all right.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Guingona be recognized to present an amendment.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Guingona is recognized.

MR. GUINGONA: Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

I have two amendments to offer. One concerns naturalization, and the other is on the matter of dual citizenship. With regard to the first, I would like to add the following clause to lines 1 and 2, page 2 of the committee report. My proposed amendment shall read: THE EXECUTIVE SHALL HAVE NO POWER TO GRANT NATURALIZATION UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE EVEN THROUGH DELEGATION BY THE LEGISLATURE.

In other words, Mr. Presiding Officer, I am removing any possibility of the executive granting citizenship by naturalization, and the reason is that we are framing a Constitution which is not only good for this generation but for many generations to come. It might be possible that in the future the legislature might delegate to the executive the power to grant citizenship, subject to restrictions.

FR. BERNAS: The Committee does not accept the amendment and would prefer to leave the matter of naturalization to ordinary legislation.

MR. GUINGONA: May I suggest to the honorable proponent that he throw it to the floor and put it to a vote.

FR. BERNAS: If the Gentleman insists, we have to throw it to the floor.

MR. GUINGONA: Thank you.

FR. BERNAS: We have no choice. May I ask for a vote on the amendment, Mr. Presiding Officer.

VOTING

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Those in favor of the proposed amendment, please raise the hand.
(Few Members raised their hand.)

Those against, please do the same. (Several Member raised their hand.)

The results show 3 votes in favor and 26 against; the amendment is lost.

MR. GUINGONA: Thank you.

The second amendment refers to the matter of dual citizenship and this is found in Section 2, starting with line 3, page 2. My proposed amendment would be: "Citizens of the Philippines who marry aliens BY REASON OF WHICH THEY ACQUIRED THE CITIZENSHIP OF THE SPOUSE shall retain their citizenship, PROVIDED THAT AT ANY TIME WITHIN ONE YEAR FROM THE CELEBRATION OF THEIR MARRIAGE, THEY RENOUNCE THE CITIZENSHIP OF THEIR SPOUSES, OTHERWISE, THEY WOULD LOSE THEIR PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP."

I would like to mention that this provision is almost a verbatim copy from the second alternative proposal of the UP Law Revision Project of 1970.

With the Commissioner's permission, may I just read some of the reasons I have advanced in connection with this particular amendment:

1. Citizens of the Philippines, including those of dual citizenship would be entitled to all rights and privileges of a citizen, including the right to be elected to the highest positions in the government.
2. Filipinos of dual citizenship would be subject to the jurisdiction of other states of which he or she is also a citizen and to which he or she would owe allegiance and would have the duty to serve and the duty to pay taxes . . .
3. It would be advisable for us to provide in the Constitution even indirectly that we uphold the theory of only one citizenship as proposed by the late Dr. Salvador Araneta, a 1971 Constitutional Convention delegate. Filipinos of dual citizenship could at best be suspected of divided loyalty as far as the countries of which they are citizens are concerned. At times even these countries may, in the future, come into conflict with one another.

Finally, the renunciation of one's citizenship under a foreign country, although the same may have no effect therein, would serve as an evident declaration of loyalty to our country.

FR. BERNAS: The matter of dual citizenship has relevance not just to Section 2 but also to paragraph 2 of Section I because the latter can also give rise to dual citizenship. But it is the position of the sponsor that the matter of dual citizenship be handled by ordinary legislation. It is perfectly within the competence of the legislative body to pass a law saying that those possessing dual citizenship must make a choice within a certain period.

Thank you.

MR. SARMIENTO: Mr. Presiding Officer, just a piece of information.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): What is the pleasure of Commissioner Sarmiento?

MR. SARMIENTO: Commissioner Guingona mentioned the 1970 UP Law Revision Project. However, a look at the 1970 UP Law Constitution Project would show that its proposal was not repeated in this 1986 UP Law Project. The proposal of the 1986 UP Law Constitution Project is a verbatim repetition of Section 2 as proposed by the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights.

Thank you.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong). Is the body ready to vote?

FR. BERNAS: Mr. Presiding Officer, I understand that the amendment has not been formally proposed, so there is no need for a vote yet.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Villacorta be recognized to present an amendment.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Villacorta is recognized.

MR. VILLACORTA: Mr. Presiding Officer, I would like to know if the Committee would consider the addition of a section that will give due recognition to the social dimension of naturalization. It is well-known that many aliens aspire for naturalization for reasons of convenience. The naturalization law of the country, unfortunately, does not provide for genuine cultural assimilation of naturalized citizens after they pass the probation test. I am not calling for a disqualification of these naturalized citizens who do not assimilate themselves. What I am proposing is a general principle that will reinforce cultural, economic and social assimilation as an ideal and which could be a basis for future legislation and serve as a behavioral norm that naturalized citizens and their families will always be conscious of. I would like the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights to consider the incorporation of the following provision based on the resolution that Commissioner Sarmiento and I have cosponsored: SECTION _____ NATURALIZED CITIZENS SHALL STRIVE TO ASSIMILATE THEMSELVES INTO FILIPINO ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL LIFE AND RESPECT FILIPINO VALUES AND TRADITIONS.

I respectfully submit this proposal so that this mutual discrimination based on racial or ethnic ancestry, as well as its ugly consequencess could be reduced significantly in our society.

FR. BERNAS: If I read the Committee's mind right? the Committee would not accept that provision for the reason that the process of assimilation should precede naturalization rather than follow naturalization. The steps towards naturalization should be strengthened in such a way that before naturalization judgment is given, there should be an assurance that there has already been assimilation. As I understand the Commissioner's proposal, the assimilation will be after naturalization, which is quite late. Assimilation before naturalization can very well be provided by ordinary legislation, and I believe we are capable of creating a legislature which would be equally as concerned as we are with economic, social and cultural factors.

MR. VILLACORTA: Mr. Presiding Officer, may I just reply? Our proposal would like to reinforce the assimilation process that precedes the conferment of naturalization. We know for a fact that even if a candidate for naturalization assimilates himself into the national cultural mainstream, what usually happens is that he forgets to follow through the assimilation process after being naturalized.

May I, therefore, request the proponent to ask for a vote on our proposal.

FR. BERNAS: I propose a vote on the subject.

VOTING

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Those in favor of the amendment, please raise their hand. (Few Members raised their hand.)

Those against, please raise their hand. (Several Members raised their hand.)

The results show 9 votes in favor and 23 against; the amendment is lost.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer, I ask that Commissioner Maambong be recognized to present a short amendment.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Maambong is recognized.

MR. MAAMBONG: Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

I am now referring to Section 3 found on page 2, lines 7 and 8, which reads "Philippine citizenship may be lost or reacquired in the manner provided by law."

I intend to propose an amendment on the word "law." However, if the honorable sponsor could satisfy some of my questions on this point, then I will not proceed with my proposal.

First of all, I would like to know if, in the interpretation of the word "law," the Commissioner is referring to the denaturalization procedure under Section 18 of Commonwealth Act No. 473, which is the Revised Naturalization Law.

FR. BERNAS: I am referring to any denaturalization procedure which may be provided by law. This is not intended to canonize any existing law but rather to give authority to the legislature to pass future laws on this matter.

MR. MAAMBONG: Without prejudice to future legislation, may I just indicate some of the laws which may be covered by the term "law" under Section 3?

FR. BERNAS: Perhaps I could just make a general answer. If there are laws which are not yet repealed and are in existence, then they are covered by this term.

MR. MAAMBONG: Then, let us start with Section 18 of Commonwealth Act No. 473 which provides for denaturalization procedure. Could that apply in the present setting?

FR. BERNAS: If that has not yet been repealed, it still applies.

MR. MAAMBONG: It does not seem to have been repealed because it is still in the Commissioner's book. (Laughter)

FR. BERNAS: We can never tell what President Marcos repealed by decrees.

MR. MAAMBONG: I am referring to the 1983 edition of the commissioner's book.

I will proceed.

Commissioner Bernas' book also mentions Commonwealth Act No. 63 which was actually approved on October 21, 1936. The title of this Act reads: AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE WAYS IN WHICH PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP MAY BE LOST OR REACQUIRED.

Would this be covered by the term "law" under Section 3 as far as loss or reacquisition of citizenship is concerned?

FR. BERNAS: As I say, if that Act has not yet been repealed either by the legislature or by decree during the years when it could be repealed by decree, then it is covered.

MR. MAAMBONG: I ask this question in reference to Section I (7) of Commonwealth Act No. 63, as amended. I am now referring to the book Citizenship, Naturalization, Immigration, and Alien Registration Laws, Annotated, published by the Central Law Book Publishing Company Incorporated, 1977, Third Edition.

Portion of the said Commonwealth Act provides for the loss of citizenship which states:

In the case of a woman, upon her marriage to a foreigner, If by virtue of the laws enforced in her husband's country, she acquires his nationality.

Will this formulation of Section 1 (7) of Commonwealth Act No. 63 not be applicable anymore if we approve this provision on Citizenship under Section 2?

FR. BERNAS: As a matter of fact, I would say that that particular provision was already repealed by the 1973 Constitution.

MR. MAAMBONG: Thank you for that.

May I proceed to another law again mentioned in the Commissioner's book. It is RA 965, approved on June 20, 1953 which is entitled: AN ACT PROVIDING FOR REACQUISITION OF PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP BY PERSONS WHO LOST SUCH CITIZENSHIP BY RENDERING SERVICE TO, OR ACCEPTING COMMISSION IN THE ARMED FORCES OF AN ALLIED FOREIGN COUNTRY AND TAKING AN OATH OF ALLEGIANCE INCIDENT THERETO.

Offhand, would the Commissioner say that in the present setting this proposal will be covered by the term "law" under Section 3?

FR. BERNAS: Offhand, yes.

MR. MAAMBONG: Thank you. We will now proceed to RA 2630, which unfortunately is indicated in the Commissioner's book as RA 2639, approved on June; 18, 1960.

FR. BERNAS: I will have to tell my printer to correct the typographical error.

MR. MAAMBONG: The title of this RA 2630 is: AN ACT PROVIDING FOR REACQUISITION OF PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP BY PERSONS WHO LOST SUCH CITIZENSHIP BY RENDERING SERVICE TO, OR ACCEPTING COMMISSION IN THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES. Offhand, would this Act still be applicable in the interpretation of the word "law" in Section 3 under the present setting?

FR. BERNAS: As I said, the general principle I am going under is that the word "law" in that provision has reference only to laws which are still in effect. We can check later on which laws are still in effect.

MR. MAAMBONG: And all of these, without prejudice to future laws, are on loss or reacquisition of citizenship?

FR. BERNAS: Correct.

MR. MAAMBONG: This is my last question: It is not indicated anymore in the Commissioner's book but I have here P.D. No. 725, issued on June 5, 1975, which says: PROVIDING FOR REPATRIATION OF FILIPINO WOMEN WHO HAD LOST THEIR PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP BY MARRIAGE TO ALIENS AND OF NATURAL-BORN FILIPINOS.

Would this provision be considered again in the interpretation of the word "law" under Section 3 of the proposed Article on Citizenship?

FR. BERNAS; Again, we would consider it a law provided it has not yet been' repealed.

MR. MAAMBONG. In view of that reply, I will not proceed with my proposed amendment.

Thank you very much.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Suarez be recognized to present an amendment.

MR. SUAREZ: Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer. My amendment is very simple; it is the deletion of the proviso in Section 4, lines 12 to 13, which reads: "Provided, That those who elect Philippine citizenship in accordance with Section 1, paragraph 3 above shall also be deemed natural-born citizens."

FR. BERNAS: The Committee prefers to retain this proviso just to even things out in view of our approval of Section 1, paragraph 2.

MR. SUAREZ: Thank you.

May I be allowed to discuss this matter?

I must confess that I had some agonizing moments before moving to delete this particular proviso because I do not want to be accused of discriminating against fellow citizens. I might be committing a disservice to them. However, I feel rather strongly that my personal sentiments should not prevail over the interests of the nation.

Let me cite an example. Under our Constitution, the President, Vice-President, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and members of the Commission on Elections are required to be natural-born citizens. So, if this provision would be approved, there will be frightening possibilities. We may have a President whose father is named Jack Reagan who is based in Washington, D.C. and is a member of the CIA. We may have a Vice-President -whose name may be Naburo Nakasone, based in Tokyo, Japan. We may have a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court whose father may be named Miguel Gorbachev, a member of the KGB in Moscow. We may have a Chair- man of the Commission on Elections whose father may be called Jose Deng Xiaoping who is based in Peking.

This matter involves national interest and security. We should not allow possibilities as frightening as these to be perpetrated in our Constitution. Our sentiment in this regard is rather very strong and so we are respectfully moving for the deletion of this particular proviso appearing in Section 4 of the Proposed Resolution on Citizenship.

Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

FR. BERNAS: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): What does the sponsor say?

FR. BERNAS: May I say a few words. I have already adverted to that problem earlier saying that certain offices should be occupied only by these very pure citizens. We can attend to that when we come to the proper provisions. For instance, when we are dealing with the qualifications of the President, we could have a provision stating that the President must be born of a Filipino father and mother. That is the appropriate place to put it in because that is where the problem is. That can be taken care of in those specific portions of the Constitution.

MR. SUAREZ. So, is the Commissioner suggesting that we defer consideration of my motion to delete?

FR. BERNAS: I am not suggesting that. I am suggesting that even if we approve this proviso, it can still be attended to when we take up the pertinent provisions on the Executive, the Legislative, the Judiciary and the Commission on Elections especially when we start talking about the qualifications of those who will occupy those offices.

In other words, when we reach those Articles, we will not just say “natural-born citizen,” but we will specify what we mean.

MR. SUAREZ: That might pose complications, Mr. Presiding Officer. So, I would not accept the suggestion of the proponent.

FR. BERNAS: Mr. Presiding Officer, I submit this matter to a vote.

MR. RODRIGO: Before we vote, may I have a few minutes.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): Commissioner Rodrigo is recognized.

MR. RODRIGO: The purpose of that proviso is to remedy an inequitable situation. Between 1935 and 1973, when we were under the 19325 Constitution, those born of Filipino fathers but alien mothers were natural-born Filipinos. However, those born of Filipino mothers but alien fathers would have to elect Philippine citizenship upon reaching the age of majority; and, if they do elect, they become Filipino citizens, yes, but not natural-born Filipino citizens.

The 1973 Constitution equalized the status of those born of Filipino mothers and those born of Filipino fathers. So that from January 17, 1973 when the 1973 Constitution took effect, those born of Filipino mothers but of alien fathers are natural-born Filipino citizens. Also, those who are born of Filipino fathers and alien mothers are natural-born Filipino citizens.

If the 1973 Constitution equalized the status of a child born of a Filipino mother and that born of a Filipino father, why do we not give a chance to a child born before January 17, 1973, if and when he elects Philippine citizenship, to be in the same status as one born of a Filipino father — namely, natural-born citizen.

Another thing I stated is equalizing the status of a father and a mother vis-a-vis the child. I would like to state also that we should equalize the status of a child born of a Filipino mother the day before January 17, 1973 and a child born also of a Filipino mother on January 17 or 24 hours later. A child born of a Filipino mother but an alien father one day before January 17, 1973 is a Filipino citizen, if he elects Philippine citizenship, but he is not a natural-born Filipino citizen. However, the other child who luckily was born hours later — maybe because of parto laborioso — is a natural-born Filipino citizen.

I think we should equalize their status, so this proviso should be inserted. I think it is a very just proviso.

Thank you very much

FR. BERNAS: The amendment of Commissioner Suarez is for the deletion of the proviso on page 2, line 12.

VOTING

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): All those in favor of the proposed amendment, please raise their hand. (Few members raise their hand.)

Those against, please raise their hand. (Several Members raised their hand.)

The results show 7 votes in favor and 23 against; the amendment is lost.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The Floor Leader is recognized.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

MR. RAMA: I move that we adjourn until tomorrow at two-thirty in the afternoon.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Sumulong): The session is adjourned until tomorrow at two-thirty in the afternoon.

It was 7:46 p.m.

R.C.C. NO. 26 Wednesday, July 9, 1986

R.C.C. NO. 26

Wednesday, July 9, 1986

OPENING OF SESSION

At 2:55 p.m., the President, the Honorable Cecilia Muñoz Palma, opened the session.

THE PRESIDENT: The session is called to order.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE PRESIDENT: Everybody will please rise to sing the National Anthem.

Everybody rose to sing the National Anthem.

THE PRESIDENT: Everybody will please remain standing for the Prayer to be led by the Honorable Jose N. Nollado.

Everybody remained standing for the Prayer.

PRAYER

MR. NOLLEDO: O Dakilang Diyos, hinihingi po namin ang Inyong awa, pagmamahal at pagkalinga sa aming makasaysayang pagbalangkas at pagbuo ng isang Saligang Batas na tunay na maka-Pilipino at maka-tao, isang Saligang Batas na tumatangkilik sa mga karapatang pambayan at hahango sa kahirapan ng marami naming mamamayan, isang Saligang Batas na magbibigay ng tunay na pag-asa sa aming mga kababayan at magpapatibay ng kanilang loob sa kanilang pagtahak sa daang puno ng tinik at kapighatian tungo sa masagana at maligayang kinabukasan at nawa'y makintal sa isipan ng buong sambayanang Pilipino sa lalong madaling panahon ang paniniwalang may langit din pala sa daigdig. Hinihingi po namin ang mga ito sa ngalan ng Inyong Bugtong na Anak na si Hesus na naghahari kasama po Ninyo at ng banal na Espiritu Santo, iisang Diyos, magpakailan man. Siya nawa.

ROLL CALL

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary-General will please call the roll.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Abubakar	Present	Azcuna	Present
Alonto	Present	Bacani	Present
Aquino	Present	Bengzon	Present
Bennagen	Present	Ople	Present *
Bernas	Present	Padilla	Present
Rosario Braid	Present	Quesada	Present
Brocka	Present	Rama	Present
Calderon	Present	Regalado	Present
Castro de	Present	Reyes de los	Present

Colayco	Present	Rigos	Present
Concepcion	Present	Rodrigo	Present
Davide	Present	Romulo	Present
Foz	Present	Rosales	Present
Garcia	Present	Sarmiento	Present
Gascon	Present	Suarez	Present
Guingona	Present	Sumulong	Present
Jamir	Present	Tadeo	Present
Laurel	Present *	Tan	Present
Lerum	Present	Tingson	Present
Maambong	Present	Treñas	Present
Monsod	Present	Uka	Present
Natividad	Present	Villacorta	Present
Nieva	Present	Villegas	Present
Nolledo	Present		

The President is present.

The roll call shows 42 Members responded to the call.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

MR. CALDERON: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the Assistant Floor Leader is recognized.

APPROVAL OF JOURNAL

MR. CALDERON: I move that we dispense with the reading of the Journal of the previous session and that we approve the same. THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

MR. CALDERON: Madam President, I move that we proceed to the Reference of Business.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Secretary-General will read the Reference of Business.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary-General read the following Proposed , Resolutions on First Reading, Communications and Committee Reports, the President making the corresponding references:

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS ON FIRST READING

Proposed Resolution No. 446, entitled:

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A MULTIPARTY POLITICAL SYSTEM.

Introduced by Hon. Ople, Natividad, Maambong and de los Reyes, Jr.

To the Committee on Constitutional Commissions and Agencies.

Proposed Resolution No. 447, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING TO INCLUDE IN THE CONSTITUTION A PROVISION PROHIBITING HAMLETTING, ZONING, FOOD BLOCKADE, AND SIMILAR CRUEL AND INHUMAN MILITARY MEASURES AGAINST CIVILIAN COMMUNITIES.

Introduced by Hon. Tan, Tadeo, Colayco, Sarmiento, Bennagen, Aquino, Suarez and Bacani.

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights.

Proposed Resolution No. 448, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION PROHIBITING THE USE OF TORTURE FOR ANY PURPOSE.

Introduced by Hon. Garcia.

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights.

Proposed Resolution No. 449, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION PROVISIONS FOR THE CREATION OF THE PEOPLE'S POLICE COUNCIL COMPOSED OF THE MAJOR SECTORS IN THE LOCALITY THAT WILL MONITOR AND PROVIDE SANCTIONS AGAINST ANY SYSTEMATIC POLICE ABUSES.

Introduced by Hon. Bennagen.

To the Committee on General Provisions.

Proposed Resolution No. 450, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION FOR THE USE OF THE INDIGENOUS WRITTEN LANGUAGE AND ALPHABET OF THE ETHNIC MINORITIES WHEN VOTING IN ANY NATIONAL OR LOCAL ELECTIONS, PLEBISCITE OR REFERENDUM.

Introduced by Hon. Bennagen.

To the Committee on General Provisions.

Proposed Resolution No. 451, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION PROVISIONS RELATIVE TO THE PROBLEM OF ENGLISH, SPANISH, AND FILIPINO, OUR MOTHER TONGUES, NATIVE LANGUAGES AND DIALECTS, AND OTHER RELATED SUBJECTS.

Introduced by Hon. Davide, Jr., Maambong, Jamir, Uka, Abubakar and Rama.

To the Committee on Human Resources.

Proposed Resolution No. 452, entitled:

RESOLUTION FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT AND PROMOTION OF PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATIONS.

Introduced by Hon. Gascon.

To the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles.

Proposed Resolution No. 453, entitled:

RESOLUTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF OUR ENVIRONMENT AND THE PRESERVATION OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES.

Introduced by Hon. Gascon.

To the Committee on the National Economy and Patrimony.

Proposed Resolution No. 454, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION OF EVERY CITIZEN IN THE BILL OF RIGHTS OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION.

Introduced by Hon. Gascon, Villacorta, Guingona, Treñas and Rosario Braid.

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights.

Proposed Resolution No. 457, entitled:

RESOLUTION DECLARING THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO ELIMINATE TYRANNY AND TO REPLACE IT WITH A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT.

Introduced by Hon. Ople, Maambong, de los Reyes, Jr. and Natividad.

To the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication from Mr. Manuel A. Argel of Vigan, Ilocos Sur, proposing, among others, a parliamentary form of government patterned after that of France, the synchronization of elections, a bicameral legislature, and abandonment of the Sabah claim.

(Communication No. 146 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Steering Committee.

Unnumbered resolution of the Association of Disabled , Persons of Rinconada and Iriga City (ADPRIC) requesting the inclusion of provisions which would grant disabled, Filipinos priority of employment in government and private entities.

(Communication No. 147 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Letter from Mr. Rolando R. Abad of San Isidro, Pili, Camarines Sur, requesting the inclusion of provisions on land reform, education and languages.

(Communication No. 148 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Letter from Lakas ng Manggagawa signed by Mr. Daniel Edralin, submitting general proposals on basic constitutional issues and a particular resolution affording more protection to labor and guaranteeing human and trade union rights.

(Communication No. 149 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Telegram from Ms. Maria Luisa Lorenzo of Manila, expressing opposition to any provision imposing a national language.

(Communication No. 150 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Human Resources.

Letter from Mr. Romulo P. Sandejas III of Legaspi City, proposing free education and health service, among others.

(Communication No. 151 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Letter from GABRIELA signed by Sr. Mary John Mananzan, OSB, enclosing its manifesto calling for the full emancipation of women, and for justice, freedom, democracy and prosperity for the people.

(Communication No. 152 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights.

Letter from the Philippine Institute of Environmental Planners signed by Mr. Cesar H. Concio, enclosing a position paper prepared by Mr. Rene S. Santiago and endorsing particularly the proposals on autonomous regional governments.

(Communication No. 153 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Local Governments.

Letter from Mr. Pedro M. Espina of the Knights of Columbus, Virgen Sa Barangay Council No. 8362, City of Tagbilaran, suggesting, among others, a bill of duties and obligations of citizens enumerated explicitly to counterbalance the Bill of Rights.

(Communication No. 154 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights.

Letter from Mr. Prisco P. Orcullo, Jr. of Salvacion, San Agustin, Surigao del Sur, proposing the translation of the Constitution into different Philippine dialects and requiring every head of the family to secure a copy free or in exchange for sales receipts.

(Communication No. 155 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on General Provisions.

Letter from Mr. Fidel R. Milan and eleven others of Sta. Catalina, Zamboanga City, requesting provisions on urban land reform, free hospitalization, creation of Urban Poor Ministry, and handicraft skills training.

(Communication No. 156 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Letter from Mr. Edward M. Kelly of Assumption Sapang Palay College, Inc., submitting proposals on the equality of man and woman, protection of the environment, housing and education, among others.

(Communication No. 157 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles.

Letter from Mr. Orlando F. Caliolio of Southern City Colleges, Zamboanga City, requesting inclusion in the Bill of Rights of a provision granting the right to keep and bear arms for self-defense.

(Communication No. 158 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights.

Communication from Anchor Foundation, Inc. and Anchor Broadcast Council, Sta. Mesa, Manila, requesting inclusion of a provision that will promote and protect the people's right to the use of the airwaves for broadcast media.

(Communication No. 159 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on the National Economy and Patrimony.

Letter from the People's Secretariat for the Constitutional Commission signed by Mr. Rizal Ruiz Amon, forwarding the position paper of the Filipino Inventors Society proposing provisions for invention, science and technology.

(Communication No. 160 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Human Resources.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee Report No. 16 on Proposed Resolution No. 455, prepared by the Committee on Accountability of Public Officers, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING TO INCORPORATE IN THE TRANSITORY PROVISIONS OF THE 1986 CONSTITUTION CERTAIN SECTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE PROPOSED ARTICLE ON ACCOUNTABILITY OF PUBLIC OFFICERS,

recommending its approval.

Sponsored by Hon. Monsod, Colayco and members of the Committee on Accountability of Public Officers.

To the Steering Committee.

Committee Report No. 17 on Proposed Resolution No. 456, prepared by the Committee on Accountability of Public Officers, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING TO INCORPORATE IN THE 1986 CONSTITUTION AN ARTICLE ON ACCOUNTABILITY OF PUBLIC OFFICERS,

recommending its approval in substitution of Proposed Resolution Nos. 61, 66, 74, 76, 121, 125, 218, 223, 229, 280, 344, 353 and 354.

Sponsored by Hon. Monsod, Colayco and members of the Committee on Accountability of Public Officers.

To the Steering Committee.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I would like to inform the body of some changes on the referral of certain resolutions.

Proposed Resolution No. 277, proposing for a national health policy, has been referred to the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles from the Committee on Justice; and Proposed Resolution Nos. 265, 266, 270, 96, 164 and 347 which were previously referred to the Committee on General Provisions, to the Committee on Human Resources.

THE PRESIDENT. Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; 10t the corresponding matters be recorded.

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED
RESOLUTION NO. 322
(Article on Amendment or Revision)
Continuation

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

MR. RAMA: I move that we continue the consideration of Committee Report No. 7 on Proposed Resolution No. 322 on Second Reading. We are still in the period of sponsorship and debate.

I ask that the sponsor be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The sponsor, Commissioner Suarez, is recognized.

MR. SUAREZ: Thank you, Madam President.

May we respectfully call the attention of the Members of the Commission that pursuant to the mandate given to us last night, we submitted this afternoon a complete Committee Report No. 7 which embodies the proposed provision governing the matter of initiative. This is now covered by Section 2 of the complete committee report. With the permission of the Members, may I quote Section 2:

The people may, after five years from the date of the last plebiscite held, directly propose amendments to this Constitution thru initiative upon petition of at least ten percent of the registered voters.

This completes the blanks appearing in the original Committee Report No. 7. This proposal was suggested on the theory that this matter of initiative, which came about because of the extraordinary developments this year, has to be separated from the traditional modes of amending the Constitution as embodied in Section 1. The committee members felt that this system of initiative should be limited to amendments to the Constitution and should not extend to the revision of the entire Constitution, so we removed it from the operation of Section I of the proposed Article on Amendment or Revision. Also this power could be susceptible to abuse to such an extent that it could very well happen that the initiative method of amendment could be exercised, say, twice or thrice in a matter of one year; thus, a necessity for putting limitations to its exercise. The committee members also felt that putting a limitation within a five-year period after the date of the last plebiscite held is reasonable, as well as the percentage arrived at — meaning, ten percent of the registered voters. On the basis of the information given, we have about 26 or 27 million registered voters, which would necessitate getting the affirmative vote of at least 2.5, 2.6 or 2.7 million thereof. This, of course, is not an impossible task although it would pose some difficulties. The general idea as agreed upon is for us to try to make the process of amendment a little more difficult in order that we can have an enduring and lasting Constitution. After all, there are two other methods of amendment, the traditional ones, which we have provided under subsections (a) and (b) of Section 1. So, our Committee decided to propose this particular Section 2 as it is now embodied in the complete committee report.

We would like to clear up one other point, lest we be misunderstood in the interpretation of the provisions which now appear as Section 3 of the complete Committee Report No. 7. When we were asked by Commissioner Maambong last night about the applicability of Section 3 in connection with the employment of the words “election or plebiscite,” we did not get the full significance of his questioning and we came up with an affirmative answer. We ventured the observation that in the application of Section 3, the calling of a constitutional convention could not be submitted to the people in a special plebiscite on the theory that this Section 3, formerly Section 2 operates only simultaneously with the calling of an election. The members of the Committee — and this was borne out by the proposal of Commissioner de Castro — agreed to delete after the word “electorate” the phrase appearing in the 1973 Constitution. In other words, the idea is clear that this Section 3 could operate with or without an election and a plebiscite for the purpose could be called independently of the election. So this is for the purpose of clearing up any possible misunderstanding of the provision which is now Section 3 of the completed Committee Report No. 7.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair would just like to clarify this point from the honorable sponsor.

We adjourned yesterday while we were in the process of closing the debate on the original resolution submitted by the Committee. Does the Chair understand that we will debate on this substitute resolution again, or is this one of the amendments?

MR. SUAREZ: We are not yet in the period of amendments, Madam President. I think we can accommodate interpellations regarding this proposed Section 2 of the completed Committee Report No. 7.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair would like to know whether or not we will close the debate on Committee Report No. 7.

MR. RAMA: Not yet, Madam President, because some Members would like to debate on certain portions of the Article on Amendment. As a matter of fact, Commissioner Rodrigo has reserved his turn to speak on the matter.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair would like to know whether we are now in the period of amendments.

MR. RAMA: We are still in the period of sponsorship and debate.

Madam President, I ask that Commissioner Rodrigo be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Rodrigo is recognized.

MR. RODRIGO: Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, last night I said the Committee on the Legislative drafted a provision for initiative or referendum on ordinary legislation, and I said that in that Article, the Committee on the Legislative provides that initiative or referendum shall be initiated by at least ten percent of the registered voters in the immediately preceding election. I am now reading from the final draft which will be considered this evening for final approval by the Committee. In the committee report, the committee also suggests 10 percent of the electorate to propose a constitutional amendment, so that the proportion of the people who can initiate an ordinary legislation is the same as that who can propose a constitutional amendment. In the resolution itself it is very evident that the intention of the Constitution is to make the process of proposing a constitutional amendment more difficult than that of an ordinary legislation. Section I states:

Any amendment to, or revision of, this Constitution may be proposed:

(a) by the National Assembly upon a vote of three-fourths of all its Members; or

(b) by a constitutional convention.

A constitutional convention may be called by the National Assembly by a vote of two-thirds of all its Members. So, the norm is to have a bigger vote for proposals for constitutional amendments than for ordinary legislations. So, does not the sponsor think that instead of the same proportion of 10 percent of the electorate to propose constitutional amendments and to initiate ordinary legislations, the percentage to propose constitutional amendments should be much bigger?

MR. SUAREZ: The Committee will be glad to entertain proposals to amend this particular subject matter at the proper time.

MR. RODRIGO: Section 2 of the complete committee report provides: "upon petition of at least 10 percent of the registered voters." How will we determine that 10 percent has been achieved? How will the voters manifest their desire, is it by signature?

MR. SUAREZ: Yes, by signatures.

MR. RODRIGO: Let us look at the mechanics. Let us say some voters want to propose a constitutional amendment. Is the draft of the proposed constitutional amendment ready to be shown to the people when they are asked to sign?

MR. SUAREZ: That can be reasonably assumed, Madam President.

MR. RODRIGO: What does the sponsor mean? The draft is ready and shown to them before they sign. Now, who prepares the draft?

MR. SUAREZ: The people themselves, Madam President.

MR. RODRIGO: No, because before they sign there is already a draft shown to them and they are asked whether or not, they want to propose this constitutional amendment.

MR. SUAREZ: As it is envisioned, any Filipino can prepare that proposal and pass it around for signature.

MR. RODRIGO: Pass it around?

MR. SUAREZ: Yes, Madam President.

MR. RODRIGO: So it is possible it be by one man.

MR. SUAREZ: One man or a group of men.

MR. RODRIGO: A group of men or ordinary citizens can prepare the draft and pass it around for signature.

MR. SUAREZ: That is right, Madam President.

MR. RODRIGO: And once they sign the draft, it is final. They cannot amend it anymore.

MR. SUAREZ: Probably, they could.

MR. RODRIGO: It is our experience right in this hall that in proposing amendments we are very careful about every word, even the comma. So, how can these 2.5 million signatories participate in the drafting of the amendment?

MR. SUAREZ: The mechanical details could be ironed out later, but substantially the democratic process will have to be followed; meaning, if a person has a proposal for amendment, he has to market its acceptability among ten percent of the electorate.

That is the general idea behind the introduction of this particular section.

MR. RODRIGO: Madam President, this proposed amendment will be distributed throughout the Philippines, in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

MR. SUAREZ: Yes.

MR. RODRIGO: This may be prepared by one man or a group of men who will gather signatures. The sponsor said that amendments may be proposed. How can these be proposed? By 10 percent or 20 percent of the electorate. Suppose somebody wants to change a word before signing the proposal, say, "obnoxious" to "inconsistent," who will decide whether or not change it?

MR. SUAREZ: What probably would be the ultimate test of any particular proposal for the amendment of the Constitution under this system is its final presentation to the Commission on Elections for submission in the plebiscite called for the purpose, Madam President.

MR. RODRIGO: Yes, but who will draft that proposal?

Will the 2.5 million signatories have a hand in the drafting of that proposal?

MR. SUAREZ: Not necessarily, because this contemplates a situation where the proposal will be accepted by the required percentage. It does not require that the signatories would be coauthors of that proposal. They only signify their conformity to it and this ultimately will have to be submitted to the people for ratification in a plebiscite called for the purpose, Madam President.

The process of submitting the proposal for acceptance by the required percentage of voters is different from submitting the accepted proposal for ratification by the people in a plebiscite.

MR. RODRIGO: That is correct. But if the National Assembly (by a vote of three-fourths of its Members) or a constitutional convention or constitutional commission like ours makes the proposal, all the members participate. In other words, the ones who propose would study, debate, participate and vote on this.

What if the ten percent of the electorate will propose the amendment? Does the sponsor mean it is possible that only one man or a group of men will draft the proposal and have it signed by the people without their right to amend, revise or change it or participate in drafting it?

MR. SUAREZ: If 10 percent of the electorate signifies its acceptance and conformity to the proposal submitted by one man, that is just beautiful, Madam President. That means that the proposal of that single individual has been marketed for acceptability to the required percentage of the electorate.

MR. RODRIGO: So in the final analysis, we can say that this is a proposal not studied, neither drafted nor participated in by the people through initiative because initiative means the people act directly.

MR. SUAREZ: One might accept that situation, Madam President.

MR. RODRIGO: Now, Section 4 states:

Any amendment to, or revision of, this Constitution shall be valid when ratified by a majority of the votes cast in a plebiscite which shall be held not earlier than sixty days and not later than ninety days after the approval of such amendment or revision.

In the case of a proposal made by the National Assembly or by a convention, we know the date of its approval. How about that of the 10 percent of the electorate? When is the date of approval?

MR. SUAREZ: That is a very relevant question which was taken up during the committee meeting this morning. The idea, Madam President, although we did not include it in the draft proposal, is that in the case of proposals submitted through initiative, the operative period would be after the Commission on Elections has certified that the required number of registered voters has been obtained. This was the suggestion, but we thought it was wiser to throw this matter to the body at the appropriate time.

MR. RODRIGO: I have another question. A constitution is supposed to be the act of the sovereign people of the Philippines. The only requirement in this committee report is at least 10 percent of the electorate must petition. Let us say 10 percent of the electorate of the whole Philippines petitioned but this 10 percent came only from Metro Manila, would that be sufficient?

MR. SUAREZ: As it is envisioned, yes, Madam President, although again in the committee meeting this morning, that situation was precisely explored and ideas were given to the effect that at least a certain percentage of the electorate from the provinces should sign the proposal. There were suggestions that this percentage could amount to something like five percent from each province. Again, we leave this to the body to determine later on.

MR. RODRIGO: Which body?

MR. SUAREZ: The Commission, Madam President, by way of amendment.

MR. RODRIGO: During the period of amendments.

MR. SUAREZ: Yes, Madam President.

MR. RODRIGO: So, there will be a provision to that effect in Section 2 of the proposed resolution?

MR. SUAREZ: If that is the sense of the Commission, yes, Madam President.

MR. RODRIGO: But if nobody presents that amendment, does not the Committee think that that amendment should be incorporated in this section?

MR. SUAREZ: The Committee could very well submit that as a committee amendment for consideration by the Commission.:

MR. RODRIGO: Let me go back to a previous question. The Committee is not happy with, let us say, 10 percent of the votes coming from only one region like Metro Manila.

MR. SUAREZ: Yes.

MR. RODRIGO: But the way Section 2 is worded now, that is possible and admissible.

MR. SUAREZ: That situation is theoretically possible — that all of the 2.6 or 2.7 million registered voters would come from one area, say, from Luzon or from Metro Manila.

MR. RODRIGO: Yes. If it is the National Assembly that proposes the amendment, the whole Philippines is represented, is it not?

MR. SUAREZ: That is correct.

MR. RODRIGO: And if it is a constitutional convention which proposes the amendment, the whole Philippines is also presented.

MR. SUAREZ: That is correct, Madam President.

MR. RODRIGO: Whereas, if the people want to act directly, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao might not be represented at all in the 10 percent electorate who proposes to amend the Constitution, is that correct?

MR. SUAREZ: That is correct.

MR. RODRIGO: Thank you very much.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I ask that Commissioner Sarmiento be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Sarmiento is recognized.

MR. SARMIENTO: Madam President, I am happy that the Committee on Amendments and Transitory Provisions decided to retain the system of initiative as a mode of amending the Constitution. I made a survey of American constitutions and I discovered that 13 states provide for a system of initiative as a mode of amending the Constitution — Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma and Oregon. The initiative for ordinary laws only is used in Idaho, Maine, Montana and South Dakota. So, I am happy that this was accepted or retained by the Committee.

About the matter of drafting, questions were raised as to who will draft the proposals of the people. I hope this information will be of help to the Committee and to the Commission.

In Alaska, the initiative petition is prepared by the lieutenant governor through a ballot title and proposition which summarizes the proposed law and he shall place this on the ballot for their first statewide election held more than

120 days after adjournment of the legislative session following the filing of the proposal. If before the election substantially the same measure has been enacted, the petition is void.

In the State of Colorado, the original draft or text of the proposed initiated constitutional amendments and initiated laws is submitted to the legislative research and drafting offices of the general assembly for review and comment. Not, later than two weeks after submission of the original draft unless withdrawn by the proponents, the legislative research and drafting offices of the general assembly shall render their comments to the proponents of the proposed measure at a meeting open to the public, which shall be held only after full and timely notice to the public.

Madam President, a book entitled: The American Federal Government's Suffrage, Nominations and Elections has this paragraph on initiative and on the matter of drafting a proposal:

The initiative is an electoral device through which an individual or a group may propose statutory legislation or constitutional amendments by securing the signatures of the requisite number of voters and may place the measure before the electorate for adoption or rejection. The drafting of such measures normally is done by interested groups or their attorneys. The number or proportion of signatures required is set by law or constitution.

I hope these points will be considered by the Committee on Amendments and Transitory Provisions.

Two more points, Madam President. Regarding the percentage of registered voters that will propose amendments to the Constitution through initiative, I think I agree with the first interpellator that this system of initiative should be made more difficult.

In the State of Arizona, the number of electorate that can propose a legislative measure is 10 percent, but it is higher for those who will propose any amendment to the Constitution. Maybe, since the Constitution is a fundamental law, it is more serious than a legislative measure. So, we can increase the percentage to 15 percent as in the case of Arizona.

Madam President, Section 2 provides:

The people may, after the years from the date of the last plebiscite held, directly propose amendments to this Constitution. . .

What if the people feel that there should be an amendment to meet a situation, does not the sponsor think this provision is quite stringent or strict? I ask this question because Section 4 of the State Constitution of Alaska provides that an initiative petition to proposed amendments to the Constitution may be filed any time.

Thank you, Madam President.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Bacani be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Bacani is recognized.

BISHOP BACANI: Will the honorable sponsor yield to two questions?

MR. SUAREZ: With pleasure, Madam President.

BISHOP BACANI: The first question is: Does the sponsor think that proposing amendments to the Constitution is necessary?

MR. SUAREZ: In view of recent developments and in order to give meaning and significance to the concept of people's power, I would answer in the affirmative, Madam President.

BISHOP BACANI: In other words, one cannot look forward to an effective way of proposing constitutional amendments anymore if Section 2 is not adopted?

MR. SUAREZ: Not necessarily, because we still have the two traditional methods of proposing amendments to the Constitution under Section 1, paragraphs (a) and (b) of the resolution, Madam President.

BISHOP BACANI: Therefore, it is not necessary; it is perhaps opportune at some time.

MR. SUAREZ: It could be necessary in a situation where the methods outlined under paragraphs (a) and (b) could not be utilized.

BISHOP BACANI: Thank you.

MR. SUAREZ: An example of this would be if, say, the National Assembly cannot muster the necessary three-fourths vote in order to constitute itself as a constituent assembly or that the two-thirds vote required for the calling of a constitutional convention could not be obtained, in which event this extraordinary situation develops and a single individual can take it upon himself or herself to resort to the exercise of this method of initiating an amendment to the Constitution. And I recall at one time — I think it was Honorable Ople who mentioned this — a gentleman, one single individual, in the State of California who came up with a proposition, and succeeded in amending or heading Proposition No. 13, which was accepted by the entire state. We are thinking along those lines.

BISHOP BACANI: Thank you.

The second major question is: Does this section allow for two or more groups concurrently getting signatures like, let us say, at a certain period, five groups may be trying to get signatures from 2,700,000 people on different, maybe contradictory, proposals for amendments?

MR. SUAREZ: Yes, Madam President. It could even contemplate that the two different groups would be submitting two different proposals which finally would have to be submitted to the people for ratification in a plebiscite.

BISHOP BACANI: Thank you, Madam President.

MR. SUAREZ: Thank you.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Bernas be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Bernas is recognized.

FR. BERNAS: Madam President, just two simple submit the question of calling such a convention to the clarificatory questions.

First, on Section 1 on the matter of initiative upon referendum can be held quite independently of an petition of at least 10 percent, there are no details in election the provision on how to carry this out. Do we understand, therefore, that we are leaving this matter to the legislature?

MR. SUAREZ: That is right, Madam President.

FR. BERNAS: And do we also understand, therefore, that for as long as the legislature does not pass the necessary implementing law on this, this will not operate?

MR. SUAREZ: That matter was also taken up during the committee hearing, especially with respect to the budget appropriations which would have to be legislated so that the plebiscite could be called. We deemed it best that this matter be left to the legislature. The Gentleman is right. In any event, as envisioned, no amendment through the power of initiative can be called until after five years from the date of the ratification of this Constitution. Therefore, the first amendment that could be proposed through the exercise of this initiative power would be after five years. It is reasonably expected that within that five-year period, the National Assembly can come up with the appropriate rules governing the exercise of this power.

FR. BERNAS: Since the matter is left to the legislature — the details on how this is to be carried out — is it possible that, in effect, what will be presented to the people for ratification is the work of the legislature rather than of the people? Does this provision exclude that possibility?

MR. SUAREZ: No, it does not exclude that possibility because even the legislature itself as a body could propose that amendment, maybe individually or collectively, if it fails to muster the three-fourths vote in order to constitute itself as a constituent assembly and submit that proposal to the people for ratification through the process of an initiative.

FR. BERNAS: What I mean is: Does this procedure allow the legislature to amend the formula which may have been presented?

MR. SUAREZ: No, Madam President.

FR. BERNAS: It does not.

MR. SUAREZ: It does not contemplate that situation, definitely not.

FR. BERNAS: Thank you, Madam President. On another point, on Section 3, the last phrase says electorate.” I notice that the word “electorate” is used. Earlier, the sponsor was saying that a plebiscite or a referendum can be held quite independently of an election.

MR. SUAREZ: Yes, Madam President.

FR. BERNAS: And when the word “electorate” was used here, would the sponsor not contradict his previous statement?

MR. SUAREZ: No, Madam President, because when we speak of electorate, these are the voters who would participate either in a plebiscite or an election.

FR. BERNAS: Thank you, Madam President.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I ask that Commissioner Aquino be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Aquino is recognized.

MS. AQUINO: Will the honorable sponsor yield to a few questions?

MR. SUAREZ: With pleasure, Madam President.

MS. AQUINO: Do I understand from the sponsor that the intention in the proposal is to vest constituent power in the people to amend the Constitution?

MR. SUAREZ: That is absolutely correct, Madam President.

MS. AQUINO: I fully concur with the underlying precept of the proposal in terms of institutionalizing popular participation in the drafting of the Constitution or in the amendment thereof, but I would have a lot of difficulties in terms of accepting the draft of Section 2, as written. would the sponsor agree with me that in hierarchy of legal mandate, constituent power has primacy over legal mandates?

MR. SUAREZ: The Commissioner is right, Madam President.

MS. AQUINO: And would the sponsor agree with me that in the hierarchy of legal values, the Constitution is source of all legal mandates and that therefore we require a great deal of circumspection in the drafting and in the amendments of the Constitution?

MR. SUAREZ: That proposition is nondebatable.

MS. AQUINO: Such that in order to underscore the primacy of constituent power we have a separate article in the constitution that would specifically cover the process and the modes of amending the Constitution?

MR. SUAREZ: That is right, Madam President.

MS. AQUINO: Therefore, is the sponsor inclined, as the provisions are drafted now, to again concede to the legislature the process or the requirement of determining the mechanics of amending the Constitution by people's initiative?

MR. SUAREZ; The matter of implementing this could very well be placed in the hands of the National Assembly, not unless we can incorporate into this provision the mechanics that would adequately cover all the conceivable situations.

MS. AQUINO: In other words, the sponsor would be amenable at the proper time to accommodate amendments that would define or modify or amplify these provisions in Section 2 of this Article?

MR. SUAREZ: Yes, Madam President. The Committee would be delighted to accept reasonable propositions at the appropriate time.

MS. AQUINO: On another point, do I understand it correctly that the provisions in Section 2 are not self-executing in the sense that it would further require the procedure enunciated in Section 4; that is, notwithstanding the source of the proposed amendment, it would have to be ratified by a majority of the votes cast in a plebiscite?

MR. SUAREZ: Yes.

MS. AQUINO: We understood that.

MR. SUAREZ: Section 2 must be interpreted together with the provisions of Section 4, except that in Section 4, as it is presently drafted, there is no take-off date for the 60-day and 90-day periods.

MS. AQUINO: Yes. In other words, Section 2 is another alternative mode of proposing amendments to the Constitution which would further require the process of submitting it in a plebiscite, in which case it is not self-executing.

MR. SUAREZ: No, not unless we settle and determine the take-off period.

MS. AQUINO: But as stated now, it is the process.

MR. SUAREZ: It is.

MS. AQUINO: In which case, I am seriously bothered by providing this process of initiative as a separate section in the Article on Amendment. Would the sponsor file amenable to accepting an amendment in terms of realigning Section 2 as another subparagraph (c) of Section 1, instead of setting it up as another separate section as if it were a self-executing provision?

MR. SUAREZ: We would be amenable except that, as we clarified a while ago, this process of initiative is limited to the matter of amendment and should not expand into a revision which contemplates a total overhaul of the Constitution. That was the sense that was conveyed by the Committee.

MS. AQUINO: In other words, the Committee was attempting to distinguish the coverage of modes (a) and (b) in Section 1 to include the process of revision; whereas, the process of initiation to amend, which is given to the public, would only apply to amendments?

MR. SUAREZ: That is right. Those were the terms envisioned in the Committee.

MS. AQUINO: I thank the sponsor; and thank you, Madam President.

MR. SUAREZ: Thank you.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Guingona be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Guingona is recognized.

MR. GUINGONA: Thank you, Madam President.

Will the distinguished proponent yield to a few questions?

MR. SUAREZ: Yes, Madam President.

MR. GUINGONA: Before I ask my questions, I would like to say that I concur with the view of Commissioner Sarmiento that the 10 percent might, perhaps, be increased to 15 percent for the reasons advanced by him. In answer to the question of Commissioner Rodrigo, the sponsor spoke of the 10 percent as referring to signatures obtained for this purpose. Am I correct?

MR. SUAREZ: Yes, Madam President.

MR. GUINGONA; I know there is a dispute going on in one of the committees of this Commission as to whether or not illiterates should be allowed to vote. Does this mean that this Committee has already made a decision that, as far as this particular process is concerned, illiterates would be excluded?

MR. SUAREZ: They would not be excluded because they could signify their conformity to the proposal in the manner outlined by law.

MR. GUINGONA: So, it is not necessary to require signatures only?

MR. SUAREZ: No, Madam President.

MR. GUINGONA: I see. Thank you.

Speaking of initiative, the Committee on the Legislative headed by Commissioner Davide of which I am a member, has come up with a proposed provision which I thought might be more appropriate in view of the sponsor's answer to the question of Commissioner Bernas that the details of this matter concerning initiative will be left to the legislature; such matters, for example, as determining safeguards against any attempts to violate the sanctity of the expression of the people's will like bribery, questions on appropriation and so forth. The Legislative Committee has come up with a proposal that the National Assembly shall provide for a system of initiative whereby the people may, after five years from the date of the last plebiscite held, directly propose amendments to this Constitution through initiative. I am not just using the words of the provision, but I am applying them to the proposed provision on initiative. In other words, one distinction is that there is a specific reference to the National Assembly or the legislature.

MR. SUAREZ: Yes.

MR. GUINGONA: In the Committee's proposed provision, there is no such reference.

Second, I was going to add the words UP TO REGISTERED VOTERS in the immediately preceding election to clarify which registered voters this provision refers to.

MR. SUAREZ: We took that into account when we came up with this wording. In the contemplation that there could be a continuing process of registration, the take-off period should be counted from the date of submission of the proposed amendment. The list of registered voters that should prevail is the one existing at the time of the submission of the proposal, not from the date of the last voting or plebiscite as the case may be.

MR. GUINGONA: Thank you.

The last question may be a reversal to the supposition advanced by Commissioner Bacani that this proposal about initiative might not be approved. I would say, I am assuming that it will be approved. I was thinking that if this is to be approved, would it not be better that the last portion of Section 3, lines 17 to 18, which I will read: "or by a majority vote of all its Members, submit the question of calling such a convention to the electorate " be deleted if there is already the provision on initiative because this is rather a cumbersome process as pointed out by Dean Irene Cortez of the U.P.? We will call a convention and there will be, of course, the expenses resulting from such a convention, and then we will follow it with another exercise, which is the ratification after the proposal. I thought, maybe, if initiative were to be accepted by the honorable Members of this Commission, then perhaps this portion might be removed.

I thank the sponsor; thank you, Madam President.

MR. SUAREZ: Thank you.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Natividad be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Natividad is recognized.

MR. NATIVIDAD: Will the Gentleman yield?

MR. SUAREZ: Yes, Madam President.

MR. NATIVIDAD: Thank you.

Paragraph (a), Section 1, reads:

. . . Any amendment to, or revision of, this Constitution may be proposed:

(a) by the National Assembly upon a vote of three-fourths of all its Members.

Will this be automatic or will the legislature enact the enabling legislation to be presented to the people?

MR. SUAREZ: I am sorry I did not get the full meaning of the question.

MR. NATIVIDAD: Suppose the National Assembly, by a vote of three-fourths of all its Members, proposes an amendment to the Constitution, will this need legislation before a plebiscite can be held?

MR. SUAREZ: As I understand it, based on historical precedence, the National Assembly will come up with a proposition and then submit this to the people for ratification in a plebiscite called for the purpose.

MR. NATIVIDAD: Has there been any instance in this historical precedence that this has been delayed because of lack of legislation?

MR. SUAREZ: I am not aware of any such situation in the past, Madam President, What I was only aware of is the fact that time and again there were plebiscites called and the people were screaming that they had not been given the full opportunity to thoroughly discuss, analyze and review the proposals submitted.

MR. NATIVIDAD: How about the previous Con-Con? Was there any problem about enabling legislation?

MR. SUAREZ: No, we did not have any problem.

MR. NATIVIDAD: I see. In Section 2, there is a phrase which reads: "after five years from the date of the last plebiscite held." Is this designed to prevent frequent amendments to the Constitution?

MR. SUAREZ: That is right, Madam President. It is a measure to prevent too frequent amendments to the Constitution which might result in the impoverishment of the government.

MR. NATIVIDAD: But Section 2 refers to a mode of amendment by initiative only. Am I correct?

MR. SUAREZ: Yes, Madam President.

MR. NATIVIDAD: But suppose we apply this to all modes of amendments so that we prevent frequent amendments to the Constitution that the powers-that-be would like to undertake. What we have witnessed is that the frequency of amendments to the Constitution is becoming a national sport.

MR. SUAREZ: Is the Gentleman suggesting that the five-year limitation period be applied equally to sub-sections (a) and (b) of Section 1 ?

MR. NATIVIDAD: It should apply to all modes and ways of amending the Constitution. Suppose we limit it to, say, once in every six years in order to prevent the frequent amendments to the Constitution to suit the powers-that-be.

MR. SUAREZ: That proposal or suggestion could be taken up at the appropriate time during the period of amendments.

MR. NATIVIDAD: This is just to preserve the Constitution because I think we are beginning to develop a reputation of changing the Constitution too often.

How about Section 3? Where is this amendment?

MR. SUAREZ: It is in Section 2.

MR. NATIVIDAD: Is this in Section 2?

MR. SUAREZ: Yes, Madam President.

MR. NATIVIDAD: In the case of recall, it has been said that if the percentage is 10 or 20 percent, it would be inadvisable not to designate from what area it comes because in the realities of politics in this country, most politicians have bailiwicks to rely upon — the north, the south, the central part of the country. And a politician with a bailiwick can easily influence the mode of recall or initiative or referendum. The big families, the dynasties, can easily sway and marshal big blocks of votes. So that in the case of recall, especially in small towns, the requirement of 20 percent, if not equitably distributed, would easily be collected and raised by a politician who has a bailiwick.

My question is: Does the Committee find no objection if a certain area of our country would raise this 10 percent and initiate any amendment to the Constitution, or would it rather propose that this be equitably distributed or spread out to make it more responsive? I was just thinking of our debates in the old Congress and the Batasan where the proposal of recall was met with resistance precisely because if we follow the trend, it will exacerbate a situation where there is too much politicking involving the law and the statutes in the Constitution of our country. So, is it the sponsor's view to let this pass without any equitable distribution? Is it acceptable to him as it is written now?

MR. SUAREZ: We pointed out a while ago that the Committee would be amenable to propositions spreading out, as the Gentleman has defined it, the matter of the people's participation even on the provincial level. And we were thinking in terms of five percent from each province as an example.

MR. NATIVIDAD: Yes. I am putting up this view, Madam President, because of the realities of politics and it might not achieve what the authors would like to achieve. At the proper time, we will present some volunteered information, Madam President.

MR. SUAREZ: Thank you.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I ask that Commissioner Maambong, the last speaker, be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Maambong is recognized.

MR. MAAMBONG: Madam President, will the distinguished sponsor yield to a few questions?

MR. SUAREZ: Yes, Madam President.

MR. MAAMBONG: First of all, I would like to thank the sponsor for clarifying his answer to my query last night. As it stands now, it is very clear to our mind that the matter of calling a constitutional convention can now be done not only by election but also by a plebiscite. This was also clarified in a clarificatory question of Commissioner Bernas. I would also like to indicate that it is now very clear in the Constitution that we have such words as “revision” or “amendment,” which were not found in the 1935 Constitution. Previously, if I recall correctly, in the case of *Occena vs. COMELEC* (G.R. 56350, April 12, 1981), the Supreme Court interpreted the word “amendment” to cover a thorough revision of the Constitution, but that was also clarified by Commissioner Padilla.

As premise to my question, I would like to associate myself with the concern of Commissioner Rodrigo about the process we are now talking about because, as one authority puts it, the amending process of the Constitution could actually avert a revolution by providing a safety valve in bringing about changes in the Constitution through pacific means. This, in effect, operationalizes what political law authors call the “prescription of sovereignty.” There is one point which is nagging my mind and, with the sponsor’s indulgence, I would like to have this clarified. This is the term “constitutional convention.” I understand that this was interpreted in the framing of the 1935 Constitution as it was also interpreted in the framing of the 1973 Constitution by the 1971 Constitutional Convention. But I am afraid that all these interpretations may not be acceptable in the present exercise that we are doing. So my first question is: When the decision to call a constitutional convention has been resolved by the people or the National Assembly, is it not a fact that there should be an election of delegates to the constitutional convention?

MR. SUAREZ: That is what is envisioned under this constitutional provision, Madam President.

MR. MAAMBONG: And when we say, there should be an election of delegates to the constitutional convention, there should also be an enabling law not only for that purpose but also for the purpose of providing funds therefor.

MR. SUAREZ: The Gentleman is right, although not only in connection with the budgetary situation but also in the number of the delegates to the constitutional convention.

MR. MAAMBONG. Thank you, Madam President.

With that reply, the next question would be: Instead of causing the election of delegates, has the legislature the power to just name the delegates to the constitutional convention?

MR. SUAREZ: Under what provision would the Gentleman relate that?

MR. MAAMBONG: I am following up the sponsor’s answer that when we talk of constitutional convention, we are talking of elective delegates to the constitutional convention. In other words, it negates the authority of the legislature to just name delegates to the constitutional convention without calling an election.

MR. SUAREZ: That is very obvious, Madam President.

MR. MAAMBONG: Thank you, Madam President.

Since the legislature could not name delegates without calling an election, it also goes without saying that the legislature cannot delegate the power to somebody for that authority to name delegates to the constitutional convention?

MR. SUAREZ: The Gentleman is right.

MR. MAAMBONG: I thank the sponsor.

Can the legislature determine the number of delegates to be elected to the constitutional convention?

MR. SUAREZ: Yes, as they did in 1971. In the 1970 enabling law, they specifically stated the number to be 320 delegates from all over the country.

MR. MAAMBONG: Yes, Madam President. And no other body can determine the number of elective delegates to the constitutional convention?

MR. SUAREZ: Yes, Madam President.

MR. MAAMBONG: This will be my last question. Regarding the process of election of delegates, does the sponsor agree with the opinion of the Supreme Court and I am actually quoting this opinion of the Supreme Court of Maine, U.S.A., in the opinion of Justices 167 APL. 176 — that it is not valid to elect delegates to the constitutional convention at large? And the Supreme Court said and I quote:

Although a convention is summoned by the legislature, it derives its power from the sovereign people. It has accordingly been the practice to have as delegates those fairly representing the political subdivisions of the State. It is evident therefore that in every constitutional convention of which we have knowledge, delegates have been chosen not at large but from various localities within the State.

Would the sponsor agree with that?

MR. SUAREZ: Yes. And that is exactly what happened in connection with the 1971 Constitutional Convention, by districts and provinces.

MR. MAAMBONG: Forgive me, but I have one last question: Will the sponsor agree that once the constitutional convention is convened, the legislature has no more control over it?

MR. SUAREZ: That is absolutely correct, Madam President.

MR. MAAMBONG: I thank the sponsor; thank you, Madam President.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, for the last clarificatory question, I ask that Commissioner Lerum be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Lerum is recognized.

MR. LERUM: I just have one question.

MR. SUAREZ: Yes, Madam President.

MR. LERUM: Referring to Section 2 which provides for at least 10 percent of registered voters, who will determine this 10 percent?

MR. SUAREZ: The Commission on Elections, Madam President; that is why we were thinking in terms of using as a take-off date the issuance of a certification by the Commission on Elections that the required number of registered voters have indeed been obtained.

MR. LERUM: Does it mean that the petition itself should also be addressed to the Commission on Elections?

MR. SUAREZ: I did not get the question.

MR. LERUM: What I mean is that after the 10 percent requirement has been obtained, will this have to be submitted to the Commission on Elections also?

MR. SUAREZ: That is what is envisioned, Madam President.

MR. LERUM: Thank you.

MR. SUAREZ: Thank you.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, since there are no more interpellators and there are no registered speakers pro or en contra, I move that we close the period of sponsorship and debate.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

PERIOD OF AMENDMENTS

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I move that we proceed to the period of amendments.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The floor is open for amendments.

MR. RODRIGO: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Rodrigo is recognized.

MR. RODRIGO: I propose the following amendment: delete the whole Section 2.

Madam President, this new provision is not necessary. There is no need for it. The present provisions of the Constitution on the proposal for amendments to the Constitution are most satisfactory, very democratic. This is done by either the National Assembly composed of representatives elected by the people all over the Philippines by a vote of three-fourths or by a constitutional convention, again, composed of delegates elected by all from all parts of the Philippines. And, usually, these delegates are elected on the basis of their stand on certain constitutional issues.

Madam President, ours is a republican government which means a representative government. This satisfies the essence of democracy. I do not know why all of a sudden we now insist on this reserved "people power." If we base it on the EDSA peaceful revolution that is called "people power," that is one event in our history which, I think, can hardly be repeated — bloodless revolution that toppled the dictator. Now, we want to use people power even in enacting laws and in proposing amendments to the Constitution. Non sequitur, Madam President. It does not follow. There is no popular clamor for this. I do not know that our people, because of the EDSA peaceful revolution, are now clamoring to initiate constitutional amendments directly. There is no such clamor from the people. And so, why clutter our Constitution with a provision that is untried and impractical?

We are told that there are some states in the United States that follow this. But those are states in the United States with less population than the Philippines. And remember that the Philippines is an archipelago. It is so difficult to go around and obtain 2,700,000 signatures based on the 10-percent requirement; so, at 15 percent, more than 4,000,000 signatures. After all, these 4,000,000 people who will sign that, if one can get them, are not the ones who prepared the proposed amendment. They do not even participate in the drafting of the proposed amendment. Maybe, only one man, as the sponsor said, or a group of men would prepare this. And this would go around for signatures, and those whose signatures are affixed cannot even modify or amend the proposed amendment.

It is so impractical, Madam President, to have this go around the 7,000 islands in the country with so many different dialects. Maybe, this proposed amendment has to be translated in all the dialects. It is impractical. I think it is an exercise in futility. We will just clutter up our Constitution with a provision that will not, in any way, be used.

Madam President. we are here as a Constitutional Commission. We have a time constraint. Our aim is to go back to normal constitutional democracy as soon as possible. Let us not go into controversial matters like this which can hardly be understood by our people who, after all, are the ones who are going to either ratify or reject this Constitution. Let us go to the basics. Let us not depart radically from what we have found to be satisfactory in our country for the last half-century or more than half-century, and that is the republican form of government — a government run by duly-elected representatives of the people. This is practical. It is not perfect, but it is the best kind of government that we know.

Thank you very much.

MR. RAMA.: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Is the amendment accepted by the sponsor?

MR. SUAREZ: The Committee regrets that it cannot accept the amendment by deletion submitted by the Honorable Rodrigo. First, we want to provide a mechanism that is very responsive to the sentiments of the people. Second, the fact that it is supposed to be impractical is fallacious in the sense that, if a situation develops where the mechanisms provided under Section 1 (a) and (b) could not be fully implemented in this wise, a time may come when in spite of the clamor of the people for proposing amendments to the Constitution, the National Assembly may not be able to muster enough votes in order to constitute itself as a constituent assembly or to call a constitutional convention. So, in that sense, it is a very practical avenue or safety valve which is available to the people. And with respect to the third ground we should go back to the basics of the Constitution. This is basic; this is fundamental because it emanates from the people. It is a direct representation made in behalf of the people. And so, it is a fundamental right that finds expression in this system of initiative. So, we regret that we cannot accept the proposed amendment. We would rather that this be submitted to the floor for consideration.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any other speaker for the amendment?

MR. RAMA: Madam President, there are two speakers en contra.

THE PRESIDENT: Is it on the amendment of Commissioner Rodrigo?

MR. RAMA: Yes, Madam President, on the amendment of Commissioner Rodrigo, two members have registered to speak against and I have requested that we divide the five-minute limit between the two of them. So, I ask that Commissioner Tadeo be recognized for two minutes.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Tadeo is recognized.

MR. TADEO: Madam President, alam naman natin na ang nagsampa sa Cory government ay ang people power. At kaya naririto ngayon ang Con-Com ay dahil sa people power. Noong pumunta tayo rito, punung-puno ang ating damdamin kung paano natin i-institutionalize ang people power. Paano natin ito ilalagay sa Saligang Batas? Dalawa ang kinakailangang magawa natin para magkaroon ng laman at dugo ang people power, para ito ay hindi papel lamang. Sa paanong paraan? Kinakailangang bigyan natin ang mamamayan ng political power; kinakailangang bigyan natin ang people power ng economic power. Ano ang isang nakita natin para magkaroon siya ng political power? Sa pamamagitan ng multi-party system na pinirmahan noong 17, kung saan sinasabi natin, yung 250, ang limampu ay para doon sa multisectoral. Alam natin na maliit pa iyan; 20 percent lang iyan. Maaaring maging isang dekorasyon iyan. Ano pa ang nakikita natin na pwedeng magbigay sa mga tao ng political power? Ang sabi natin, ang isang magandang nakita namin sa UP draft ay ang system of recall and system of initiative. Ngayon, anong ibig sabihin na ito ay impractical ayon sa sinabi ng aking kababayan na si Commissioner Rodrigo?

Kamukha ng Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP), kami ay isang pambansang organization. Ang system of initiative ay lalong iiral sa magsasaka at manggagawa na siyang pinakamalaking sector para magkaroon siya ng tinatawag na political power. Sapagkat kami ay pambansa, mayroon kaming tinatawag na makinarya. Hindi po yung sinasabi niyang individual o ilang grupo lang ng tao, kundi ang tinatawag na tunay na militanteng Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas. Mayroon kaming pang-regional na organization; mayroon kami sa Central Luzon, Northeastern Luzon, Bicol, Visayas at Mindanao. At ang nakikita lamang natin talaga na magdadagdag sa aming political power ay ang tinatawag na system of initiative. Hindi ito impractical kundi practical. Tinututulan ko ang tinatawag na “division.” Kinakailangang manatili ang system of initiative.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Gascon be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT. Commissioner Gascon is recognized.

MR. GASCON: Thank you, Madam President.

I would also like to express my objection to the amendment of Commissioner Rodrigo on the following grounds: First, we are trying to create a republican state which is supposed to be a representative government. Second, according to Commissioner Rodrigo this proposal of initiative is impractical. First and foremost, I would like to remind him that what we are doing here is also a basic affirmation of the fundamental will — that power emanates from the people. We are now expressing our will to put initiative in the Constitution because of the people power’s revolution at EDSA.

I would like again to remind this body that even the basic issue of establishing a government is people power; we are trying to establish a government for the people, of the people and by the people. So it must be responsive to them. I feel that through this process of initiative, we assert that the power of the government emanates from the people and that the people’s will must prevail. Because of such, I would like to support the basic principle that initiative must be enshrined in the Constitution. It is not an exercise in futility because I have faith in our people. In our long history of struggle for national independence and social change the people have shown their decision and definitiveness to fight for what is right. The people themselves can decide whenever they wish to, especially on matters pertaining to the Republic or the State which they claim to represent.

In reality there have been many cases where the representatives have only been the target and have only expressed the interest of their particular class. As such I would like to express my objection.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I move that we vote on the amendment of Commissioner Rodrigo.

VOTING

THE PRESIDENT: We will now vote on the amendment of Commissioner Rodrigo which is to delete Section 2 in the revised resolution submitted by the honorable sponsor this afternoon.

Those in favor of the amendment of Commissioner Rodrigo will please raise their hand. *(Few Members raised their hand.)*

Those against, please raise their hand. *(Several Members raised their hand.)*

The results show 8 votes in favor and 27 against; the amendment is lost. *(Applause)*

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Davide be recognized for another amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Davide is recognized.

MR. DAVIDE: Thank you, Madam President.

I propose to substitute the entire Section 2 with the following: SECTION 2. — ANY AMENDMENT TO THIS CONSTITUTION MAY LIKEWISE BE DIRECTLY PROPOSED BY THE PEOPLE THROUGH INITIATIVE UPON A PETITION, DULY VERIFIED BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS OR ANY OF ITS REGISTRARS, OF AT LEAST TEN PERCENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOTERS AS OF THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING NATIONAL ELECTION, OF WHICH EVERY LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT MUST BE REPRESENTED BY NOT LESS THAN TWO PERCENT THEREOF. THE PETITION SHALL BE FILED WITH THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS WHICH SHALL FORTHWITH TRANSMIT THE PETITION TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SHALL, NOT LATER THAN THIRTY DAYS FROM RECEIPT THEREOF, ENACT A LAW SUBMITTING THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR A PLEBISCITE.

NO AMENDMENT UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL BE AUTHORIZED WITHIN FIVE YEARS FROM THE APPROVAL OF THIS CONSTITUTION NOR OFTENER THAN ONCE EVERY FIVE YEARS THEREAFTER.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE PRESIDENT: The session is suspended for a few minutes in order to give the sponsor time to go over the proposed amendment.

MR. SUAREZ: We appreciate that, Madam President.

It was 4:33 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:59 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE PRESIDENT: The session is resumed.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Davide be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Davide is recognized.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, I have modified the proposed amendment after taking into account the modifications submitted by the sponsor himself and the honorable Commissioners Guingona, Monsod, Rama, Ople, de los Reyes and Romulo. The modified amendment in substitution of the proposed Section 2 will now read as follows: “SECTION 2. — AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION MAY LIKEWISE BE DIRECTLY PROPOSED BY THE PEOPLE THROUGH INITIATIVE UPON A PETITION OF AT LEAST TWELVE PERCENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOTERS, OF WHICH EVERY LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT MUST BE REPRESENTED BY AT LEAST THREE PERCENT OF THE REGISTERED VOTERS

THEREOF. NO AMENDMENT UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL BE AUTHORIZED WITHIN FIVE YEARS FOLLOWING THE RATIFICATION OF THIS CONSTITUTION NOR OFTENER THAN ONCE EVERY FIVE YEARS THEREAFTER.

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SHALL BY LAW PROVIDE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EXERCISE OF THIS RIGHT.”

MR. SUAREZ: Madam President, considering that the proposed amendment is reflective of the sense contained in Section 2 of our completed Committee Report No. 7, we accept the proposed amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: Are we ready to vote on this proposed amendment?

MS. AQUINO: Excuse me, Madam President. May we request written copies of Commissioner Davide’s amendment so that we can adequately decide on it?

MR. DAVIDE: We will request the Secretariat to prepare typewritten copies.

THE PRESIDENT: The sponsor will please furnish a copy to the Secretariat. In the meantime, can we proceed with other amendments, if there are any?

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I ask that Commissioner Romulo be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Romulo is recognized.

MR. ROMULO: Will Commissioner Davide yield to a few questions regarding his amendment?

MR. DAVIDE: Gladly, Madam President.

MR. ROMULO: Under Commissioner Davide’s amendment, is it possible for the legislature to set forth certain procedures to carry out the initiative, as in some American states where the proposition is normally submitted to the state attorney-general who puts it in proper form before it is submitted to the people for voting? Under the Commissioner’s amendment, would the legislature be allowed to set forth such a procedure?

MR. DAVIDE: It can.

MR. ROMULO: Under those systems, if the proposition as stated by the attorney-general is not accepted by the proponents, they are allowed to go to court to challenge his submission of their proposition.

MR. DAVIDE: The proponents can, if the legislative body will really leave that particular matter to another body.

MR. ROMULO: In this case it is the COMELEC who will put it in proper form.

MR. DAVIDE: No, it is already silent.

MR. ROMULO: No, but it says “shall be submitted to the COMELEC.”

MR. DAVIDE: That was the original proposal; it was already deleted.

MR. ROMULO: But the Commissioner’s amendment does not prevent the legislature from asking another body to set the proposition in proper form.

MR. DAVIDE: The Commissioner is correct. In other words, the implementation of this particular right would be subject to legislation, provided the legislature cannot determine anymore the percentage of the requirement.

MR. ROMULO: But the procedures, including the determination of the proper form for submission to the people, may be subject to legislation.

MR. DAVIDE: As long as it will not destroy the substantive right to initiate. In other words, none of the procedures to be proposed by the legislative body must diminish or impair the right conceded here.

MR. ROMULO: In that provision of the Constitution can the procedures which I have discussed be legislated?

MR. DAVIDE: Yes.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Natividad be given the floor.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Natividad is recognized.

MR. NATIVIDAD: Madam President, will Commissioner Davide yield?

MR. DAVIDE: Willingly, Madam President.

MR. NATIVIDAD: Is Commissioner Davide willing to consider a possible amendment to his amendment? This amendment is brought about by comments I read from a book from PHILCONSA on constitutional and policy issues and it is based on the comments of a certain Fortunato de Leon who recommends that the Constitution, in order that it will not fall into the hands of the powers that be, should only be amended no oftener than once in six years.

I would also premise my question by reading the comments of our own colleague here, Chief Justice Concepcion. His article entitled, "The Constitution and The Proposed Amendments Thereto" states and I quote:

A Constitution is not only a legal document, not merely a covenant between the people of a democratic society like ours. It is a symbol of the unity of the people; it is a rallying point for them as a nation. If the Constitution is to retain this role as the rallying point for the people, it should not be touched except when absolutely necessary or when there is no other possible choice.

A Constitution that does not suffer many changes accumulated in the course of time, a mass of customs, traditions and practices tending to impart to the people the feeling that their nation has a solid foundation; that it is strong enough to withstand the buffetings of the ages. A Constitution should not be amended, unless the people feel that their welfare would otherwise be in imminent danger of serious impairment.

My proposal is that instead of five years could it be six years as proposed by the eminent authors hereof?

MR. DAVIDE: The Committee has already accepted the individual amendment. Personally, I do not think that one year would make a lot of a difference. What is one year among friends? As a matter of fact, since the National Assembly is also authorized to propose amendments by a vote of three-fourths of its members or to submit the question of calling a constitutional convention by a majority vote, amendments may actually be more frequent than once every five years. We are limiting the right of the people, by initiative, to submit a proposal for amendment only, not for revision, only once every five years. But we cannot prevent the legislature from proposing amendments

as often as it would want to under its authority by a vote of three-fourths and also its authority to submit the question of calling a convention to the people.

MR. NATIVIDAD: If it is the sense of the Constitutional Commission, I think we may, if we have been given a frame of reference to the power of initiative.

MR. DAVIDE: If at all we should limit the period for the submission of an amendment, it should also be made applicable to amendments proposed by the legislature.

MR. NATIVIDAD: That is my proposal. If the Commissioner is willing to make the initiative pegged to five or six years, I feel that there would be no basis for us not to make this applicable to the legislature also. But, as the distinguished sponsor said, the idea here is not to embark into frequent amendments of the Constitution

MR. DAVIDE: By initiative.

MR. NATIVIDAD: By initiative, yes, but not by any other means as what the sponsor said, if it is accepted that the Constitution is not supposed to be changed as often as a law. So, if we accept that postulate, then, perhaps we should consider that if we limit the exercise of initiative we can also limit the exercise of the other modes of amending the Constitution. If our purpose now is to indicate through these amendments that our Constitution should not be tampered with very often as had been done, then this is the time to do it. The problems confronting the nation are easily addressed by law. It is not necessary that at any given time we may tamper with the Constitution.

So, I propose to change "5" to 6 years so that if the final decision of the Commission would be a six-year term for the President, then this will dovetail the six-year term of the President and it will work as guideline that the Constitution will not be amended more than once during the term of the President.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, I have no objection to that proposal, provided we preserve the proposal that a similar prohibition shall be imposed upon the National Assembly in calling a constitutional convention or proposing an amendment. So probably the Commissioner may introduce an amendment to that effect.

MR. NATIVIDAD: Madam President, in that case, may I address this amendment to the distinguished sponsor?

THE PRESIDENT: The Commissioner may proceed.

MR. NATIVIDAD: If it is seasonably proper, may I then propose an amendment to Section 1. On line 7, after the word "proposed," delete the colon (:) and in lieu thereof, put a comma (,) and add the following words: BUT NOT MORE OFTEN THAN EVERY SIX (6) YEARS FROM THE DATE OF THE LAST PLEBISCITE.

The whole section will read: "Section 1. Any amendment to, or revision of, this Constitution may be proposed, BUT NOT MORE OFTEN THAN EVERY SIX (6) YEARS FROM THE DATE OF THE LAST PLEBISCITE."

MR. SUAREZ: The Committee suggests that the amendment be submitted to the floor for consideration.

MR. NATIVIDAD: Thank you.

My amendment is to change "5" to 6 years to dove-tail the six-year term of the President.

THE PRESIDENT: The idea is also to limit the authority of the National Assembly to propose amendments to the Constitution.

MR. NATIVIDAD: Yes, Madam President, in line with the suggestion of the distinguished proponent of the amendment.

MR. PADILLA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Padilla is recognized.

MR. PADILLA: Madam President, before we take up the proposed amendment of having 6 years instead of “5” years, I intend to ask the sponsor of the amendment some questions. Thereafter, the proposed amendment of Commissioner Natividad to the amendment of Commissioner Davide may then be considered.

THE PRESIDENT: Actually, the amendment of Commissioner Natividad is on Section 1, while that of Commissioner Davide is on Section 2. Is that correct?

MR. PADILLA: Madam President, but we are talking of Section 2.

MR. SUAREZ: That was deferred.

THE PRESIDENT: So, it is now Section I where Commissioner Natividad is proposing an amendment.

MR. PADILLA: I did not know that it was deferred. I wanted to ask some questions regarding the amendment by substitution.

THE PRESIDENT: We will have that later on.

Is the proposed amendment of Commissioner Natividad acceptable to the honorable sponsor?

MR. SUAREZ: As we suggested a while ago, we would rather that the matter be decided by the Commission.

THE PRESIDENT: Does Commissioner Natividad insist on his amendment? Then, let us put it to a vote.

Will Commissioner Natividad kindly repeat his proposed amendment on Section 1 ?

MR. NATIVIDAD: My amendment is to delete the colon (:) after the word “proposed” on line 7, and in lieu thereof, put a comma (,) and add the following: BUT NOT MORE OFTEN THAN EVERY SIX (6) YEARS FROM THE DATE OF THE LAST PLEBISCITE.”

The section will now read: “Section 1. Any amendment to, or revision of, this Constitution may be pro (6) YEARS FROM THE DATE OF THE LAST PLEBISCITE.”

VOTING

THE PRESIDENT: Those in favor of the proposed amendment of Commissioner Natividad will please raise their hand. (Few Members raised their hand.)

Those against, please raise their hand. (Several Members raised their hand.)

The results show 6 votes in favor and 25 against; the amendment is lost.

Is there any other proposed amendment?

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I ask that Commissioner Padilla be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Padilla is recognized.

MR. PADILLA: Thank you, Madam President.

Will the distinguished sponsor, Commissioner Davide, yield to a few questions?

THE PRESIDENT: He may, if he so desires.

MR. DAVIDE: Very gladly, Madam President.

MR. PADILLA: The Committee has submitted its original report which made reference to Section 1, paragraph (c) which states: "directly by the people themselves thru initiative as provided for in Article VIII, Section 27 of the Constitution." But since it was explained that the initiative refers to ordinary legislation of the National Assembly, the Committee on Amendments had to introduce Section 2 which is now sought to be amended by substitution.

I notice that we have 10 percent, and it is now sought to be increased to 12 percent. With regard to ordinary legislation, the Committee on the Legislative proposed a 10-percent requirement for initiative by the people. Does not the Commissioner believe that we should reduce the 10-percent requirement for purposes of initiating legislation rather than increasing the requirement for constitutional amendments to 12 percent? In other words, since the Committee on the Legislative has 10 percent, the proposed amendment now is for a higher percentage, which is 12 percent for a constitutional amendment.

MR. DAVIDE: A distinction has to be made for the reason that under this proposal, what is involved is an amendment to the Constitution. To amend a Constitution would ordinarily require a proposal by the National Assembly by a vote of three-fourths; and to call a constitutional convention would require a higher number. Moreover, just to submit the issue of calling a constitutional convention, a majority of the National Assembly is required, the import being that the process of amendment must be made more rigorous and difficult than probably initiating an ordinary legislation or putting an end to a law proposed by the National Assembly by way of a referendum. I cannot agree to reducing the requirement approved by the Committee on the Legislative because it would require another voting by the Committee, and the voting was precisely based on a requirement of 10 percent. Perhaps, I might present such a proposal, by way of an amendment, when the Commission shall take up the Article on the Legislative or on the National Assembly on plenary sessions.

MR. PADILLA: Thank you.

We agree that there must be a greater percentage for an amendment to the Constitution, and a lower percentage for an amendment to ordinary legislation. The Article on the National Assembly or the Legislative will be an anterior article, Article VIII, I suppose, whereas the Article on Amendment will be subsequent, Article VI. I notice that the committee report on the legislature mentions a petition signed by at least 10 percent of the registered voters in the immediately preceding elections. However, I do not see in this report on the legislature any particulars as to whether the signatures will be verified by the COMELEC and then referred to the National Assembly for action, and then for providing appropriations, et cetera. Does not the Commissioner believe that if such procedural details are necessary for a proposed amendment allowing the people, through initiative, to amend or even repeal an ordinary legislation, which will appear at the earlier part of the Constitution, such details should be included in the Article on National Assembly? Hence, if all those details are necessary even for the proposed amendment of the Constitution by initiative of the people, then we can just make reference to Article VIII, Section 27 of the report on the National Assembly. In other words, what I wish to say is that if all those details are necessary, why do we not insert them in an anterior article, so that if those details can be referred to by reference, they do not have to be repeated in a subsequent article?

MR. DAVIDE: We appreciate the proposal. However, we feel that in the matter of authorizing the people to initiate an amendment to the Constitution, the proper situs for that would really be the Article on Amendment. We will clearly distinguish between the right of the people in proposing an ordinary legislation and that in proposing amendments to the Constitution which would become a constituent function, not just an ordinary legislative function. The mere fact that this may come later in the Constitution does not mean that this will repeal a previous provision under the National Assembly because the two concepts are entirely distinct and separate from one another.

MR. PADILLA: We recognize that an amendment to ordinary legislation is different from an amendment to the Constitution. But what I am wondering about is, if in the provision on the National Assembly there is already the phrase “a petition signed by at least 10 percent of the registered voters in the immediately preceding elections” and there are no further specifics or details for its implementation, why should not the same percentage of registered voters with regard to an amendment to the Constitution be followed without all these specifics or details?

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President and Mr. Vice-President, actually, the proposal on initiative and referendum in the proposed Article on the National Assembly would also lead to ordinary legislation, the mechanics, the manner and even the exceptions thereto. The only requirement that is mandatory upon the legislature is on the number of signatures in a petition for initiative or a petition for referendum. So, we have parity already. Here, we leave it to the National Assembly to implement the exercise of the right, and in the Article on the National Assembly, a legislation is also necessary to implement the concept of initiative and referendum.

MR. PADILLA: Do I understand that under Section 27 of the committee report on the National Assembly, this phrase “at least 10 percent of the registered voters in the immediately preceding elections” will be determined by the National Assembly regardless of any action to be taken by the COMELEC?

MR. DAVIDE: That requirement will be mandatory in the law to be enacted by the legislature to implement the right of initiative and referendum. It was also the sense of the Committee that the matter of requiring a certain percentage of the total number of votes in any given areas within the 10-percent requirement should be provided by law.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I ask that Commissioner Maambong be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Maambong is recognized.

MR. MAAMBONG: Madam President, will the distinguished proponent of the amendment yield to a few questions?

MR. DAVIDE: With pleasure, Madam President.

MR. MAAMBONG: My first question: Commissioner Davide’s proposed amendment on line I refers to “amendments.” Does it not cover the word “revision” as defined by Commissioner Padilla when he made the distinction between the words “amendments” and “revision”?

MR. DAVIDE: No, it does not, because “amendments” and “revision” should be covered by Section 1. So insofar as initiative is concerned, it can only relate to “amendments” not “revision.”

MR. MAAMBONG: Thank you.

The second point is, there is a time frame on line 5 to line 8. Is it the intention of the proponent that this time frame will only apply to amendments by initiative and not to the other forms of amendments found in the other parts of the section?

MR. DAVIDE: The Commissioner is absolutely correct.

MR. MAAMBONG: As far as I am concerned, this last point is a very worrisome problem. It is indicated on lines 2 and 3 that:

... upon petition of at least 12 percent of the total number of registered voters, of which every legislative district must be represented by at least three percent of registered voters thereof.

I contemplate a scenario of this nature on the assumption that the 12 percent is not nationwide, such that when we say we have 200 legislative districts, that is only an assumption. In one district for example, the 7th District of Cebu

from where I come, less than three percent of the votes cast is in favor of this amendment. Would it mean that even though we get more than 12 percent and that one district votes less than three percent, the amendment through initiative is lost?

MR. DAVIDE: That is correct. The entire proposed amendment will be lost, but I doubt very much if in the 7th District of Cebu where the Commissioner might be the Assemblyman by then, he will not be able to obtain more than three percent because that would be a very critical issue. He has to support it; otherwise, he will lose the support of his people.

MR. MAAMBONG: The point here is really academic. By way of academic discussion it is, therefore, possible for an amendment to be acceptable even by 50 percent of the whole nation, but it can be lost just because the leader in a certain legislative district strongly opposes it. Is that the intention of the proponent?

MR. DAVIDE: That would really be the effect because we would like that the 10 percent be truly representative of all districts and that is why we require a certain percentage of the registered voters in any given district or in all districts. So, anyone campaigning for an amendment through initiative must see to it that he will have more than three percent in all the representative districts, and I do not fear that this proposal can easily be supported by at least three percent because we have the contending political parties thereat.

MR. MAAMBONG: Without presenting any specific amendment, I suggest that the proponent and the distinguished sponsor who accepted this amendment should perhaps think this over considering that one district could defeat the intention of the whole country.

Thank you very much, Madam President.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, actually, the original proposal of this Member was only two percent, but by way of amendment, there were modifications made by other Commissioners. So, I yielded to the collective wisdom of those who wanted to make a modification on the requirement.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Monsod be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Monsod is recognized.

MR. MONSOD: Thank you.

Will the proponent yield to some questions?

MR. DAVIDE: Willingly, Madam President.

MR. MONSOD: I have just two clarificatory questions.

The first is on the interpretation that the first petition can be filed after five years. Am I right?

MR. DAVIDE: The first limitation is five years from the ratification of this Constitution.

MR. MONSOD: That is right; since the sentence says "every five years thereafter" not oftener than once, can there be another one on the sixth year?

MR. DAVIDE: There can be; but between the sixth and the tenth year, we can only have one.

MR. MONSOD: That is right. So, we can have one on the sixth and one on the eleventh.

MR. DAVIDE: It can be done; the second may be on the eleventh year.

MR. MONSOD: My second question is: Is the Commission on Elections envisaged to be the body that will pass on the authenticity of the signatures?

MR. DAVIDE: That may be provided for in a law by the National Assembly for the implementation of the exercise of this right.

MR. MONSOD: Thank you.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I ask that Commissioner Rigos be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Rigos is recognized.

REV. RIGOS: Madam President, I would like to file a motion to amend the proposed amendment of Commissioner Davide; namely, that we eliminate or delete the last sentence of the first paragraph which reads: "NO AMENDMENT UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL BE AUTHORIZED WITHIN FIVE YEARS FOLLOWING THE RATIFICATION OF THIS CONSTITUTION NOR OFTENER THAN ONCE EVERY FIVE YEARS THEREAFTER." If we are not willing to limit the National Assembly in making the necessary amendments, the more reason we should not limit the people in making the necessary amendments any time they think amendments are needed.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, the only amendment of this Member on this matter is the initiative calling for amendment after the first five years. Insofar as the first five years is concerned, that was an original proposal of the Committee. Insofar as that portion of the proposal covered by my original amendment is concerned, it is with deep regret that I cannot accept the proposal. That might even be divisive because every year people might be campaigning for a proposed amendment. It will really destroy the sense of stability of a constitution. It is enough that we recognize that right to be exercised by them at least once every five years.

REV. RIGOS: Madam President, I do not see the logic in giving full freedom to the National Assembly in making the necessary amendments, and yet limiting the people to every five years. It seems to me that I will ask the House to vote on this proposal.

MR. SUAREZ: Since the amendment to the amendment has not been accepted by the proponent, may we request a vote on the matter, Madam President.

VOTING

THE PRESIDENT: For clarification, the amendment of Commissioner Rigos is to delete the second sentence of the first paragraph of Section 2.

As many as are in favor of the proposed amendment of Commissioner Rigos, please raise their hand. *(Few Members raised their hand.)*

As many as are against, please raise their hand. *(Several Members raised their hand.)*

The results show 13 votes in favor of the amendment and 18 against; the amendment to the amendment is lost.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Rodrigo be recognized for one question.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Rodrigo is recognized.

MR. RODRIGO: I move to delete the portion limiting my question to one.

Will the Gentleman yield?

THE PRESIDENT: The Gentleman may yield, if he so desires.

MR. RODRIGO: The proposed amendment says that a petition of at least 12 percent of the total number of registered voters is required. Is it possible that two national groups, let us say, two national political groups or two nationwide labor organizations, campaign for two inconsistent amendments and both of them get more than 12 percent and both amendments also get at least 3 percent in every legislative district.

MR. DAVIDE: It should be done simultaneously because if it would be one after the other within a period of five years following the first five years after the ratification, then it cannot be done.

MR. RODRIGO: Yes, simultaneously, one organization senses or knows.

MR. DAVIDE: Two or three or four amendments can be proposed simultaneously but it can only be submitted to a plebiscite once every five years.

MR. RODRIGO: What happens if four inconsistent amendments get more than 12 percent?

MR. DAVIDE: In other words, both amendments qualify with the requirements and numbers.

MR. RODRIGO: I was starting with only two amendments but the Gentleman said it is even possible to have four. What will be done with those four amendments, all of which qualify under this section?

MR. DAVIDE: Even if these amendments are inconsistent with one another, the people will have the final say in the plebiscite.

MR. RODRIGO: How will they be presented to the people in a plebiscite?

MR. DAVIDE: The National Assembly shall, by law, provide for the implementation of the exercise of this right. So, the law may provide that in such instances where there are separate and inconsistent proposals for amendments, then whichever of the amendments may be approved by a majority of the people will be deemed valid amendments. We leave it to the people, if they agree to inconsistent provisions.

MR. RODRIGO: So, in a plebiscite it is possible for the people to approve by a majority vote two inconsistent amendments to the Constitution.

MR. DAVIDE: That is the will of the people in a plebiscite — to opt for a proposal for amendments submitted.

MR. RODRIGO: That is why I say this is impractical because in the case of an amendment proposed by the legislature or by a constitutional convention, no such situation would arise. But precisely it is not the mechanics of this that I object to. I like the idea but I will be in favor of the idea only if I see it is practical.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, that may be remote. But in the event it happens, there is still the power of the legislature to propose an amendment by a vote of three-fourths to cure the inconsistency.

MR. RODRIGO: There is an initiative by the people by means of the required number of votes. The last sentence says that the National Assembly shall, by law, provide for the implementation and exercise thereof, which means to say that the National Assembly must appropriate the money and submit the amendments to the people in a plebiscite.

MR. DAVIDE: That would depend now on the provision of the particular enabling statute. For instance, if the legislature can foresee such a situation where inconsistent amendments are presented by initiative in a given year, it might agree to defer the consideration of an inconsistent amendment, say, after five years, provided the two amendments are so inconsistent that the danger of them being approved might result in an absurdity.

MR. RODRIGO: Then what happens to the required 10 percent vote?

MR. DAVIDE: That is why if, indeed, two or more simultaneous amendatory proposals would be clearly and substantially inconsistent with one another, we leave it to the sound discretion of the legislature.

MR. RODRIGO: Thank you.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Jamir be recognized to present an amendment to the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Jamir is recognized.

MR. JAMIR: My amendment is with respect to the second line of the proposed amendment. Delete the words "THROUGH INITIATIVE" after the word "PEOPLE" because the proposal is made by the people so that the phrase "THROUGH INITIATIVE" is already redundant. That is the reason for the suggested deletion.

THE PRESIDENT: Is that acceptable, Commissioner Davide?

MR. DAVIDE: May I refer to the Committee?

MR. SUAREZ: The Committee finds merit in the proposed amendment to the amendment but would rather leave this to the body.

THE PRESIDENT: What is the pleasure of Commissioner Ople?

MR. OPLE: Madam President, on this subject at hand, may I just say that there is not necessarily incongruity or superfluity in saying that the people may act directly through initiative because then that puts the stamp of a great democratic institution or tradition on this formulation, which means the Gentleman connects to the great traditions of democracy, such as the thousand-year old tradition of the initiative and referendum in the cantons of Switzerland. We are not really reinventing the wheel in installing initiative as additional mode of proposing an amendment to the Constitution, and as a reserve power, of the sovereign people, when they are dissatisfied with the National Assembly in responding to a critical situation requiring a constitutional amendment, this initiative vests the power of direct action in the people themselves. It is largely, I think, reserve power, precisely a fallback position of the people in the event that they are dissatisfied. When we include the word "initiative," then we introduce into the formulation the great body of democratic conditions based on initiative especially in the countries where this has been most successful.

So, I would like to request Commissioner Jamir — If it does not detract too much from his own sense of being important — to kindly leave the word “initiative” there. It also matches to some extent or correlates the initiative, referendum and recall that are actually used in the Legislative Committee.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: What is the pleasure of Commissioner Jamir?

MR. JAMIR: Considering the eloquent request of the Gentleman from Bulacan, I agree to withdraw my amendment.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I ask that Commissioner Sarmiento be recognized to make an amendment to the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Sarmiento is recognized.

MR. SARMIENTO: May I address a few questions to the distinguished proponent of the amendment?

MR. DAVIDE: Willingly, Madam President.

MR. SARMIENTO: The U.P. draft and the state constitutions refer to initiative as a reserved power, together with recall and referendum. The last line of the amendment mentions exercise of this right. Will the Gentleman agree to use the word “exercise” instead of “right”?

MR. DAVIDE: So, it will read: “THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SHALL BY LAW PROVIDE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POWER.”

MR. SARMIENTO: Yes.

MR. DAVIDE: No objection.

MR. SARMIENTO: Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Does the Committee accept the amendment?

MR. SUAREZ: We have no objection.

MR. SARMIENTO: Thank you very much.

VOTING

THE PRESIDENT: We will first put this proposed amendment to a vote.

As many as are in favor of the proposed amendment of Commissioner Sarmiento, please raise their hand. *(Several Members raised their hand.)*

As many as are against, please raise their hand. *(Few Members raised their hand.)*

The results show 26 votes in favor and 2 against; the amendment is approved.

MR. SARMIENTO: For the last two questions, Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Gentleman may proceed.

MR. SARMIENTO: Line 3 reads: "AT LEAST TWELVE PERCENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOTERS." Nothing is specified whether these are registered voters of the preceding general election. The state constitutions I read make mention of registered voters of the preceding general election. Will the honorable proponent agree with me to include the words: REGISTERED VOTERS OF THE PRECEDING GENERAL ELECTION.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, the original proposal of this Member made reference to the total number of registered voters in the immediately preceding national election but there were amendments there to and the original draft of the Committee made reference to a registered number of voters only, the idea being that the total number of registered voters as of the presentation of the proposed amendment to the Constitution must be the basis. I yielded to the wisdom of that proposal because we limit now the amendment by initiative after the first five years following the ratification of this Constitution and not oftener than once every five years thereafter. So, if we have to make as a reference the total number of registered voters in the immediately preceding general election, the total number of signatories required would be very much less, and, therefore, it might not adequately represent the sentiments of those who may have registered after the immediately preceding election.

MR. SARMIENTO: Madam President, with that manifestation I withdraw my proposed amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: The proposed amendment is withdrawn.

MR. SARMIENTO: Last question, Madam President.

May I invite the attention of the honorable proponent to line 2 which states: "PROPOSED BY THE PEOPLE THROUGH INITIATIVE UPON A PETITION OF." Commissioner Jamir gladly accommodated the eloquent manifestation of Commissioner Ople and he agreed that the words "THROUGH INITIATIVE" be maintained. I was looking at state constitutions, Madam President, and the words they used were these: "proposed by the people upon an initiative petition." I am not for the deletion of the words "THROUGH INITIATIVE" but a reformulation, so that line 2 would read: "PROPOSED BY THE PEOPLE UPON AN INITIATIVE PETITION OF AT LEAST TWELVE PERCENT."

MR. DAVIDE: The wording, as proposed and as appearing in the original committee report; that is, "THROUGH INITIATIVE UPON A PETITION," may be much better than the language as proposed which would appear to be foreign. Let us have our own phraseology in the proposal.

MR. SARMIENTO: If the intent is pro-Filipino, pro-people, then I withdraw my proposed amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, there are no more registered speakers to propose amendments on Section 2. However, there is still somebody who would like to amend or present an amendment to the amendment.

I ask that Commissioner Gascon be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Gascon is recognized.

MR. GASCON: I would like to ask a question first with regard to line 4. May I know why the line states "LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT"?

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, the Committee on the Legislative voted on a scheme of representation for Members of the National Assembly by district.

So, that is the reason we speak here of “LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT.”

MR. GASCON: The proposal to include “LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT” is mainly to advert to the problem that may arise from too much concentration in a particular region of a particular initiative petition, is that correct?

MR. DAVIDE: That is correct, Madam President.

MR. GASCON: However, a legislative district is much smaller than a province or a region; is that correct?

MR. DAVIDE: A legislative district may be the same as the province if the population of the province is less than the number of the ratio provided for, or it could be several districts in a given province, depending on the number of inhabitants in the province.

MR. GASCON: Actually, I would like to support the spirit behind the inclusion of the term “LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT” but upon considering it further, it might make the principle of initiative very difficult for the people.

So, I would like to propose an amendment. Instead of using the term “LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT,” let us use REGION.

MR. DAVIDE: We have to define the word. Right now, for political administration, we have 13 regions, including the National Capital Region. If the Gentleman refers to the traditional geographical regions, we have only three.

MR. GASCON: As far as the definition of region is concerned, I would allow the legislature to define such because there are proposals for autonomous regions and I believe that this should be included.

So, when I speak of region, I am thinking of the 13 existing regions, plus whatever may be created as autonomous regions.

MR. DAVIDE: I would rather throw it to the body, Madam President, because of the difficulty, first, of defining what a region is since there are several regions, and, second, it might dilute the sanctity of the original proposal.

MR. GASCON: If that is the case, I withdraw my proposal for the word REGION and instead change “LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT” to PROVINCE.

THE PRESIDENT: “PROVINCE OR CITY.”

MR. GASCON: Yes, PROVINCE OR CITY.

MR. DAVIDE: I would like to ask the Committee.

THE PRESIDENT: What does the Committee say?

MR. SUAREZ: How about the cities?

MR. GASCON: My issue is basically to make it much easier for the people to initiate.

MR. DAVIDE: What about the cities?

MR. GASCON: EVERY PROVINCE OR CITY.

MR. SUAREZ: As far as the Committee is concerned, that is an acceptable proposal.

MR. DAVIDE: It is also acceptable to this Member, Madam President, provided it would be: "OF WHICH EVERY PROVINCE OR CITY MUST BE REPRESENTED BY AT LEAST THREE PERCENT OF THE REGISTERED VOTERS THEREOF."

THE PRESIDENT: Does the Committee accept the amendment?

MR. SUAREZ: The Committee accepts, Madam President.

MR. DAVIDE: It is also acceptable to this Member, Madam President.

MR. MONSOD: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Monsod is recognized.

MR. MONSOD: By city, does the Gentleman mean chartered city? There are 16 chartered cities but there are about 50 cities. What are we referring to here — chartered cities or all cities?

MR. GASCON: All cities.

MR. MONSOD: All right; thank you.

MR. DAVIDE: All cities, whether component or highly urbanized.

MR. BENGZON: Before we take a vote, Madam President, may I just have one minute to speak against that proposed amendment?

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Bengzon may proceed.

MR. BENGZON: I am afraid that if we do pass that amendment, it is going to be used as a political tool by the politicians because there are certain big provinces that have so many districts. If certain politicians band together and do away with some of the districts, they can generate the necessary three percent by just getting the necessary three percent from the various districts and disregard completely the other districts in that province. So, it is a very tempting situation to be used as a political tool. That is why I am opposed to it.

MR.: GASCON: May I speak then, Madam President?

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Gascon may proceed.

MR. GASCON: But the basic issue is the initiative process. I think we should make it as easy as possible for the people to initiate. In recognition of the problem that it might be too concentrated in one particular region, let us say, Metro Manila, I am supporting the issue to have a specified political region, whether it be legislative district, province or region. I would also like to emphasize that the initiative process does not end there. After it goes through the initiative process, it will be presented to the people for approval or disapproval. So, that problem which the Gentleman raised can easily be responded to by the process of ratification of the amendment.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I move that we take a vote on the amendment to the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: We will proceed to take a vote.

MR. RODRIGO: Madam President, may I ask a question for clarification?

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Rodrigo may proceed.

MR. RODRIGO: Does the amendment say “EVERY PROVINCE OR CITY”?

THE PRESIDENT: Both.

MR. DAVIDE: Province and city.

MR. RODRIGO: How about Metro Manila? The City of Manila, City of Pasay, City of Caloocan?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. RODRIGO: Usually, Metro Manila is treated differently, and it is so stated in the law because Metro Manila is composed of four cities.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Davide requests that he answer the question; he may proceed.

MR. DAVIDE: Yes, Madam President. Metropolitan Manila was evolved because of the creation of the Metropolitan Manila Commission. It is composed of provinces from Rizal and from Bulacan and the cities within the area. So, under the proposal, we have to consider every city in Metro Manila and the municipalities in relation to the provinces to which they belong, Rizal and Bulacan.

MR. RODRIGO: Valenzuela no longer belongs to Bulacan.

MR. DAVIDE: Under the Metropolitan Manila Commission, but I do not think the Commission is recognized as a separate political subdivision under the Committee on Local Governments — I really do not know — because there is even a move to abolish this metropolitan concept of government.

MR. RODRIGO: Let us have this clarified because this is a very important provision. So, in case of Metro Manila, if it is by city, then at least three percent is needed in the City of Manila, Pasay City, Quezon City and Caloocan City. How about San Juan and Mandaluyong?

MR. DAVIDE: San Juan will be considered part of Rizal.

MR. RODRIGO: But who will decide that? I did not know that. I always thought of San Juan and Mandaluyong as part of Metro Manila. This is a very important provision; we must specify; we must make it clear.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, this matter may be reviewed later depending on what is the report of the Committee on Local Governments. The municipalities in the metropolitan area will be returned to each respective province. So, now in computing the percentage for purposes of initiative, the vote in that particular municipality must be taken into account with the votes of the rest of the province to where that municipality actually belongs.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE PRESIDENT: The session is suspended for a few minutes.

MR. DAVIDE: May I answer that, Madam President?

It was 6:05 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:09 p.m., the Session was resumed.

THE PRESIDENT: The session is resumed.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I ask that Commissioner Gascon be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Gascon is recognized.

MR. GASCON: Thank you, Madam President. After assessing the whole thing and with the assurance that retaining “LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT” may make it easier for the people to assert their sovereign will in as far as initiative is concerned, I withdraw my proposed amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: The proposed amendment is then withdrawn.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I move that we take a vote on the entire Section 2.

MS. AQUINO: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Aquino is recognized.

MS. AQUINO: I may be out of order but I would seek the kind indulgence and liberality of the Chair to allow me to seek reconsideration of the voting that amended the last sentence of Section 2 by changing the word “Right” to POWER.

THE PRESIDENT: The Commissioner may proceed.

MS. AQUINO: This is significant for me because POWER represents a concept; it is not just a matter of words or lexicon. I believe that the word “right” is even more potent and even more determinative as against POWER. Power, in the nature of its connotation, is a political concept which requires as a condition the presence of strength before one could even invoke it; while right, when enshrined in a law, is a right, regardless of whether one has the strength or the power to assert it. Thus, I believe the word “right” is even more potent than the word POWER.

It was because the Chair immediately called for a division of the House that I was not able to timely interpose my objection to the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection to the motion for reconsideration of the amendment to change the word “Right” to POWER?

MR. SARMIENTO: Madam President, I object to the motion for reconsideration. Firstly, the proposition or the motion is out of order. Secondly, I believe that POWER is stronger than the word “right.” It is people’s power. All along we have been speaking of people’s power-participatory democracy, blessings of people’s power. I have already mentioned the reasons why POWER is more appropriate than “right.” I respectfully submit, Madam President.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I reiterate my motion that we take a vote on the whole Section 2.

MS. AQUINO: Madam President, I submit to the ruling of the Chair on my motion for reconsideration.

VOTING

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the Chair will first make its ruling.

Commissioner Aquino has appealed to the liberality of the Chair, and I believe I choose to be liberal this afternoon. Therefore, I will just submit the motion to the body for reconsideration.

As many as are in favor of the motion of Commissioner Aquino to reconsider the amendment, that is, to retain the word "Right" in the last sentence of Section 2, please raise their hand. (Several Members raised their hand)

As many as are against, please raise their hand. (Few Members raised their hand.)

The results show 22 votes in favor of the reconsideration and 6 against; the motion for reconsideration is approved and the word "Right" in the last sentence of Section 2 is retained.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I reiterate my motion that we take a vote on the whole Section 2.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection that we take a vote on the whole Section 2?

Commissioner Maambong is recognized.

MR. MAAMBONG: Madam President, may I request a reading of the section so that we will understand. There have been so many amendments.

THE PRESIDENT: Will the sponsor please read Section 2, as amended?

MR. DAVIDE: Thank you, Madam President.

Section 2, as amended, reads as follows: "AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION MAY LIKEWISE BE DIRECTLY PROPOSED BY THE PEOPLE THROUGH INITIATIVE UPON A PETITION OF AT LEAST TWELVE PERCENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOTERS, OF WHICH EVERY LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT MUST BE REPRESENTED BY AT LEAST THREE PERCENT OF THE REGISTERED VOTERS THEREOF, NO AMENDMENT UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL BE AUTHORIZED WITHIN FIVE YEARS FOLLOWING THE RATIFICATION OF THIS CONSTITUTION NOR OFTENER THAN ONCE EVERY FIVE YEARS THEREAFTER.

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SHALL BY LAW PROVIDE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EXERCISE OF THIS RIGHT."

VOTING

THE PRESIDENT: As many as are in favor of Section 2, as amended, please raise their hand. *(Several Members raised their hand.)*

As many as are against, please raise their hand. *(Few Members raised their hand.)*

The results show 31 votes in favor and 3 against: Section 2, as amended, is approved.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Monsod be recognized to present the last amendment to the last section.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Monsod is recognized.

MR. MONSOD: I would like to propose an amendment to Section 4 in order to reflect the necessity of a plebiscite in the exercise of the right under Section 2. As it reads now, the phrase “after the approval of such amendment or revision” refers only to amendments under Section 1.

So, I would like to propose the addition of the following lines after the phrase “approval of such amendment or revision”: UNDER SECTION 1 OR THE DECLARATION BY THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS OF THE COMPLETION OF THE PETITION FOR AMENDMENT UNDER SECTION 2 OF THIS ARTICLE.

MR. DE LOS REYES: Madam President, will the proponent of the amendment accept an amendment to the amendment.

MR. MONSOD: The Gentleman will please state his amendment.

MR. DE LOS REYES: I propose that on line 20, between the words “Constitution” and “shall,” we insert the phrase UNDER SECTION 1, SUBPARAGRAPHS (A) AND (B). Is that all right?

MR. MONSOD: That is all right, yes.

THE PRESIDENT: What line, please?

MR. DE LOS REYES: Line 20, Madam President. Between the words “Constitution” and “shall,” insert the phrase UNDER SECTION 1, SUBPARAGRAPHS (A) AND (B) to indicate the fact that Section 4 refers to the amendment under Section 1 (a) and (b) — by the National Assembly or by the constitutional convention.

MR. MONSOD: I accept the amendment to the amendment.

MR. DE LOS REYES: Then, I propose to include another paragraph after line 23, which will read: AMENDMENT UNDER SECTION 2 SHALL BE VALID WHEN RATIFIED BY A MAJORITY OF THE VOTES CAST IN A PLEBISCITE WHICH SHALL BE HELD . . . The continuation will be the Gentleman’s amendment.

MR. MONSOD: Yes. It reads: NOT EARLIER THAN SIXTY DAYS AND NOT LATER THAN NINETY DAYS AFTER THE DECLARATION BY THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS OF THE COMPLETION OF THE PETITION.

MR. DE LOS REYES: That is my amendment.

MR. MONSOD: I accept the amendment to the amendment.

MR. SUAREZ: What is the complete wording, Madam President?

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

MR. DE LOS REYES: I move for a suspension of the session so that we can consolidate our amendments.

THE PRESIDENT: The session is suspended.

It was 6:19 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:23 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE PRESIDENT: The session is resumed.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I ask that Commissioner Monsod be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Monsod is recognized.

MR. MONSOD: May I read the proposed amendment which is a consolidation of the proposals of Commissioners de los Reyes, Aquino and myself. Section 4 will now read: :ANY AMENDMENT TO, OR REVISION OF THIS CONSTITUTION UNDER SECTION ONE (1) SUBPARAGRAPHS (A) AND (B) SHALL BE VALID AND RATIFIED BY A MAJORITY OF THE VOTES CAST IN A PLEBISCITE WHICH SHALL BE HELD NOT EARLIER THAN SIXTY DAYS AND NOT LATER THAN NINETY DAYS AFTER THE APPROVAL OF SUCH AMENDMENT OR REVISION.

AMENDMENT UNDER SECTION TWO (2) SHALL BE VALID WHEN RATIFIED BY A MAJORITY OF THE VOTES CAST IN A PLEBISCITE WHICH SHALL BE HELD NOT EARLIER THAN SIXTY DAYS AND NOT LATER THAN NINETY DAYS AFTER THE CERTIFICATION BY THE COMELEC OF THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE PETITION.”

THE PRESIDENT: Is the proposed amendment accepted by the honorable sponsor?

MR. SUAREZ: It is accepted, Madam President, except that the word “COMELEC” should read: COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS.

MR. MONSOD: Yes, “COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS,” Madam President.

VOTING

THE PRESIDENT: Are there any other comments? Are we ready to vote on the proposed amendment, as amended, of Commissioner Monsod?

As many as are in favor of the proposed amendment, as amended, of Commissioner Monsod, please raise their hand.
(Several Members raised their hand)

As many as are against, please raise their hand. (No Member raised his hand.)

The results show 30 votes in favor and none against; the proposed amendment, as amended, is approved.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Davide be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Davide is recognized .

MR. DAVIDE: Thank you, Madam President.

This is the last amendment intended to give more teeth to Section 3. On line 18., after the word “electorate,” add the phrase IN A REFERENDUM and after that, add a new sentence to read as follows: IF THE QUESTION IS AFFIRMATIVELY VOTED UPON, THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SHALL, WITHIN THIRTY (30) DAYS FROM THE DAY OF THE REFERENDUM, ENACT THE LAW CALLING THE CONVENTION.

MR. SUAREZ: Madam President, the Committee would rather submit the proposal to the floor for consideration.

MR. DAVIDE: May I be allowed to explain.

THE PRESIDENT: Please do so.

MR. DAVIDE: In the original provision of both the 1935 and 1973 Constitutions, the submission to the electorate of the question calling such a convention is in an election. That was eliminated by the proposal, the idea being probably, that since it would be tied up with an election, the issue on the call may not be meritoriously considered by the people. So it is necessary that we should put here that the submission must be in a referendum which can never be simultaneous with an election.

Secondly, if we do not add the new sentence; IF THE QUESTION IS AFFIRMATIVELY VOTED UPON, THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SHALL, WITHIN THIRTY (30) DAYS FROM THE DAY OF THE REFERENDUM, ENACT THE LAW CALLING THE CONVENTION, the will of the people in approving the matter of submitting the revision or amendment to a constitutional convention might easily be frustrated by Congress by not acting at all after the question has been submitted and affirmatively voted upon by the people. So I submit that the proposed amendment is necessary to give teeth to Section 3.

MR. MAAMBONG: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Maambong is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

MR. MAAMBONG: I thought that this matter on Section 3 has already been properly explained by the sponsor to the extent that this could actually be done either in an election or a plebiscite. At any rate, the proposed amendment is too involved.

May I ask for a suspension of the session, Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The session is suspended.

It was 6:28 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:30 p.m., the session was resumed

THE PRESIDENT: The session is resumed.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I ask that the sponsor be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Suarez is recognized.

MR. SUAREZ: Madam President, we would like to call the attention of the movant to the fact that under Section 3, it is the National Assembly that is ordained by a two-thirds vote of all its Members to call a constitutional convention, and it is incumbent upon the National Assembly to come up with the enabling act providing the necessary mechanism for the constitutional convention to submit the proposed amendment to the people in a plebiscite called for the purpose. This is already built-in in whatever enabling act the National Assembly may promulgate, and that is the reason the Committee feels that it is no longer necessary to provide the statement suggested by the Gentleman.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, on the understanding that the call is in itself the enabling statute for the constitutional convention, if the question is affirmatively voted upon by the people, then I am willing to withdraw the proposed amendment.

MR. SUAREZ: Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

The proposed amendment is hereby withdrawn.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the Floor Leader is recognized.

APPROVAL OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 322
ON SECOND READING
(Article on Amendment or Revision)

MR. RAMA: I move that we now vote on Proposed Resolution No. 322, as amended, the whole Article on Amendment or Revision.

THE PRESIDENT: We will now proceed to the voting. As many as are in favor of Proposed Resolution No. 322, the Article on Amendment or Revision of the Constitution, please raise their hand. (Several Members raised their hand.)

As many as are against, please raise their hand. (No Member raised his hand.)

The results show 29 votes in favor and none against.

Proposed Resolution No. 322, as amended, is approved on Second Reading. (Applause)

MR. SUAREZ: Madam President, in behalf of the members of the Committee on Amendments and Transitory Provisions, may we extend our deepest gratitude to each and everyone of the Members of the Commission for bearing with us in this marathon session.

Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: The message of the Gentleman is duly noted.

Is there any other business?

MR. RAMA. Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON PROPOSED
RESOLUTION NO. 263 ON THIRD READING
(Article on National Territory)

MR. RAMA: I move that we vote on Third Reading on Proposed Resolution No. 263.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Printed copies of Proposed Resolution No. 263 were distributed on July 8, 1986, pursuant to Section 28, Rule VI of the Rules of the Constitutional Commission.

Voting on the proposed resolution on Third Reading is, therefore, in order.

The Secretary-General will read the title of the proposed resolution.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL. Proposed Resolution No. 263, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION AN ARTICLE ON NATIONAL TERRITORY.

FIRST ROLL CALL

THE PRESIDENT: The body will now vote on this resolution, and the Secretary-General will call the roll.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Abubakar	Azcuna
Alonto	Bacani
Aquino	

BISHOP BACANI: Madam President, I would like to explain my vote.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Bacani has three minutes to explain his vote.

COMMISSIONER BACANI EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

BISHOP BACANI: Fundamentally, the reason I vote no is because voting yes seems to me to be foreclosing the claim to Sabah. I have no objection to dropping the claim, but it seems that despite the protestations that the claim is not foreclosed in any way whatsoever, it is nevertheless actually foreclosed. I can foresee a possible scenario like this in the future — the Philippine government trying to renegotiate the claim and the people of Sabah saying, “Why do you claim Sabah? Is this your territory?” And we would answer: “Well, we are not sure whether it is our territory or not, but it may be.” Then they can just say, “It certainly is not your territory.” Why?

According to the Committee’s definition of “territory,” it is “all the other territories over which the government exercises sovereign jurisdiction.” However, we do not exercise sovereign jurisdiction over this now, and, therefore,

this is in no way ours, and we cannot lay any claim to it. Therefore, for this reason, I vote no. But if it is approved, I would like to emphasize that this formulation, in no way, forecloses the claim to Sabah. Nevertheless, I cannot see that being realized because language is only flexible to a certain extent, and this formulation cannot bear the burden of the interpretation that is being given to it.

Thank you.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Bengzon	Bernas
Bennagen	

FR. BERNAS: Madam President, may I be allowed to explain my vote?

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Bernas has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER BERNAS EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

FR. BERNAS: I vote yes for three reasons: First, because the last sentence is a statement of one aspect of the archipelagic principle which we, together with many other nations, accept. Second, I vote yes because it is a good description of the territory we actually have today. That territory comprises two parts: The first part is the Philippine Archipelago; that is, all the territories ceded by Spain to the United States, and eventually transferred to the sovereignty of the Republic of the Philippines. The second part comprises all other territories — territories outside the Archipelago over which the government exercises jurisdiction. Third, I also vote yes because the Article does not make any uncertain claim of any territory, and, therefore, avoids creating useless or even harmful friction. At the same time, however, under the generally accepted principles of international law which we adopt, it does not prevent us from making use of any accepted modes of establishing a claim to a territory. For these reasons, I vote yes.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Rosario Braid	Calderon
Brocka	Castro de

MR. DE CASTRO: Madam President, may I explain my vote?

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner de Castro has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER DE CASTRO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. DE CASTRO: Madam President, I vote no because with the proposed statement in our national territory, we are giving up our claim on Sabah. Through no amount of hard thinking can I convince myself that the phrase “and all other territories over which the government exercises sovereign jurisdiction” means we are still keeping our claim over Sabah; for, indeed, Madam President, everybody knows that at this time we do not exercise sovereignty nor jurisdiction over Sabah. Our claim is based on historic right, the right established by our forefathers. To give up that right by a play of words such as “over which the government exercises sovereign jurisdiction” and then say that we are still keeping our claim on Sabah is gravely misleading.

The citation of areas over which the Philippines holds historic and legal rights as belonging to our national territory may be the only way of solidifying the Philippine position preparatory to negotiation. Any agreement later would not run counter to this provision, but would become a clarification.

Let history record, therefore, that today the Constitutional Commission of 1986, by a majority vote, is dropping the Philippine claim on Sabah without giving the Executive an opportunity to be heard on such a grave and important question.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Colayco	Concepcion
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MR. CONCEPCION: Madam President, may I explain my vote?

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Concepcion has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER CONCEPCION EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. CONCEPCION: I regret to say that I cannot vote affirmatively by reason of one word, that is, “exercises.” If that word “exercises” were substituted with “HAS jurisdiction,” there would be no problem. May I add a few more words. Actual exercise of sovereignty is essential to the acquisition of a territory but is not essential to the retention of the sovereignty over that territory. And that is why when the Philippines was occupied by the Japanese forces, we did not lose sovereignty. But to require that our claim to territories out-side the Archipelago be subject to the exercise of sovereignty not only weakens our claim. but defeats it.

My interpretation of the votes cast yesterday is that many of the Members of the Commission are not sure or are not prepared to render a judgment on whether or not we have a valid claim to Sabah, and that without passing upon the “mouth” of this issue, they would like to keep the door open to the assertion of our right to Sabah.

It is one thing to exercise sovereignty; another thing is to be sovereign. Once he acquires sovereign rights, he does not need actual exercise of those rights to retain sovereignty. To require the exercise of our sovereignty over territories not forming part of our archipelago, is to deal a deathblow upon our claim on Sabah.

My vote is no.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Davide

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, may I be allowed to explain my vote?

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Davide has three minutes to explain his vote.

COMMISSIONER DAVIDE EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. DAVIDE: Although the committee report is based on my resolution, I am constrained to vote no to the final draft for the following reasons: First, it casts a serious cloud of doubt on the validity of our claim over Sabah. Secondly, it diminishes our right to pursue or enforce our historic and rightful claim over Sabah; and, finally, Madam President, a vote of yes on the proposal would be an act of liberality on our part to accommodate not the Filipinos but some other people.

So, I vote no.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Foz Garcia	Gascon
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MR. GASCON: Madam President, I would like to explain my vote.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Gascon has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER GASCON EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. GASCON: Because I believe that as we continue the struggle for independence and self-determination, we must also recognize the will of other peoples of the world, particularly in Southeast Asia, for their own liberation, and for giving peace a chance, I vote yes in favor of the Article.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Guingona

MR. GUINGONA: Madam President, may I be allowed to explain my vote?

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Guingona has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER GUINGONA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. GUINGONA: Thank you.

I have stated before that the proposed provision on National Territory should be made as flexible as possible so as not to close the door to any claim which our government may wish to make in the future, claims that are foreseen such as the Sabah claim, as well as those that are unforeseen.

I have objected to the Bernas' amendment, first, because the provision, as amended, could be construed correctly or misconstrued to mean that we have abandoned our claim to Sabah even before a thorough, unbiased and searching evaluation has been made. There are many issues to be resolved, Madam President, and many questions remain unanswered, including the so-called self-determination by the Sabahans.

Second, we are presuming that our officials would be making, on our behalf, irresponsible and illegal claims which, I think, would contradict the statement made by the honorable proponent of the amendment that we should presume that our officials would perform their functions properly.

Third, because even the Malaysians themselves in the Manila Accord that I had the privilege to read in this hall accept our right to pursue our claim to Sabah.

Finally, may I invite attention to the fact that quite a number of those who voted in favor of the amendment of Commissioner Bernas, in effect, voted conditionally because they were relying on assurance which, in my opinion, would have no binding effect.

My vote is no.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Jamir	Lerum
Laurel	Maambong

MR. MAAMBONG: Madam President, may I be allowed to explain my vote?

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Maambong has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER MAAMBONG EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. MAAMBONG: Madam President, my concern at the beginning of the deliberation on this provision, as can be gleaned from the gist of my interpellations, is that I was afraid that the wording of the provision might create uncertainty as to what is really our territory. But after hearing the distinguished sponsor, Commissioner Nollado, answer the interpellations, I began to realize that the limits are really set forth right there in the provision on the National Territory. As a matter of fact, Commissioner Nollado said that there are other laws which can be referred to in the determination of the real boundaries of our territory; namely, Republic Act No. 3046, on the computation of the straight base line; the Treaty of Paris; Presidential Decree No. 1599, on the exclusive economic zone; and Presidential Decree No. 1596, on our Kalayaan claim.

In view of the definiteness of the answer of the distinguished sponsor, I am convinced that we indeed have a provision which specifies our territory in definite terms. As a matter of fact, the honorable Secretary-General was kind enough to give us a map on the development of the archipelagic doctrine, a recognized principle of international law.

And so, Madam President, with the addition of the phrase “over which the government exercises sovereign jurisdiction,” I am convinced that we have specified in actual terms our territory and its boundaries. For that, I vote yes to the Article.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Monsod	Nieva
Natividad	Nollado

COMMISSIONER NOLLEDO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. NOLLEDO: Madam President, taking into account; the well-taken observations of Commissioners Bacani and Concepcion, but considering my being the sponsor of the definition of our national territory and, at the same time, my being courteous to Commissioner Bernas, I deeply regret that I have to abstain.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Ople

MR. OPLE: Madam President, may I explain my vote.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Ople has three minutes to explain his vote.

COMMISSIONER OPLE EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. OPLE: Madam President, I vote yes and thank the Chair for the opportunity to recapitulate the reasons for doing so.

I opposed the first Bernas amendment by deletion of the whole Article on National Territory on a plea, at that time, that this was in the nature of a municipal law, and that, therefore, no matter what we said here would have no effect whatsoever on the perceptions of the international community concerning our national territory. I said then, and I would like to repeat it, it is good to have this National Territory provision in the Constitution. It is a sort of inventory of all that we hold in common, including the air space, the land, the waters, the seabed and the insular shelves, and I thought that I could support and I did support the Bernas amendment the second amendment which, in my opinion, improved upon the original formulation. It did not waive any just claim of the Philippines. It could have removed certain mirages and preconceptions, which I considered germs of potential conflict.

We are trying to write a Constitution of peace; a reconciliation with our brothers in Mindanao is, right now, almost on the top of our national agenda. I put a lot of weight on the opinions expressed by our three brother Muslims from Mindanao — Ambassador Abubakar, Commissioners Domocao Alonto and Lugum Uka — all of whom thought that this reformulation by the Bernas amendment of the National Territory would help accelerate the return of peace and enduring unity between Muslims and Filipinos in Mindanao. I regret some of the unkind tendencies of earlier remarks that attributed motives other than or less patriotic to those who voted for the Bernas amendment — I think that is foul. I think we are not accommodating any other nation. I think that the interest of Malaysia does not appeal to anyone here and to insinuate that this could have affected some of the thinking of those who voted is certainly unkind and unparliamentary. I think that, as it stands, this is a good definition of our national territory. It responds to our best conceptions of the territory which is indulged with sanctity for every Filipino — that territory is certainly under our sovereign jurisdiction. We may have claims to other parts of the world but these are in the nature of claims which are not foreclosed under international law and which cannot partake of the same sanctity for us Filipinos of that territory over which the Republic of the Philippines now exercises sovereign jurisdiction and which can claim from everyone of us a supreme sacrifice in the future.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Padilla

MR. PADILLA: May I explain my vote, Madam President?

THE PRESIDENT: The Commissioner has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER PADILLA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. PADILLA: I voted against the deletion of the Article on National Territory because I believe that the Constitution should have a provision on National Territory.

Madam President, the Article on National Territory in the 1973 Constitution included the phrase “historic right or legal title.” This was changed to the phrase “over which the government exercises sovereign jurisdiction.” As a consequence of that amendment, the provision in the 1973 Constitution which reads: “over which the Philippines has sovereignty or jurisdiction” was eliminated. In other words, Madam President, the phrase or the clause “over which the Philippines has sovereignty or jurisdiction” has practically been eliminated to give way to the phrase “over which the government exercises sovereign jurisdiction.” I cannot accept this amendment.

First, the word “Philippines” has been changed to “government.” Second, the words “the Philippines has” have been changed to “the government exercises” and the phrase “sovereignty or jurisdiction” to “sovereign jurisdiction.” “Sovereignty” and “jurisdiction” are not identical but the word “sovereignty” has been transformed into an adjective

to qualify “jurisdiction” Moreover, it would require under the present text that not only the Philippines has jurisdiction or sovereignty but it was changed to the actual exercise of sovereign jurisdiction by the government.

Madam President, I like the phrase introduced by Commissioner Azcuna regarding terrestrial, fluvial and aerial domains, but because of this change from “the Philippines has sovereignty or jurisdiction” to the clause “government exercises sovereign jurisdiction,” I regret I have to vote no.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Quesada	Rama
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MR. RAMA: Madam President, may I explain my vote?

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Rama has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER RAMA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. RAMA: I vote no. I believe in the validity of our claim to Sabah. I should know because I made a research on this matter in the 1960’s, and I would like to believe that the articles that I wrote in the Free Press led to the formal filing of the Philippine claim on Sabah.

One item that I did not mention the last time I stood here to document the validity of our claim was the fact that the British government invoked the document of the annexation order as basis for its claim of sovereignty over Sabah. I would like to inform the body that this annexation order was dated July 10, 1946, only six days after we declare our independence on July 4, 1946. Ironically, it was former Governor-General Francis Burton Harrison, as foreign affairs adviser to President Quirino, who called the attention of the Philippine government, stating that the annexation order passed by the Parliament of Britain was a surreptitious and a unilateral act, “a” political aggression” taking advantage of the prostrate situation of the Philippines which has just emerged from the rubble of a war. Therefore, former Governor-General Harrison urged the Philippine government to present to the United Nations a claim on Sabah because he repudiated and was scandalized by the acts of the British. But there is no perfect crime because when one examines the annexation order whereby the British government claimed sovereignty over Sabah, it was full of defects and the major defect was this: According to that annexation order, the British government claimed sovereignty over Sabah by virtue of the fact that it has assumed the rights of the British North Borneo Company. Our records will show that the British North Borneo Company never exercised public power nor sovereign rights since it was a private corporation. In other words, it could not have given to the British government what it did not have — Nemo dat quod non habet.

As to the argument that this may give rise to violence, I would also advert to the body the fact that the Philippine government insisted on a peaceful settlement and even invited Malaysia to take this question to the International Court of Justice. Precisely, we wanted a peaceful settlement, a civilized settlement among nations, but it was Malaysia who refused to go to that peaceful settlement and, therefore, courted trouble.

Therefore, Madam President, I am more concerned about the rights of the Filipinos than the rights of Malaysians.

I vote no.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Regalado	Rigos
Reyes de los	

REV. RIGOS: May I explain my vote, Madam President?

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Rigos has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER RIGOS EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REV. RIGOS: I vote no for the same reason given by Commissioner Concepcion.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Rodrigo

MR. RODRIGO: Madam President, may I explain my vote?

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Rodrigo has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER RODRIGO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. RODRIGO: Madam President, I vote yes because this Article defined very clearly what is rightly our territory and at the same time it saves me from violating the mandate: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's territory.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Romulo	Sarmiento
Rosales	

MR. SARMIENTO: Madam President, may I explain my vote?

THE PRESIDENT: The Commissioner has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER SARMIENTO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. SARMIENTO: Madam President, in the spirit of Asian solidarity and the fact that this provision on National Territory will not preclude this government and the future Governments from pursuing its claim over any territory, I vote yes.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Suarez

MR. SUAREZ: Madam President, may I explain my vote?

THE PRESIDENT: The Commissioner has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER SUAREZ EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. SUAREZ: I vote no because I certainly have no wish to waive and renounce our nation's historic rights and legal title. Secondly, I would not feel comfortable relying upon assurances that are not integrated in our Constitution. Ambiguities have no place in the supreme law of the land.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Sumulong	Tadeo
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MR. TADEO: Madam President, may I explain my vote?

THE PRESIDENT: The Commissioner has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER TADEO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. TADEO: I vote no, naniniwala kasi ako na makabuluhan at mahalaga na manatili ang “historic right” at “legal title.”

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Tan	Treñas
Tingson	Uka

COMMISSIONER UKA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. UKA: May I explain my vote, Madam President?

I vote yes because my understanding of the meaning of the Article on National Territory does not in any way preclude us from claiming any area or territory in the future, including the moon. This Article describes very clearly our present territory over which we have sovereignty. For if we include future territories, we will really have a very large territory. Let us cross the bridge when we come to it.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Villacorta

MR. VILLACORTA: May I explain my vote, Madam President?

THE PRESIDENT: The Commissioner has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER VILLACORTA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. VILLACORTA: Madam President, I vote yes after having consulted specialists in international law and diplomacy who assured me that the term “sovereign jurisdiction” is not an auto-limitation that precludes the Philippines from asserting her sovereignty over territories which she may either lose or claim in the future. Moreover, these experts informed me that the term “sovereign” shall always remind the users of the Constitution that where a claimed territory is not an empty piece of land but is inhabited by living persons, these persons’ will must be taken into account. Sovereignty resides only in the people and the people’s self-determination reigns supreme over historic right, legal title and other requirements of territorial claims. This principle is consistent with the evolving theme of our 1986 Constitution; namely, people’s rights and interest.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Villegas

SECOND ROLL CALL

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary-General will conduct a second call for those who have not registered their votes.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Abubakar		Brocka	
Alonto		Calderon	
Aquino	Yes	Colayco	
Azcuna	Yes	Foz	Yes
Bengzon	Yes	Garcia	Yes
Bennagen	Yes	Jamir	
Rosario Braid	Yes	Laurel	
Lerum	Yes	Romulo	
Monsod		Rosales	
Natividad	Yes	Sumulong	Yes
Nieva	Yes	Tan	
Quesada	Yes	Tingson	
Regalado	Yes	Treñas	
Reyes de los	Yes		

THE PRESIDENT: The results show 22 votes in favor, 11 against and 1 abstention.

Proposed Resolution No. 263 is lost on Third Reading for failure to meet the required majority vote of all the Members.

MR. BENGZON: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Bengzon is recognized.

MR. BENGZON: There are some of us who are not present and it would be fair if these proceedings on Third Reading continue until tomorrow in order that the votes of those absent may be obtained on nominal voting.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Davide is recognized.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, I object to the motion because that would be against the Rules.

THE PRESIDENT: The motion is out of order. We already had a voting; therefore, the only remedy open would be for a motion for reconsideration which we could consider at some future time.

MR. BENGZON: May I beg your pardon, Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: I said we already had a voting on the resolution. The resolution was lost and so, the only remedy open is for a motion for reconsideration which we can consider tomorrow.

MR. BENGZON: Madam President, may I say something.

THE PRESIDENT: Please proceed.

MR. BENGZON: Under the circumstances, I would like to move for the suspension of the Rules in order to obviate the filing of a motion for reconsideration tomorrow. So, may I move for a suspension of the Rules today, so that we could continue with the nominal voting tomorrow.

MR. GUINGONA: I object, Madam President.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, I object.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Guingona is recognized.

MR. GUINGONA: Madam President, I object because I am afraid this will create a bad precedent that everytime a vote is taken and it is lost, we will ask for a suspension of the Rules.

MR. BENGZON: In that case, as suggested by the Chair, the motion for reconsideration will be presented tomorrow.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, parliamentary inquiry.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Davide is recognized.

MR. DAVIDE: Before any motion for reconsideration is presented at the appropriate time, would the results of the voting today mean that the new Constitution will be without an Article on National Territory, unless the Committee will propose another?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, as it is now, there is no provision for the National Territory in the Constitution.

MR. DAVIDE: Thank you, Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there a motion for adjournment?

MR. GUINGONA: Madam President, may I move that the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles take it up again for presentation to the body?

THE PRESIDENT: Then, we will take that up when the motion for reconsideration is submitted.

MR. GUINGONA: Thank you, Madam President.

MR. MAAMBONG: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Maambong is recognized.

MR. MAAMBONG: Just a minor point of parliamentary inquiry.

THE PRESIDENT: Please proceed.

MR. MAAMBONG: We just want to find out exactly how many Members participated in the voting — just for the record, Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The result of the voting is: 22 affirmative; 11 negative; 1 abstention; so, that is 34.

MR. MAAMBONG: Thank you, Madam President.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I move that we adjourn the session until tomorrow at two-thirty in the afternoon

THE PRESIDENT: The session is adjourned until tomorrow at two-thirty in the afternoon

It was 7:14 p.m.

R.C.C. NO. 27 Thursday, July 10, 1986

R.C.C. NO. 27

Thursday, July 10, 1986

OPENING OF SESSION

At 3:10 p.m. the President the Honorable Cecilia Muñoz Palma opened the session.

THE PRESIDENT: The session is called to order.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE PRESIDENT: Everybody will please rise to sing the National Anthem.

Everybody rose to sing the National Anthem.

THE PRESIDENT: Everybody will please remain standing for the Prayer to be led by the Honorable Christine A. Tan.

Everybody remained standing for the Prayer.

PRAYER

SR. TAN: Good Father, we are pressured and sometimes tense. Show us how to keep the space in our heart where You will be able to show Yourself, and when You do, show Yourself beyond reason and law. Give us the simplicity to recognize You and to act accordingly. Amen.

ROLL CALL

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary-General will please call the roll.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Abubakar	Present	Davide	Present
Alonto	Present	Foz	Present
Aquino	Present	Garcia	Present
Azcuna	Present	Gascon	Present
Bacani	Present	Guingona	Present
Bengzon	Present	Jamir	Present
Bennagen	Present*	Laurel	Present
Bernas	Present	Lerum	Present
Rosario Braid	Present	Maambong	Present
Brocka	Absent	Monsod	Present
Calderon	Absent	Natividad	Present
Castro de	Present	Nieva	Present
Colayco	Present	Nolledo	Present
Concepcion	Present	Ople	Present*
Padilla	Present	Suarez	Present

Quesada	Present	Sumulong	Present
Rama	Present	Tadeo	Present
Regalado	Present	Tan	Present
Reyes de los	Present	Tingson	Absent
Rigos	Present	Treñas	Present
Rodrigo	Present	Uka	Present
Romulo	Present	Villacorta	Present
Rosales	Absent	Villegas	Present
Sarmiento	Present		

The President is present.

The roll call shows 42 Members responded to the call.

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I move that we dispense with the reading of the Journal of yesterday's session.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

APPROVAL OF JOURNAL

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I move that we approve the Journal of yesterday's session.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none: the motion is approved.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I move that we proceed to the Reference of Business.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none the motion is approved.

The Secretary-General will read the Reference of Business.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary-General read the following Proposed Resolutions on First Reading, Communications and Committee Reports the President making the corresponding references:

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS ON FIRST READING

Proposed Resolution No. 458, entitled:

RESOLUTION FIXING THE TERM OF THE INCUMBENT PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT.

Introduced by Hon. Ople, Maambong and Natividad.

To the Committee on Amendments and Transitory Provisions.

Proposed Resolution No. 459, entitled:

RESOLUTION STRENGTHENING THE SEPARATION BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE.

Introduced by Hon. Ople, Natividad, de los Reyes, Jr. and Maambong.

To the Committee on Constitutional Commissions and Agencies.

Proposed Resolution No. 460, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR REPRESENTATION OF THE OPPOSITION IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL COMMISSIONS.

Introduced by Hon. Maambong.

To the Committee on Constitutional Commissions and Agencies.

Proposed Resolution No. 461, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE ARTICLE ON TRANSITORY PROVISIONS OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION REPEALING ALL LAWS, DECREES, PROCLAMATIONS, ORDERS, INSTRUCTIONS, RULES OR REGULATIONS WHICH ARE INCONSISTENT WITH THE FREEDOM CONSTITUTION AND THE NEW CONSTITUTION.

Introduced by Hon. Davide, Jr.

To the Committee on Amendments and Transitory Provisions.

Proposed Resolution No. 462, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE ARTICLE ON THE TRANSITORY PROVISIONS OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION MANDATING THE OBJECTIVES AND PARAMETERS OF GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION.

Introduced by Hon. Davide, Jr.

To the Committee on Amendments and Transitory Provisions.

Proposed Resolution No. 463, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE ARTICLE ON THE TRANSITORY PROVISIONS OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION ON URGENT MEASURES ON NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION, RECOVERY AND RECONCILIATION TO WHICH THE FIRST NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MUST GIVE UTMOST PRIORITY.

Introduced by Hon. Davide, Jr.

To the Committee on Amendments and Transitory Provisions.

Proposed Resolution No. 464, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE ARTICLE ON THE TRANSITORY PROVISIONS OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISIONS FIXING LIMITATION TO THE PERIOD WITHIN WHICH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES MAY BE SEPARATED FROM THE SERVICE DUE TO THE REORGANIZATION OF THE GOVERNMENT, PROVIDING THE RULE ON SEPARATION AND MANDATING THE BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES OF SEPARATED EMPLOYEES.

Introduced by Hon. Davide, Jr.

To the Committee on Amendments and Transitory Provisions.

Proposed Resolution No. 465, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION ON THE REPEAL OF ALL LAWS WHICH ARE INIMICAL AND/OR TEND TO DEPRIVE THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS ETHNIC MINORITIES OVER ANCESTRAL LANDS.

Introduced by Hon. Bennagen.

To the Committee on Human Resources.

Proposed Resolution No. 466, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION FOR THE ADOPTION OF A MULTIPARTY SYSTEM.

Introduced by Hon. Garcia.

To the Committee on Constitutional Commissions and Agencies.

Proposed Resolution No. 467, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION PROHIBITING RELATIVES OF INCUMBENT LOCAL OFFICIALS WITHIN THE THIRD DEGREE OF CONSANGUINITY OR AFFINITY FROM RUNNING FOR THE POSITION TO BE VACATED BY THE INCUMBENT LOCAL OFFICIAL.

Introduced by Hon. Garcia.

To the Committee on Constitutional Commissions and Agencies.

Proposed Resolution No. 471, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING TO ADOPT IN THE CONSTITUTION THE RECOGNITION OF THE STATE OF THE RIGHT OF THE CITIZENRY TO SPORTS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

Introduced by Hon. Quesada, Sarmiento, Garcia, Suarez, Nollado and Brocka.

To the Committee on Human Resources.

Proposed Resolution No. 472, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO BROADEN THE SCOPE OF THE ARTICLE ON THE BILL OF RIGHTS TO INCORPORATE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS.

Introduced by Hon. Quesada, Sarmiento, Villacorta, Garcia, Maambong, Foz, Nieva, Bennagen, Aquino, Gascon, Tan, Brocka, Davide, Jr., Rosario Braid, Uka, Tadeo, Nollado and Suarez.

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights.

COMMUNICATIONS

Letter from Bulacan Social Action Movement signed by Mr. Tirso G. Robles, Jr., proposing a provision mandating the Legislature to enact laws on socialized medicine.

(Communication No. 161 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Letter from the Promotion of Church People's Rights signed by Fr. Rogelio Obja-an, OSA, Sr. Aurora R. Zambrano, ICM, and other members from the regions of Mindanao and Visayas and the national office, proposing the removal of foreign military bases, and suggesting provisions on land reform, national industrialization and human rights.

(Communication No. 162 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Steering Committee.

Communication from the Union United Churchmen of Northern Mindanao, suggesting that a portion of the income tax proceeds be set aside and administered by religious denominations for the purpose of helping the poor.

(Communication No. 163 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Letter from Fr. Bernard D. Verberne, MSC, of the Multi-Sectoral Alliance for Tribal Concerns in Agusan, requesting public hearings to give tribal Filipinos opportunity to express themselves on their right to land, their own culture and system of justice.

(Communication No. 164 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Human Resources.

Letter from Davao Inventors Society signed by Mr. Domnino S. Cagape, submitting a resolution petitioning the Commission for the creation of an Inventors Trust Fund.

(Communication No. 165 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Human Resources.

Letter from Bicol Multi-Sectoral Organization, Manila, signed by Sr. Gloria A. Martires, CFIC and 32 others, requesting the inclusion of provisions on environmental protection from pollution, deforestation and unscrupulous gathering of corals.

(Communication No. 166 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on the National Economy and Patrimony.

Letter from Aksyon Para sa Kapayapaan at Katarungan (AKKAPKA) signed by Ms. Esther Felipe of 224 Sto. Domingo St., Quezon City and 1,181 others, proposing a separate article on education, labor and employment, housing and agrarian and urban land reform.

(Communication No. 167 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Social Justice.

Letter from Center for Solidarity Tourism signed by Mr. Crescencio A. Yaco, enclosing a resolution requesting a provision for the development of alternative tourism or “backyard tourism.”

(Communication No. 168 — Constitutional Commission of 1986)

To the Committee on Citizenship, Bill of Rights, Political Rights and Obligations and Human Rights.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee Report No. 18, prepared by the Committee on the Judiciary, entitled:

ARTICLE ON THE JUDICIARY,

recommending its approval.

Sponsored by Hon. Concepcion, de los Reyes, Jr., Azcuna, Guingona, Colayco, Davide, Jr., Suarez, Regalado, Romulo, Treñas, Padilla, Sumulong, Jamir, Sarmiento, Uka, Natividad and Bengzon.

To the Steering Committee.

Committee Report No. 19 on Proposed Resolution No. 468, prepared by the Committee on Constitutional Commissions and Agencies, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION THE COMMON PROVISIONS ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL COMMISSIONS AND THE PROVISIONS ON THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION,

recommending its approval in substitution of Proposed Resolution Nos. 51, 54, 108, 117, 135, 139, 238, 240, 281, 356 and 357.

Sponsored by Hon. Foz, Rigos and Regalado.

To the Steering Committee.

Committee Report No. 20 on Proposed Resolution No. 469, prepared by the Committee on Constitutional Commissions and Agencies, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE PROVISIONS ON THE COMMISSION ON AUDIT IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION,

recommending its approval in substitution of Proposed Resolution Nos. 21 and 282.

Sponsored by Hon. Foz, Jamir and Monsod.

To the Steering Committee.

Committee Report No. 21 on Proposed Resolution No. 470, prepared by the Committee on Local Governments, entitled: ,

RESOLUTION PROPOSING TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION AN ARTICLE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS,

recommending its approval in substitution of Proposed Resolution Nos. 182, 329 and 361.

Sponsored by Hon. Nollado, Calderon, Tingson, Rosales, Alonto, de Castro, Bennagen, Rigos, Regalado, Jamir and Ople.

To the Steering Committee.

Committee Report No. 22, prepared by the Committee on the Legislative, entitled:

ARTICLE ON THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY,

recommending its approval.

Sponsored by Hon. Davide, Jr., Azcuna, Abubakar, Alonto, Aquino, Calderon, Concepcion, de los Reyes, Jr., Garcia, Guingona, Jamir, Lerum, Rodrigo, Sumulong and Treñas.

Cosponsored by Hon. Villacorta, Romulo, Regalado Foz, Gascon, Tingson, Monsod, Rigos and Sarmiento.

To the Steering Committee.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I move that we consider the proposal on the Article on National Territory, and I ask that Commissioner Bengzon be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Bengzon is recognized.

RECONSIDERATION OF VOTE ON THIRD READING ON PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 263
(Article on National Territory)

MR. BENGZON: Madam President, I move for a reconsideration of the vote on Third Reading that took place last night on the Article on National Territory.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection to the motion of Commissioner Bengzon that the voting on Third Reading which was held last night be reconsidered? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

SUSPENSION OF THE RULES

MR. BENGZON: Madam President, I also move for the suspension of the Rules in order to bring back the status of the Article on National Territory to Second Reading for the sole purpose of accommodating one amendment to change a phrase which presently reads: "all the other territories over which the government exercises sovereign jurisdiction" into the phrase "all other territories over which the PHILIPPINES HAS SOVEREIGNTY OR jurisdiction."

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I ask that Commissioner Bernas be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Bernas is recognized.

FR. BERNAS: Madam President, pursuant to the motion for the suspension of the Rules for the very exclusive purpose of inserting a change in the controversial phrase, I would like to propose that present amendment. We have in the text which was voted on yesterday the phrase starting on the third line which reads "and all the other territories over which the government exercises sovereignty or jurisdiction." The changes proposed would be: in place of the word "government," we put PHILIPPINES; in place of the word "exercises," we put HAS; in place of the word "sovereign," we put SOVEREIGNTY, and then we add OR. Thus, the amended phrase would read: "and all the other territories over which the PHILIPPINES has SOVEREIGNTY OR jurisdiction." And the explanation, if I may be allowed, is; on the change from "government" to PHILIPPINES, this is a recognition of the recommendation made by Commissioner Padilla that instead of "government" we use PHILIPPINES; on the change from "exercises" to HAS, this is in recognition of the sole objection of Commissioner Concepcion to this Article. The word HAS is of a broader application than "exercises." As explained by Commissioner Concepcion yesterday, one can continue to have jurisdiction over a territory even if it is physically wrested from him, whereas, in order to acquire a territory, one must exercise jurisdiction over it. But one does not lose a territory simply because he has lost the physical exercise of jurisdiction. One still continues to have jurisdiction even if he has lost effective exercise. The example given yesterday was that the jurisdiction over the Philippines when Japan was exercising control over the Philippines was not lost.

So, with these, may I repeat, the phrase will now be: "and all the other territories over which the PHILIPPINES HAS SOVEREIGNTY OR jurisdiction."

THE PRESIDENT: So, the parliamentary situation right now is, first of all, the suspension of the Rules in order to allow this proposed amendment.

MR. NOLLEDO: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Is there any objection? May I please proceed first?

MR. NOLLEDO: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection for the suspension of the Rules for the sole purpose stated by Commissioner Bernas? (Silence) The Rules then are suspended for this particular purpose and the remarks of Commissioner Bernas are taken into account.

MR. NOLLEDO: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Nolleto is recognized.

MR. NOLLEDO: Thank you.

On behalf of the Committee on Preamble, National Territory, and Declaration of Principles, I would like to manifest that the members of the Committee gladly accept the amendments of Commissioner Bernas and we commend his high sense of statesmanship.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Davide is recognized.

MR. DAVIDE: Will the distinguished sponsor of the amendment yield to some clarificatory questions?

THE PRESIDENT: What does Commissioner Bernas say?

FR. BERNAS: Very willingly.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, under the new proposed amendment, would “SOVEREIGNTY” mean past and present sovereignty?

THE PRESIDENT: The question is addressed to Commissioner Bernas.

MR. DAVIDE: Yes. Would the word “SOVEREIGNTY” in the new proposed amendment mean either past sovereignty or present sovereignty?

FR. BERNAS: It certainly would mean present sovereignty.

MR. DAVIDE: As well as past sovereignty?

FR. BERNAS: It would not refer to past sovereignty because if sovereignty is past that means it has been lost.

MR. DAVIDE: In other words, the import is just the same as the original proposal?

FR. BERNAS: No, the change in import is in the change of the word “exercises” to HAS.

MR. DAVIDE: So, “HAS SOVEREIGNTY OR jurisdiction”?

FR. BERNAS: Yes.

MR. DAVIDE: Nevertheless, the meaning again of “HAS SOVEREIGNTY” would only be present sovereignty, not past sovereignty?

FR. BERNAS: Yes, that would be true because if, as I said, sovereignty is past, it is lost; it is gone; one does not have it.

MR. DAVIDE: In other words, I would repeat, the import of the new proposal is just the same as the original proposal?

FR. BERNAS: No, I would say, it is not because the difference is in the word HAS. The original proposal could be understood to mean that if one is unable physically to exercise control, then he loses the territory; whereas, in the new proposal, even if one is unable to exercise the control, he continues to have the sovereignty. Let me give an example.

MR. DAVIDE: Would the proponent give an example on the matter of Sabah?

FR. BERNAS: Let me choose my own example.

MR. DAVIDE: Can the example not be extended to Sabah?

FR. BERNAS: Let me first give my own example since I am the one giving the example.

MR. DAVIDE: Yes. We will accommodate that, Madam President.

FR. BERNAS: Let us take the example of Batanes. We have jurisdiction over Batanes. We are actually and physically exercising sovereignty and jurisdiction over Batanes. Let us suppose that tomorrow, a very powerful force overcomes our government in Batanes and deprives us of control over that area. We continue to have jurisdiction over it even if the invading force may be able to impose its laws on it by force. We have jurisdiction, but temporarily we are unable to exercise jurisdiction.

MR. DAVIDE: Since the meat of the original proposal and the present proposal would precisely be on the issue of Sabah . . .

FR. BERNAS: On-the issue of Sabah now, Sabah would be included, if it can be proven that we have sovereignty or jurisdiction.

MR. DAVIDE: So, our historic right or legal title to Sabah would now be dropped.

FR. BERNAS: No, it is not being dropped. It is being left unsettled by us because we are not a judicial body capable of passing judgment on a factual issue.

MR. DAVIDE: In other words, to be very clear about it, under the present wording, we have not foreclosed any claim over Sabah because we have historic title over it?

FR. BERNAS: We have not foreclosed any claim to Sabah, period. Neither are we saying that we have.

MR. DAVIDE: That becomes more confusing.

I thank the proponent and thank you, Madam President.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: There are no more interpellators.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner de Castro is recognized.

MR. DE CASTRO: May the Honorable Bernas yield to a few questions?

FR. BERNAS: Very gladly.

MR. DE CASTRO: As I get it, we have not foreclosed, as the proponent has said, our claim over Sabah with this phrase "the PHILIPPINES HAS SOVEREIGNTY OR jurisdiction." Am I correct?

FR. BERNAS: We are not making any claim over Sabah. We are not dropping any claim. This prescinds any claim.

MR. DE CASTRO: So, we are not making any claim nor dropping any claim?

FR. BERNAS: No, we are prescinding from any uncertain claim.

MR. DE CASTRO: We are, therefore, losing our historic right or legal title over Sabah. Am I correct?

FR. BERNAS: In my humble opinion, the Gentleman is not correct.

MR. DE CASTRO: Why?

FR. BERNAS: Because we can always claim it under international law. There are accepted modes of establishing a claim over a territory under international law and I am sure that our Constitution will uphold the generally accepted principles of international law.

MR. DE CASTRO: In short, with this proposal on the Article on National Territory, as well as the sponsor's amendment now, we are dropping our claim over Sabah and we leave it to international law to settle our claim on it. Am I correct?

FR. BERNAS: My position is: We are not interfering with whatever the executive department might do about the claim over Sabah.

MR. DE CASTRO: May I know the reason why we dropped the words "historic right or legal title" contained in the Article on National Territory of the 1973 Constitution?

FR. BERNAS: If I will be allowed to repeat what we have repeated over and over again in this session hall, I will repeat the reasons.

MR. DE CASTRO: I ask this because before this amendment, when the phrase was still "government exercises sovereign jurisdiction," the sponsor insisted that we are not dropping our claim over Sabah with that phrase. That is why I am now asking why we are dropping our claim per the sponsor's explanation.

FR. BERNAS: I already said we are not dropping any claim.

MR. DE CASTRO: The sponsor is not dropping any claim but he leaves this claim to be settled under international law and not state it on the provision on National Territory, am I correct?

FR. BERNAS: I said I am prescinding from any claim which may have been made by the government of the Philippines. It is not a question of dropping or continuing; it is a question of prescinding — P-R-E-S-C-I-N-D-I-N-G.

MR. DE CASTRO: Madam President, we are playing with words here. Frankly and forthrightly, why do we not state that we are claiming or we are abandoning our claim? Why play with words?

Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Abubakar is recognized.

MR. ABUBAKAR: I just want to ask one simple question that requires a simple answer. Has the Philippines ever acquired jurisdiction over Sabah? I mean, within the context of the term "jurisdiction."

FR. BERNAS: We are not answering that question here; we are prescinding from that question here.

MR. ABUBAKAR: But we spoke of jurisdiction. Why are we afraid to face the issue and not answer the question if ever we have acquired jurisdiction over Sabah?

FR. BERNAS: Because I am, not in a position to answer the factual issues of the case. The complicated issues of the case are factual. We have not been given the documents for us to examine. How can we make a judgment over that?

We believe that if we have to make a judgment, it must be a judgment with due process. And due process is a process which decides only after hearing. We have not heard; we have not seen the evidence.

MR. ABUBAKAR: In other words, from the sponsor's reply and from his knowledge and whatever evidence we heard, he does not put in the Record that the Philippines has acquired jurisdiction over Sabah?

FR. BERNAS: We are not.

MR. ABUBAKAR: Thank you.

MR. GUINGONA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Guingona is recognized.

MR. GUINGONA: The honorable Members of this Commission will perhaps recall that last night, I objected to the motion for reconsideration and made a manifestation that today I would make a motion to recommit the Article on National Territory to the committee concerned. But this morning, after consultation, I agreed not to object and not to present any motion. However, may I say that I find it unfortunate that the question regarding sovereignty has to be raised. I had the occasion to read the statement of Messrs. Kaplan and Katzenbach wherein, speaking of sovereignty, they said:

There is no more confusing concept in international law than sovereignty. It has been viewed indiscriminately in a number of different meanings by decision-makers and scholars alike.

I regret that we have to distinguish sovereignty, whether it is past, present or future, because 200 years from now, if the Philippines were to acquire a territory and if we follow the interpretation given here that sovereignty refers to present sovereignty, then it would appear we cannot claim sovereignty over the territory that we will acquire 200 years from now because the wording here is "HAS SOVEREIGNTY," and it only refers to the present; it is used in the present tense.

So, I regret very much that this has to be opened. I had hoped that we would let the word "SOVEREIGNTY" remain as it is without the necessity of further interpretation or construction.

Thank you, Madam President.

FR. BERNAS: Madam President, just a word of reply, please.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, Commissioner Bernas may do so.

FR. BERNAS: In my reply to the interpellation of Commissioner Davide, the only thing I excluded was past sovereignty. I did not exclude whatever we might have in the future; I did not exclude whatever we may have in the future.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: The amendment has been sufficiently debated and none has registered to further interpellate. So, I move that we take a vote on the amendment of Commissioner Bernas.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

We will now proceed to take a vote on the amendment of Commissioner Bernas.

FR. BERNAS: The phrase to be added in substitution will be: "all the other territories over which the PHILIPPINES HAS SOVEREIGNTY OR jurisdiction."

VOTING

THE PRESIDENT: Those in favor of the proposed amendment, please raise their hand. *(Several Members raised their hand.)*

Those against the proposed amendment, please raise their hand. *(Few Members raised their hand.)*

The results show 38 votes in favor of the amendment and 2 against; the amendment is, therefore, approved.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I move that we close the period of amendments on the Article on National Territory.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I move that we proceed to the voting on Third Reading on the Article on National Territory.

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, Commissioner Davide is recognized.

MR. DAVIDE: I think a voting on Third Reading will not be proper at this time because we have just reopened the period of amendments to accommodate one amendment. So, we must first have a voting on Second Reading, not on Third Reading.

THE PRESIDENT: What we have just finished is the voting on the proposed amendment of Commissioner Bernas.

APPROVAL OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 263 ON SECOND READING (Article on National Territory)

MR. RAMA: Madam President, to accommodate Commissioner Davide, I move that we approve on Second Reading the Article on National Territory, as amended.

THE PRESIDENT. Those in favor of the approval on Second Reading of the whole Article on National Territory, as amended, please raise their hand. *(Several Members raised their hand.)*

Those against, please raise their hand. *(Few Members raised their hand.)*

The results show 39 votes in favor, 3 against and no abstention; the Article on National Territory, as amended, is approved on Second Reading.

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Bengzon be recognized..

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Bengzon is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF THE RULES

MR. BENGZON: Madam President, I move for the suspension of the Rules so that we can vote on Third Reading on the Article on National Territory.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

NOMINAL VOTING ON PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 263 ON THIRD READING (Article on National Territory)

MR. RAMA: Madam .President, I move that we vote on Third Reading on Proposed Resolution No. 263.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Printed copies of Proposed Resolution No. 263 were distributed on July 8, 1986, pursuant to Section 27, Rule VI of the Rules of the Constitutional Commission.

Voting on the proposed resolution on Third Reading is, therefore, in order.

The Secretary-General will read the title of the proposed resolution.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL: Proposed Resolution No. 263, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION AN ARTICLE ON NATIONAL TERRITORY.

FIRST ROLL CALL

THE PRESIDENT: The body will now vote on this resolution and the Secretary-General will call the roll.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Abubakar	Yes	Bennagen	Yes
Alonto	Yes	Bernas	Yes
Aquino	Yes	Rosario Braid	Yes
Azcuna	Yes	Brocka	
Bacani	Yes	Calderon	
Bengzon	Yes	Castro de	

MR. DE CASTRO: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner de Castro is recognized.

MR. DE CASTRO: May I explain my vote?

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner de Castro has three minutes to explain his vote.

COMMISSIONER DE CASTRO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. DE CASTRO: Madam President, I vote no, because whatever play of words we have in this Article on National Territory, our country would, in effect, drop its claim to Sabah and to any territory it may want to claim in the future, as stated by Commissioner Guingona. We should also have given the Executive the opportunity to have a hand in so delicate and important an issue like our claim to Sabah. My remarks last night stand.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Colayco	Yes	Davide
Concepcion	Yes	

MR. DAVIDE: Madam President, may I be allowed to explain my vote very briefly.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Davide has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER DAVIDE EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. DAVIDE. My vote is no, because I am unable to perceive the difference between the original and modified Bernas' amendment. Both amount to the same thing.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, reading:

Foz	Yes	Gascon	Yes
Garcia	Yes	Guingona	

MR. GUINGONA: Madam President, may I be allowed to explain my vote.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Guingona has three minutes.

COMMISSIONER GUINGONA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

MR. GUINGONA: Thank you, Madam President.

First of all, I wish to thank Commissioner Bernas for partially accepting my suggestion of changing "sovereign jurisdiction" to "sovereignty or jurisdiction" or "title." I was hoping that even with the non-acceptance of the third word, I might be able to vote in favor, but because of the manifestation made during the interpellations by the honorable Commissioner Davide, notwithstanding my view that the interpretation is not binding, I am constrained to vote no.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL *reading*:

Jamir	Yes	Rigos	Yes
Laurel	Yes	Rodrigo	Yes
Lerum	Yes	Romulo	Yes
Maambong	Yes	Rosales	
Monsod	Yes	Sarmiento	Yes
Natividad	Yes	Suarez	Yes
Nieva	Yes	Sumulong	Yes
Nolledo	Yes	Tadeo	Yes
Ople	Yes	Tan	Yes
Padilla	Yes	Tingson	
Muñoz Palma		Treñas	Yes
Quesada	Yes	Uka	Yes
Rama	Yes	Villacorta	Yes
Regalado	Yes	Villegas	Yes
Reyes de los	Yes		

SECOND ROLL CALL

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary-General will conduct a second call for those who have not registered their votes.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Brocka	Rosales
Calderon	Tingson
Muñoz Palma	

APPROVAL OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 263 ON THIRD READING (Article on National Territory)

THE PRESIDENT: The results show 39 votes in favor, 4 against and no abstention.

Proposed Resolution No. 263 is approved on Third Reading. *

MR. RAMA: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: The Floor Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 7 ON THIRD READING (Article on Citizenship)

MR. RAMA: I move that we vote on Third Reading on Proposed Resolution No. 7.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Printed copies of Proposed Resolution No. 7 were distributed on July 9, 1986 pursuant to Section 27, Rule VI of the Rules of the Constitutional Commission.

Voting on the proposed resolution is, therefore, in order.

The Secretary-General will read the title of the proposed resolution.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL: Proposed Resolution No. 7, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION AN ARTICLE ON CITIZENSHIP.

FIRST ROLL CALL

THE PRESIDENT: The body will now vote on this proposed resolution and the Secretary-General will call the roll.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Abubakar	Yes	Castro de	Yes
Alonto	Yes	Colayco	Yes
Aquino	Yes	Concepcion	No
Azcuna	Yes	Davide	Yes
Bacani	Yes	Foz	
Bengzon	Yes	Garcia	Yes
Bennagen	Yes	Gascon	Yes
Bernas	Yes	Guingona	No
Rosario Braid	Yes	Jamir	Yes
Brocka		Laurel	Yes
Calderon		Lerum	
Maambong	Yes	Rodrigo	Yes
Monsod	Yes	Romulo	Yes
Natividad	Yes	Rosales	
Nieva	Yes	Sarmiento	Yes
Nolledo	Yes	Suarez	No
Ople	Yes	Sumulong	Yes
Padilla	No	Tadeo	No
Muñoz Palma		Tan	Yes
Quesada	Yes	Tingson	
Rama	Yes	Treñas	Yes
Regalado	Yes	Uka	Yes
Reyes de los	Yes	Villacorta	Yes
Rigos	Yes	Villegas	Yes

SECOND ROLL CALL

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary-General will conduct a second call for those who have not registered their votes.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

Brocka	Muñoz Palma
Calderon	Rosales
Foz	Tingson
Lerum	

APPROVAL OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 7 ON THIRD READING
(Article on Citizenship)

THE PRESIDENT: The results show 36 votes in favor, 5 against and no abstention.

Proposed Resolution No. 7 is approved on Third Reading. *

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE PRESIDENT: The session is suspended.

It was 4:02 p. m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:06 p.m., the session was resumed with the Honorable Adolfo S. Azcuna, presiding.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): The session is resumed.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): The honorable Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer, I ask that the Chairman of the Steering Committee be recognized.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): Commissioner Bengzon is recognized.

MR. BENGZON: It is a pleasant surprise, Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): Commissioner Bengzon may proceed.

MR. BENGZON: May I call the attention of the Members of this Commission that in the Order of Business yesterday, Committee Report No. 18, the draft Article on the Judiciary, was included and a separate sheet was distributed to each Commissioner making the committee report as an additional Reference of Business. It is supposed to have been included in the Calendar of Business so that it could be taken up today, but due to an oversight of the Bills and Index Division, Committee Report No. 18 was not included in the Business for the Day. For this reason, since the Rules has been followed and we agreed informally yesterday that this will be taken up for sponsorship, interpellations and, possibly, for amendments, and considering further that the Chairman and the members of the Committee on the Judiciary are ready to sponsor this committee report, I move that we consider Committee Report No. 18 as part of the Business for the Day so that we can proceed to its consideration.

A MEMBER: I second the motion.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): It has been moved and seconded that Committee Report No. 18 on the Judiciary be taken up on Second Reading as part of the Business for the Day.

Is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

CONSIDERATION OF COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 18
(Article on the Judiciary)

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

MR. BENGZON: Mr. Presiding Officer, I move that we consider Committee Report No. 18 on Proposed Resolution Nos. 14, 18, 52, 75, 78, 112, 115, 140, 143, 146, 147, 153, 204, 236, 259, 275, 292 and 313 as reported out by the Committee on the Judiciary.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): Is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Consideration of Committee Report No. 18 is now in order. With the permission of the body, the Secretary- General will read only the title of the committee report without prejudice to inserting in the Record the whole text thereof.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL: Committee Report No. 18, entitled:

ARTICLE ON THE JUDICIARY.

(The following is the whole text of the draft Article on the Judiciary per C.R. No. 18.)

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 18

The Committee on the Judiciary to which were referred the following proposed resolutions:

Proposed Resolution No. 14, introduced by Hon. de los Reyes, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO RETAIN THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE X, SECTION 11 (1) OF THE 1973 CONSTITUTION AND TO MAKE THE SAME MANDATORY AND APPLICABLE TO CASES PENDING BEFORE THE COURTS,

Proposed Resolution No. 18, introduced by Hon. Azcuna, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE FOR A CONSTITUTIONAL WRIT OF *AMPARO*,

Proposed Resolution No. 52, introduced by Hon. Guingona, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION ARTICLES ON THE JUDICIARY TO SAFEGUARD AND ENHANCE THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE SUPREME COURT,

Proposed Resolution No. 75, introduced by Hon. Colayco, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION PROHIBITING THE DESIGNATION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SUPREME COURT AND OF THE OTHER COURTS CREATED BY LAW TO PERFORM NON JUDICIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES OR AGENCIES EXCEPT WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE MAJORITY VOTE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Proposed Resolution No. 78, introduced by Hon. Davide, entitled:

PROVIDING FOR THE MANNER OF APPOINTMENT TO THE SUPREME COURT AND OTHER COURTS TO ENSURE THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY,

Proposed Resolution No. 112, introduced by Hon. de los Reyes, entitled:

RESOLUTION REMOVING FROM THE SUPREME COURT ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERVISION OVER ALL COURTS AND PERSONNEL THEREOF AND VESTING THE SAME IN A JUDICIAL COMMISSION AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,

Proposed Resolution No. 115, introduced by Hon. Davide, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCORPORATE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION A PROVISION PROHIBITING A GENERAL REVAMP OF THE JUDICIARY BY LEGISLATION,

Proposed Resolution No. 140, introduced by Hon. Suarez entitled:

RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE SECURITY OF TENURE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE JUDICIARY,

Proposed Resolution No. 143, introduced by Hon. Davide, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROHIBITING COURTS FROM ISSUING MINUTE RESOLUTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION NINE OF ARTICLE TEN OF THE 1973 CONSTITUTION,

Proposed Resolution No. 146, introduced by Hon. Regalado, entitled:

RESOLUTION ON THE SPECIFICITY AND REQUISITES FOR THE EXERCISE OF THE POWER OF THE SUPREME COURT TO DECLARE THE UNCONSTITUTIONALITY OR INVALIDITY OF TREATIES, EXECUTIVE AGREEMENTS AND LAWS,

Proposed Resolution No. 147, introduced by Hon. Regalado, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROVIDING F

OR THE REQUISITES FOR THE IMPOSITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY IN CRIMINAL CASES BY THE SUPREME COURT,

Proposed Resolution No. 153, introduced by Hon. Romulo, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING THE CREATION OF A JUDICIAL COUNCIL,

Proposed Resolution No. 204, introduced by Hon. Colayco, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SUPREME COURT, THE INTERMEDIATE APPELLATE COURT, AND OF THE OTHER COURTS ESTABLISHED BY LAW, INCLUDING THE SANDIGANBAYAN,

Proposed Resolution No. 236, introduced by Hon Romulo, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROPOSING A PROVISION IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION AUTHORIZING THE CHIEF JUSTICE TO ADDRESS THE LEGISLATURE,

Proposed Resolution No. 259, introduced by Hon. Treñas, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCLUDE IN THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION A PROVISION REQUIRING APPROVAL BY THE SUPREME COURT OF RULES CONCERNING PLEADING, PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE PROMULGATED BY QUASI-JUDICIAL BODIES BEFORE THESE RULES CAN BECOME EFFECTIVE,

Proposed Resolution No. 275, introduced by Hon. Treñas, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO INCLUDE IN THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION SECTION ELEVEN, PARAGRAPH (1), ARTICLE X OF THE 1973 CONSTITUTION WITH MODIFICATIONS AND WITH AN ADDITIONAL PARAGRAPH TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN THE COMPULSORY CHARACTER OF SAID PROVISION,

Proposed Resolution No. 292, introduced by Hon. Padilla, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR APPEAL FROM JUDGMENT OF ACQUITTAL WHEN IT IS MANIFESTLY AGAINST THE EVIDENCE AND IS CONTRARY TO LAW,

Proposed Resolution-No. 313, introduced by Hon. Suarez, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE FOR AN ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT TO INSURE ITS INDEPENDENCE,

has considered the foregoing proposed resolutions and has the honor to report them back to the Constitutional Commission of 1986 with the recommendation that all of the listed proposed resolutions be approved as revised, amended or adopted by the Committee and as hereinafter described.

Each proposed resolution accepted by the Committee was not considered and amended on a line-by-line basis. Rather, the Committee adopted the basic concept or substance of the proposed resolutions and embodied it in the attached draft of the Article on the Judiciary. Thus, in this report, we indicated hereunder in which section of the proposed Article on the Judiciary a particular proposed resolution is reflected.

Proposed Resolution	Section Embodied In
No. 14 (de los Reyes)	Sec. 14
No. 18 (Azcuna)	Sec. 7 (5)
No. 52 (Guingona)	Sec. 13 & 15
No. 75 (Colayco)	Sec. 8
No. 78 (Davide)	Sec. 6
No. 112 (de los Reyes)	Sec. 6
No. 115 (Davide)	Sec. 2, 2nd Para.
No. 140(Suarez)	Sec. 2, 2nd Para.
No. 143 (Davide)	Sec. 12, 2nd Para.
Nos 146 & 147 (Regalado)	Sec. 3 (2)
No. 153(Romulo)	Sec. 6
No. 204 (Colayco)	Sec. 6
No. 236 (Romulo)	Sec. 16
No. 259 (Treñas)	Sec. 7 (5)
No. 275 (Treñas)	Sec. 14
No. 292 (Padilla)	Sec. 12, 3rd Para.
No. 313 (Suarez)	Sec. 15

We have recommended to the Committee on Transitory Provisions the following:

“Section _____. The Supreme Court shall adopt for itself and the lower courts a systematic plan to expedite the decision or resolution of cases or matters filed with the Supreme Court or the lower courts prior to the effectivity of this Constitution.”

“Section _____. All courts existing at the time of the ratification of this constitution shall continue and exercise their jurisdiction, until otherwise provided by law in accordance with this constitution, and all cases pending in said courts shall be heard, tried, and determined under the laws then in force. The provisions of the existing rules of court

not inconsistent with this constitution shall remain operative unless amended, modified, or repealed by the Supreme Court or the National Assembly.”

The Committee hereby gratefully acknowledges the valuable contribution of the various resource persons who either appeared in person or submitted position papers.

(Sgd.) Roberto R. Concepcion
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary

ARTICLE _____
THE JUDICIARY

SECTION 1. The judicial power shall be vested in one Supreme Court and in such lower courts as may be established by law.

Judicial power includes the duty of courts of justice to settle actual controversies involving rights which are legally demandable and enforceable and to determine whether or not there has been a grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction on the part of any branch or instrumentality of the government.

SECTION 2. The National Assembly shall have the power to define, prescribe, and apportion the jurisdiction of the various courts but may not deprive the Supreme Court of its jurisdiction over cases enumerated in Section 7 hereof.

No law shall be passed reorganizing the judiciary when it undermines security of tenure.

SECTION 3. (1) The Supreme Court shall be composed of a Chief Justice and ten Associate Justices. It may sit en banc or in two divisions.

(2) All cases involving the constitutionality of a treaty, international or executive agreement, or law shall be heard and decided by the Supreme Court en banc, and no treaty, international or executive agreement, or law may be declared unconstitutional without the concurrence of a majority plus one of the members who actually participated when the case was submitted for decision. The same number of votes shall be required for the imposition of the death penalty.

(3) All other cases including those involving the application or operation of presidential decrees, proclamations, orders, instructions, ordinances and other regulations which under the rules of court are required to be heard *en banc* shall be decided with the concurrence of a majority of the members who actually participated when the case was submitted for decision.

(4) Cases heard by a division shall be decided with the concurrence of a majority of the members who actually participated when the case was submitted for decision but if such required number is not obtained, the case shall be decided en banc: Provided, that no doctrine or principle of law laid down by the court in a decision rendered en banc or in division may be modified or reversed except by the court sitting *en banc*.

SECTION 4. (1) No person shall be appointed member of the Supreme Court unless he is a natural-born citizen of the Philippines, at least forty years of age, and has for fifteen years or more been a judge of a lower court or engaged in the practice of law in the Philippines.

(2) The National Assembly shall prescribe the qualifications of judges of lower courts, but no person may be appointed judge thereof unless he is a natural-born citizen of the Philippines and a member of the Philippine Bar.

SECTION 5. The Members of the Supreme Court and judges of lower courts shall be appointed by the President from a list of at least three nominees prepared by a Judicial and Bar Council for every vacancy. Such appointments need no confirmation.

SECTION 6. (1) A Judicial and Bar Council is hereby created under the supervision of the Supreme Court composed of the

Chief as ex-officio Chairman, the Minister of Justice and a representative of the National Assembly as *ex-officio* members, a representative of the integrated bar of the Philippines, a professor of law, a retired member of the Supreme Court, and a representative of the private sector.

(2) The regular members of the Council shall be appointed by the President for a term of four years. Of the members first appointed, the representative of the integrated bar of the Philippines shall serve for four years, the professor of law for three years, the retired justice for two years, and the representative of the private sector for one year.

(3) The Clerk of the Supreme Court shall be the Secretary ex-officio and shall keep a record of the proceedings of the Council.

(4) The regular members of the Council shall receive such emoluments, and the ex-officio members shall receive such allowances, as may be determined by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court shall provide in its annual budget the appropriations for the Council.

(5) The Council shall have the principal function of recommending appointee to the judiciary. It may exercise such other functions and duties as the Supreme Court may assign to it.

SECTION 7. The Supreme Court shall have the following powers:

(1) Exercise original jurisdiction over cases affecting ambassadors other public ministers and consuls, and over petitions for *certiorari*, *prohibition*, *mandamus*, *quo warranto*, and *habeas corpus*.

(2) Review, revise, reverse, modify, or affirm on appeal or certiorari as the law or the rules of court may provide, final judgments and decrees of lower courts in —

(a) All cases in which the constitutionality or validity of any treaty, international or executive agreement, law, ordinance, executive order, proclamation, or regulation is in question.

(b) All cases involving the legality of any tax, impost, assessment, or toll, or any penalty imposed in relation thereto.

(c) All cases in which the jurisdiction of any lower court is in issue.

(d) All criminal cases in which the penalty imposed is death or life imprisonment.

(e) All cases in which only an error or question of law is involved.

(3) Assign temporarily judges of lower courts to other stations public interest may require. Such temporary assignment shall not last longer than six months without the consent of the judge concerned.

(4) Order a change of venue or place of trial to avoid a miscarriage of justice.

(5) Promulgate rules concerning the protection and enforcement of constitutional rights, pleading, practice, and procedure in all courts, the admission to the practice of law, the integrated bar, and legal assistance to the underprivileged. The National Assembly may repeal, alter, or supplement the said rules with the advice and

concurrence of the Supreme Court. Such rules shall provide a simplified and inexpensive procedure for the speedy disposition of cases, shall be uniform for all courts of the same grade, and shall not diminish, increase, or modify substantive rights. Rules of procedure of special courts and quasi-judicial bodies shall take effect upon approval by the Supreme Court.

(6) Appoint all officials and employees of the judiciary in accordance with the Civil Service Law.

SECTION 8. The Members of the Supreme Court and of other courts established by law shall not be designated to any agency performing quasi-judicial and/or administrative functions.

SECTION 9. The Supreme Court shall have administrative supervision over all courts and the personnel thereof.

SECTION 10. The Members of the Supreme Court and judges of lower courts shall hold office during good behavior until they reach the age of seventy years or become incapacitated to discharge the duties of their office. The Supreme Court en banc shall have the power to discipline judges of lower courts, or order their dismissal by the vote of a majority plus one of the Members who actually participated when the matter was submitted for resolution.

SECTION 11. The conclusions of the Supreme Court in any case submitted to it for decision en banc or in division shall be reached in consultation before the case is assigned to a Member for the writing of the opinion of the court. A certification to this effect signed by the Chief Justice shall be issued and a copy thereof attached to the record of the case and served upon the parties. Any Member dissenting or abstaining from a decision shall state the reason for his dissent or abstention. The same requirement shall be observed by all lower collegiate courts.

SECTION 12. No decision shall be rendered by any court without expressing therein clearly and distinctly the facts and the law on which it is based.

No petition for review or motion for reconsideration of a decision of the court shall be refused due course or denied without stating the legal basis therefor.

An appeal by the State and/or the offended party from a judgment of acquittal may be allowed in the discretion of the Supreme Court by a petition for review on certiorari on the ground that it is manifestly against the evidence and with grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction.

SECTION 13. The salary of the Chief Justice and of the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court and of judges of lower courts shall be fixed by law. During their continuance in office, their salary shall not be diminished nor subjected to income tax. Until the National Assembly shall provide otherwise, the Chief Justice shall receive an annual salary of _____ and each Associate Justice _____ pesos.

SECTION 14. (1) All cases or matters filed after the effectivity of this Constitution must be decided or resolved within twenty-four months from date of submission for the Supreme Court, and unless reduced by the Supreme Court, twelve months for all lower collegiate courts, and three months for all other lower courts.

(2) A case or matter shall be deemed submitted for decision or resolution upon the filing of the last pleading, brief, or memorandum required by the rules of court or by the court itself.

(3) Upon the expiration of the corresponding period, a certification to this effect signed by the Chief Justice or the presiding judge shall forthwith be issued and a copy thereof attached to the record of the case or matter, and served upon the parties.

SECTION 15. An amount equivalent to not less than two percent of the national budget shall be automatically appropriated and regularly released for the judiciary.

SECTION 16. The Supreme Court shall, within thirty days from the opening of each regular session of the National Assembly, submit to the President and the National Assembly an annual report on the operations and activities of the judiciary. The Chief Justice shall address the National Assembly at the opening of each regular session.

MR. RAMA: May I ask that the sponsor of the Article on the Judiciary, Commissioner Concepcion, be recognized?

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): The session is suspended.

It was 4:09 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:43 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): The session is resumed.

The honorable Commissioner Concepcion is now recognized to sponsor the proposed Article on the Judiciary.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF COMMISSIONER CONCEPCION

MR. CONCEPCION: Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

I will speak on the judiciary. Practically, everybody has made, I suppose, the usual comment that the judiciary is the weakest among the three major branches of the service. Since the legislature holds the purse and the executive the sword, the judiciary has nothing with which to enforce its decisions or commands except the power of reason and appeal to conscience which, after all, reflects the will of God, and is the most powerful of all other powers without exception. But before I proceed, I would like to present my regrets for being out, not being in the session hall when the Committee was called to report. I thought we had a recess. And considering our experience last night, when most of us were unable to reach our homes until late in the evening, I thought it was an opportune moment to get some reinforcement, if I may use the expression. And so, with the body's indulgence, I will proceed to read the provisions drafted by the Committee on the Judiciary.

The first section starts with a sentence copied from former Constitutions. It says:

The judicial power shall be vested in one Supreme Court and in such lower courts as may be established by law.

I suppose nobody can question it.

The next provision is new in our constitutional law. I will read it first and explain.

Judicial power includes the duty of courts of justice to settle actual controversies involving rights which are legally demandable and enforceable and to determine whether or not there has been a grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction on the part or instrumentality of the government.

Fellow Members of this Commission, this is actually a product of our experience during martial law. As a matter of fact, it has some antecedents in the past, but the role of the judiciary during the deposed regime was marred considerably by the circumstance that in a number of cases against the government, which then had no legal defense at all, the solicitor general set up the defense of political questions and got away with it. As a consequence, certain principles concerning particularly the writ of habeas corpus, that is, the authority of courts to order the release of political detainees, and other matters related to the operation and effect of martial law failed because the government

set up the defense of political question. And the Supreme Court said: "Well, since it is political, we have no authority to pass upon it." The Committee on the Judiciary feels that this was not a proper solution of the questions involved. It did not merely request an encroachment upon the rights of the people, but it, in effect, encouraged further violations thereof during the martial law regime. I am sure the members of the Bar are familiar with this situation. But for the benefit of the Members of the Commission who are not lawyers, allow me to explain. I will start with a decision of the Supreme Court in 1973 on the case of Javellana vs. the Secretary of Justice, if I am not mistaken. Martial law was announced on September 22, although the proclamation was dated September 21. The obvious reason for the delay in its publication was that the administration had apprehended and detained prominent newsmen on September 21. So that when martial law was announced on September 22, the media hardly published anything about it. In fact, the media could not publish any story not only because our main writers were already incarcerated, but also because those who succeeded them in their jobs were under mortal threat of being the object of wrath of the ruling party. The 1971 Constitutional Convention had begun on June 1, 1971 and by September 21 or 22, had not finished the Constitution; it had barely agreed on the fundamentals of the Constitution. I forgot to say that upon the proclamation of martial law, some delegates to that 1971 Constitutional Convention, dozens of them were picked up. One of them was our very own colleague, Commissioner Calderon. So, the unfinished draft of the Constitution was taken over by representatives of Malacañang. In 17 days, they finished what the delegates to the 1971 Constitutional Convention had been unable to accomplish for about 14 months. The draft of the 1973 Constitution was presented to the President around December 1, 1972, whereupon the President issued a decree calling a plebiscite which suspended the operation of some provisions in the martial law decree which prohibited discussions, much less public discussions, of certain matters of public concern. The purpose was presumably to allow a free discussion on the draft of the Constitution on which a plebiscite was to be held sometime in January 1973. If I may use a word made famous by our colleague, Commissioner Ople, during the interregnum, however, the draft of the Constitution was analyzed and criticized with such a telling effect that Malacañang felt the danger of its disapproval. So, the President suspended indefinitely the holding of the plebiscite and announced that he would consult the people in a referendum to be held from January 10 to January 15. But the questions to be submitted in the referendum were not announced until the eve of its scheduled beginning, under the supposed supervisions not of the Commission on Elections, but of what was then designated as "citizens assemblies or barangays." Thus the barangays came into existence. The questions to be propounded were released with proposed answers thereto, suggesting that it was unnecessary to hold a plebiscite because the answers given in the referendum should be regarded as the votes cast in the plebiscite. Thereupon, a motion was filed with the Supreme Court praying that the holding of the referendum be suspended. When the motion was being heard before the Supreme Court, the Minister of Justice delivered to the Court a proclamation of the President declaring that the new Constitution was already in force because the overwhelming majority of the votes cast in the referendum favored the Constitution. Immediately after the departure of the Minister of Justice, I proceeded to the session room where the case was being heard. I then informed the Court and the parties the presidential proclamation declaring that the 1973 Constitution had been ratified by the people and is now in force.

A number of other cases were filed to declare the presidential proclamation null and void. The main defense put up by the government was that the issue was a political question and that the court had no jurisdiction to entertain the case.

Under the Constitution, the President may declare martial law in case of invasion, insurrection or rebellion or imminent danger thereof. If public safety or public interest requires it, he may suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus or place the Philippines or any part thereof under martial law.

The government said that in a referendum held from January 10 to January 15, the vast majority ratified the draft of the Constitution. Note that all members of the Supreme Court were residents of Manila, but none of them had been notified of any referendum in their respective places of residence, much less did they participate in the alleged referendum. None of them saw any referendum proceeding.

In the Philippines, even local gossips spread like wild fire. So, a majority of the members of the Court felt that there had been no referendum.

Second, a referendum cannot substitute for a plebiscite. There is a big difference between a referendum and a plebiscite. But another group of justices upheld the defense that the issue was a political question. Whereupon, they

dismissed the case. This is not the only major case in which the plea of “political question” was set up. There have been a number of other cases in the past.

I hope the Commissioners who are not lawyers will bear with me as I explain further because the matter is really a technical one. The Senate and the House had, under the 1935 Constitution, a House Electoral Tribunal and a Senate Electoral Tribunal. Our friend, Mr. Lorenzo Tañada, was the only member of the minority party in the Senate. The Constitution provided that electoral protests involving senators would be a nine-man Senate Electoral Tribunal. Of these nine, three were to be members of the majority party in the Senate and another three members for the minority party in the Senate; and lastly, three Justices of the Supreme Court. After the majority party had elected its three representatives to the Electoral Tribunal, and when it came to the nominations of the three senators for the opposition, Senator Tañada said that he could not nominate any senator except himself because there was no other senator belonging to the minority. The majority then nominated two senators belonging to the majority to form part of the group of three to represent the minority. As a consequence, the majority would actually have had five members: the Supreme Court, three and the minority, one. When the issue was brought to the Supreme Court, the defense put up by the government was that the matter involved a political question. But in that case of Tañada vs. Cuenco, the Court held that the Senate Electoral Tribunal was to consist of nine senators, because the possible partisanship of the three members for the majority would be offset by that of the three members of the minority. The group of three members of the Supreme Court constituting the third group would ensure the impartiality in the decision of the Electoral Tribunal. The defense of the political question was rejected because the issue was clearly justiciable.

We still had another important case. It was early after liberation. You probably remember that during World War II, President Roosevelt of the US announced over the television that the American government would compensate or indemnify all damages we may suffer during the war up to the last carabao. Liberation came and the American Congress appropriated \$1 billion for war damages but with strings attached. We had to give them parity rights. The question was whether or not we should grant these rights because of the issue in the election held in 1946. The majority party was in favor and another political party opposed it, because there was \$1 billion together with the parity rights.

In order to give parity rights to the Americans, it was necessary, however, to get a qualified majority in both Houses of Congress. But the number of votes available to the majority party was a few votes short of the required qualified majority. At that time there were half a dozen members elected in districts believed to be dominated by leftists. By the way, the members of the minority belonged to what was known as the Democratic Alliance. These members of the minority were suspended upon the ground that their election was tainted with fraud and terrorism.

Then the constitutional amendment granting parity rights was taken and got the qualified majority required by the Constitution. Assailed in the Supreme Court, the Supreme Court held that the question whether the suspended Members should be counted in the determination of the required qualified majority was a political question. It was obvious that the members of the Democratic Alliance were suspended to enable the ruling party to get the votes necessary for the approval of the bill calling a plebiscite on the parity rights. When your Committee on the Judiciary began to perform its functions, it faced the following questions: What is judicial power? What is a political question?

The Supreme Court, like all other courts, has one main function: to settle actual controversies involving conflicts of rights which are demandable and enforceable. There are rights which are guaranteed by law but cannot be enforced by a judicial party. In a decided case, a husband complained that his wife was unwilling to perform her duties as a wife. The Court said: “We can tell your wife what her duties as such are and that she is bound to comply with them, but we cannot force her physically to discharge her main marital duty to her husband. There are some rights guaranteed by law, but they are so personal that to enforce them by actual compulsion would be highly derogatory to human dignity.”

This is why the first part of the second paragraph of X Section I provides that:

Judicial power includes the duty of courts to settle actual controversies involving rights which are legally demandable or enforceable . . .

The courts, therefore, cannot entertain, much less decide, hypothetical questions. In a presidential system of government, the Supreme Court has, also, another important function. The powers of government are generally considered divided into three branches: the Legislative, the Executive and the Judiciary. Each one is supreme within its own sphere and independent of the others. Because of that supremacy power to determine whether a given law is valid or not is vested in courts of justice.

Briefly stated, courts of justice determine the limits of power of the agencies and offices of the government as well as those of its officers. In other words, the judiciary is the final arbiter on the question whether or not a branch of government or any of its officials has acted without jurisdiction or in excess of jurisdiction, or so capriciously as to constitute an abuse of discretion amounting to excess of jurisdiction or lack of jurisdiction. This is not only a judicial power but a duty to pass judgment on matters of this nature.

This is the background of paragraph 2 of Section 1, which means that the courts cannot hereafter evade the duty to settle matters of this nature, by claiming that such matters constitute a political question.

I have made these extended remarks to the end that the Commissioners may have an initial food for thought on the subject of the judiciary.

Section 2 of the draft prepared by the Committee is merely the second sentence of Section I of Article X of the 1973 Constitution which states, and I quote:

The National Assembly shall have the power to define, prescribe, and apportion the jurisdiction of the various courts but may not deprive the Supreme Court of its jurisdiction over cases enumerated in Section 7 hereof.

There is a second paragraph which reads:

No law shall be passed reorganizing the judiciary when it undermines security of tenure.

This provision reflects the apprehension in a number of resolutions referred to the Committee: the resort to judicial reorganization in order to circumvent the security of tenure.

Section 3 of the draft says:

The Supreme Court shall be composed of a Chief Justice and ten Associate Justices. It may sit en banc or in two divisions.

Under the 1973 Constitution, the Supreme Court shall be composed of a Chief Justice and 14 Associate Justices. It may sit en banc or in two divisions. The second, third and fourth subsections or paragraphs of this section state, and I quote:

(2) All cases involving the constitutionality of a treaty, international or executive agreement, or law shall be heard and decided by the Supreme Court en banc, and no treaty, international or executive agreement, or law may be declared unconstitutional without the concurrence of a majority plus one of the members who actually participated when the case was submitted for decision. The same number of votes shall be required for the imposition of the death penalty.

The present Constitution requires 10 votes of the Supreme Court. Our draft requires only a majority plus one:

(3) All other cases including those involving the application or operation of presidential decrees, proclamations, orders, instructions, ordinances and other regulations which under the rules of court are required to be heard en banc

shall be decided with the concurrence of a majority of the members who actually participated when the case was submitted for decision.

(4) Cases heard by a division shall be decided with the concurrence of a majority of the members who actually participated when the case was submitted for decision but if such required number is not obtained, the case shall be decided en banc: Provided, that no doctrine or principle of law laid down by the court in a decision rendered en banc or in division may be modified or reversed except by the court sitting en banc.

There are two important changes introduced by this section: the court may sit in two divisions or en banc. As usual, a majority is necessary to have a quorum. But to render a decision, only a majority plus one is necessary to declare a law unconstitutional. Whereas under the present Constitution the Supreme Court is composed of 15 members, the vote of 10 members is required to declare a law unconstitutional. Often, however, the actual membership of the court is limited to 12 or even 11. To require 10 votes for the declaration of unconstitutionality, the votes of three or four members would prevail over those of a clear majority of the Court members. This has happened several times in the past. The two-thirds requirement, therefore, strengthens the executive and weakens judicial power.

The first paragraph of Section 4 of the draft states:

(1) no person shall be appointed member of the Supreme Court unless he is a natural-born citizen of the Philippines, at least forty years of age, and has for fifteen years or more been a judge of a lower court or engaged in the practice of law in the Philippines.

Several important changes are thereby introduced. The present law requires 10 years as a judge of a court of record to be qualified for appointment to the Supreme Court. Our draft provision increases the requirement to 15 years.

Besides, we have eliminated the words “of record” in the phrase “court of record” because all lower courts are now courts of record.

Paragraph (2) of the draft Section 4 provides:

The National Assembly shall prescribe the qualifications of judges of lower courts, but no person may be appointed judge thereof unless he is a natural-born citizen of the Philippines and a member of the Philippine Bar.

Section 5 reads:

The Members of the Supreme Court and judges of the lower courts shall be appointed by the President from a list of at least three nominees prepared by a Judicial and Bar Council for every vacancy. Such appointments need no confirmation.

The choice of the President in filling vacancies in the judiciary is limited to a list of nominees prepared or submitted by a Judicial and Bar Council of which we will speak later more in detail.

Moreover, the “appointments by the President need no confirmation” by another body.

This is a provision suggested by practicing lawyers upon the ground that in the past judges had to kowtow to members of the legislative body to get an appointment or at least to see the Chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary in Congress and request his support to the confirmation of his appointment. The idea is to forestall as much as possible the influence of partisan politics.

Section 6 of the draft is to the effect that:

A Judicial and Bar Council is hereby created under the supervision of the Supreme Court composed of the Chief Justice as *ex-officio* Chairman, the Minister of Justice and a representative of the National Assembly as *ex-officio*

members, a representative of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, a professor of law, a retired member of the Supreme Court, and a representative of the private sector.

The Committee sought to have in the Council a representation for the major elements of the community.

Paragraph 2 of the draft of Section 5 provides:

The regular members of the Council shall be appointed by the President for a term of four years.

The phrase “regular members” refers to all those who are not *ex-officio* members.

The paragraph continues:

. . . Of the members first appointed, the representative of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines shall serve for four years, the professor of law for three years, the retired justice for two years, and the representative of the private sector for one year.

(3) The Clerk of the Supreme Court shall be the Secretary *ex-officio* and shall keep a record of the proceedings of the Council.

(4) The regular members of the Council shall receive such emoluments, and the *ex-officio* members shall receive such allowances as may be determined by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court shall provide in its annual budget the appropriations for the Council.

The reason for this should be obvious. The Council will actually have to work throughout the year, screening nominees for 2,200 positions in the bench.

The last paragraph of Section 6 is:

(5) The Council shall have the principal function of recommending appointees to the judiciary. It may exercise such other functions and duties as the Supreme Court may assign to it.

Pursuant to Section 7 of the draft:

The Supreme Court shall have the following powers:

(1) Exercise original jurisdiction over cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and over petitions for certiorari, prohibition, mandamus, quo warranto, and habeas corpus.

(2) Review, revise, reverse, modify, or affirm on appeal or certiorari, as the law or the rules of court may provide, final judgments and decrees of lower courts in —

(a) All cases in which the constitutionality or validity of any treaty, international or executive agreement, law, ordinance, executive order, proclamation, or regulation is in question.

(b) All cases involving the legality of any tax, impost, assessment, or toll, or any penalty imposed in relation thereto.

(c) All cases in which the jurisdiction of any lower court is in issue.

(d) All criminal cases in which the penalty imposed is death or life imprisonment.

At this point, I might invite attention to the fact that the members of the Committee are aware of the circumstance that in any other Committee the death penalty was voted to be abolished. Should the opinion of the Commission be in favor of elimination of the death penalty, we will adjust this paragraph.

(e) All cases in which only an error or question of law is involved.

Justice Colayco is kind enough to suggest that the reading of the draft be assigned to our Secretary-General. By the way, before she does so, I wish to thank the Members of the Commission for their attention in adopting means for my comfort today.

Our Secretary-General will continue the reading of the draft without prejudice to the interpellations later. I will try to answer as best I can.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, *reading*:

(3) Assign temporarily judges of lower courts to other stations as public interest may require. Such temporary assignment shall not last longer than six months without the consent of the judge concerned.

(4) Order a change of venue or place of trial to avoid a miscarriage of justice.

(5) Promulgate rules concerning the protection and enforcement of constitutional rights, pleading, practice, and procedure in all courts, the admission to the practice of law, the integrated bar, and legal assistance to the underprivileged. The National Assembly may repeal, alter, or supplement the said rules with the advice and concurrence of the Supreme Court. Such rules shall provide a simplified and inexpensive procedure for the speedy disposition of cases, shall be uniform for all courts of the same grade, and shall not diminish, increase or modify substantive rights. Rules of procedure of special courts and quasi-judicial bodies shall take effect upon approval by the Supreme Court.

(6) Appoint all officials and employees of the judiciary in accordance with the Civil Service Law.

SECTION 8. The Members of the Supreme Court and of other courts established by law shall not be designated to any agency performing quasi-judicial and/or administrative functions.

SECTION 9. The Supreme Court shall have administrative supervision over all courts and the personnel thereof.

SECTION 10. The Members of the Supreme Court and judges of lower courts shall hold office during good behavior until they reach the age of seventy years or become incapacitated to discharge the duties of their office. The Supreme Court en banc shall have the power to discipline judges of lower courts, or order their dismissal by the vote of a majority plus one of the Members who actually participated when the matter was submitted for resolution.

SECTION 11. The conclusions of the Supreme Court in any case submitted to it for decision en banc or in division shall be reached in consultation before the case is assigned to a Member for the writing of the opinion of the court. A certification to this effect signed by the Chief Justice shall be issued and a copy thereof attached to the record of the case and served upon the parties. Any Member dissenting or abstaining from a decision shall state the reason for his dissent or abstention. The same requirement shall be observed by all lower collegiate courts.

SECTION 12. No decision shall be rendered by any court without expressing therein clearly and distinctly the facts and the law on which it is based.

No petition for review or motion for reconsideration of a decision of the court shall be refused due course or denied without stating the legal basis therefor.

An appeal by the State and/or the offended party from a judgment of acquittal may be allowed in the discretion of the Supreme Court by a petition for review on certiorari on the ground that it is manifestly against the evidence and with grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction.

SECTION 13. The salary of the Chief Justice and of the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court, and of judges of lower courts shall be fixed by law. During their continuance in office, their salary shall not be diminished nor subjected to income tax. Until the National Assembly shall provide otherwise, the Chief Justice shall receive an annual salary of _____ and each Associate Justice _____ pesos.

SECTION 14. (1) All cases or matters filed after the effectivity of this Constitution must be decided or resolved within twenty-four months from date of submission for the Supreme Court, and unless reduced by the Supreme Court, twelve months for all lower collegiate courts, and three months for all other lower courts.

(2) A case or matter shall be deemed submitted for decision or resolution upon the filing of the last pleading, brief, or memorandum required by the rules of court or by the court itself.

(3) Upon the expiration of the corresponding period, certification of this effect signed by the Chief Justice or the presiding judge shall forthwith be issued and a copy thereof attached to the record of the case or matter, and served upon the parties.

SECTION 15. An amount equivalent to not less than two percent of the national budget shall be automatically appropriated and regularly released for the judiciary.

SECTION 16. The Supreme Court, shall, within thirty days from the opening of each regular session of the National Assembly, submit to the President and the National Assembly an annual report on the operations and activities of the judiciary. The Chief Justice shall address the National Assembly at the opening of each regular session.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): The honorable Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Nollado be recognized.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): Commissioner Nollado is recognized.

MR. NOLLEDO: Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

Will Commissioner Concepcion please yield to interpellations?

MR. CONCEPCION: With pleasure.

MR. NOLLEDO: Thank you.

Before I ask my questions, I do not know if it is proper for me to state that the 1973 Constitution was ratified by barangay assemblies as the Gentleman stated. There were pictures produced by the previous administration showing people raising their hands and Marcos claimed that they were voting for the Constitution. But the questions asked, according to our information, were these: "Sino ang gustong kumain ng siopao at uminom ng Coca-Cola at Pepsi?" So the people raised their hands, a picture was taken of them and the President concluded that they ratified the 1973 Constitution which is one of our working drafts. I do not know also if it is inappropriate for me to state, in connection with the Chief Justice's narration of the Javellana case, that the Honorable Napoleon Rama and I were among those incarcerated. Napoleon Rama was incarcerated in Fort Bonifacio; I was incarcerated in Camp Crame.

The second paragraph of Section 1 states: "Judicial power includes the duty of courts of justice to settle actual controversies . . ." The term "actual controversies" according to the Commissioner should refer to questions which are political in nature and, therefore, the courts should not refuse to decide those political questions. But do I understand it right that this is restrictive or only an example? I know there are cases which are not actual and yet the court can assume jurisdiction. An example is the petition for declaratory relief.

May I ask the Commissioner's opinion about that?

MR. CONCEPCION: The Supreme Court has no jurisdiction to grant declaratory judgments.

MR. NOLLEDO: The Gentleman used the term "judicial power" but judicial power is not vested in the Supreme Court alone but also in other lower courts as may be created by law.

MR. CONCEPCION: Yes.

MR. NOLLEDO: And so, is this only an example?

MR. CONCEPCION: No, I know this is not. The Gentleman seems to identify political questions with jurisdictional questions. But there is a difference.

MR. NOLLEDO: Because of the expression "judicial power"?

MR. CONCEPCION: No. Judicial power, as I said, refers to ordinary cases but where there is a question as to whether the government had authority or had abused its authority to the extent of lacking jurisdiction or excess of jurisdiction, that is not a political question. Therefore, the court has the duty to decide.

MR. NOLLEDO: I thank the Commissioner.

I would like to ask the second question with respect to the second paragraph of Section 2, which reads: "No law shall be passed reorganizing the judiciary when it undermines security of tenure."

The Supreme Court ruled in some cases that there is no vested right to public office and that if a public office is abolished, security of tenure is not adversely affected.

Would the Gentleman say then that that doctrine is changed by this proposed provision?

MR. CONCEPCION: Certainly. First, reorganization should not be resorted to for the purpose of dismissing any judge.

MR. NOLLEDO: Thank you.

The third question . . .

MR. CONCEPCION: I think Commissioner Davide has filed a resolution on that point and he can explain his thoughts on the matter.

MR. NOLLEDO: Thank you.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): Commissioner Davide is recognized.

MR. DAVIDE: Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

This particular proposal was based on a resolution filed by this representation and amended basically by the amendment of Commissioner Padilla. We realize, of course, that in 1980 for instance, under the guise of a judicial reorganization, the so-called judicial reorganization was made. So, there was a general revamp of the judiciary. Supposedly, the intention of the revamp was to attain economy, but actually the main purpose of that general revamp was to eliminate from the judiciary people whom the leadership at the time believed to be not loyal to the administration and to replace them with people who were loyal to the administration. Necessarily, the result was massive expulsion or ouster of several people, especially of those who had no padrinos, as well as the entry into the judiciary of people who had the necessary connections with the politicians of the dispensation at the time.

I recall very well that despite the creation of the Integrity Council to effect the revamp, the recommendations of the Integrity Council were disregarded. I know personally of an assemblyman who recommended somebody whose name was in the final list, but eventually another list was submitted to Malacañang and what happened was that this gentleman, who was recommended and who already gave a treat to the assemblyman, found himself without any position. Unfortunately, he was holding at the time a position in the lower courts of the judiciary. And so, he lost both positions because somebody replaced him and he was not able to get the appointment that was supposedly intended for him on the basis of the first list that was submitted.

We cannot protect the independence of the judiciary nor can we enhance its independence if a revamp of the judiciary can be made at any time by the National Assembly for any reason whatsoever. So, this proposal seeks to enhance, preserve, promote and maintain a really authentic independence of the judiciary.

MR. NOLLEDO: The Gentleman must be referring to the case of de la Llana vs. Alba, where the Supreme Court speaking through former Chief Justice Enrique Fernando said that abolition of public office does not involve security of tenure. So, as I understand it from Commissioner Davide, this ruling is now obsolete if we adopt this provision.

MR. DAVIDE: That was a general doctrine and in this particular case, we limit ourselves to our position on the security of tenure in the judiciary.

MR. NOLLEDO: I do not know if any member of the Committee is willing to enlighten me on the meaning of international agreement because, as I understand it, when we talk of executive agreement, we talk of two chief executives entering into an agreement on tariff, customs, etc. But it seems to me this is my first time to hear the term “international agreement” because as I understand it, when we call it an international agreement, we must be referring necessarily to a treaty.

MR. CONCEPCION: Mr. Presiding Officer, there are conventions, for example, the Hague Convention, where the word “treaty” is not proper for the set of rules incorporated into these international agreements.

MR. NOLLEDO: If the Commissioner does not mind, I presented Resolution No. 188, which is not mentioned in the committee report, entitled:

RESOLUTION TO ENSHRINE IN THE ARTICLE ON THE JUDICIARY OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION, ETHICAL RULES ON QUALIFICATIONS AND CONDUCT OF MEMBERS OF THE JUDICIARY.

It is unfortunate that the reputation of our judges is not so good and so, I do not know what is the sense of the Committee. I would like to tell the members in advance that I intend to present this as an amendment for consideration — that in connection with Section 4, perhaps we can add a subsection there which may run like this: THAT NO ONE SHALL BE APPOINTED AS MEMBER OF THE JUDICIARY UNLESS HE IS A PERSON OF PROVEN COMPETENCE, INTEGRITY, PROBITY AND INDEPENDENCE and THAT THE ACTUATIONS OF A MEMBER OF THE JUDICIARY IN OR OUTSIDE THE COURT MUST BE BEYOND REPROACH.

This is similar to a provision in “Canons of Judicial Ethics,” but history states that those provisions are more honored in breach than in observance.

MR. CONCEPCION: That is right.

MR. NOLLEDO: So, when we discipline a member of the judiciary, perhaps it will strengthen the intention if we can quote a constitutional mandate that he has not acted beyond reproach as enjoined by the Constitution.

MR. CONCEPCION: The Committee is well aware of the fact that our task is to make good laws. But it is also fully aware of the fact that no matter how good the laws are, if the persons chosen to enforce those laws are not the right persons, they may be doing a disservice to the country. In connection with the judges, that is the reason for the Judicial and Bar Council.

MR. NOLLEDO: When we set forth these moral qualifications, they may be considered guidelines by the Judicial and Bar Council when they determine the qualifications of prospective appointees.

MR. CONCEPCION: But that is understood: honesty, competence, etc. That is the only purpose of the Judicial and Bar Council.

MR. NOLLEDO: Just two more questions, if Commissioner Concepcion does not mind.

Section 7 (3) on page 4 says: "Assign temporarily judges of lower courts to other stations as public interest may require." I would like to know the meaning of "other stations" because as now constituted by law, we have regional trial courts within a particular region. So when a judge is assigned temporarily to another court within a region, is that an assignment to other stations or not?

MR. CONCEPCION: Yes, Commissioner.

MR. NOLLEDO: If my memory serves me right, there is an obiter dictum of the Supreme Court that it is not considered an assignment because it is within the region. A station is different from a region.

MR. CONCEPCION: The appointments are extended for a particular branch of a given region but one branch is different from the others. A judge may have a good assignment — in terms of housing facilities, etc. — and he may be threatened to be transferred to a place where those facilities are absent.

MR. NOLLEDO: Thank you.

My last question is about my Resolution No. 367, entitled: RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION THAT THE DEATH PENALTY IMPOSED ON AN ACCUSED MUST BE RESOLVED BY THE SUPREME COURT WITHIN TWO YEARS FROM THE DATE OF JUDGMENT, OTHERWISE THE SAME SHALL BE REDUCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT, EXCEPT IF THE ACCUSED, BY WRITTEN MANIFESTATION, INSISTS ON THE RESOLUTION OF HIS PLEA OF INNOCENCE.

I am mentioning this in advance so that he may discuss with the members of the Committee, if it will be acceptable to them that the proposed resolution be included in Section 14 (4) on page 6.

MR. CONCEPCION: There really is a problem of coordination. The question refers to cases where the death penalty has been imposed, whereas our impression is that the majority of another committee has voted to abolish the death penalty. That is why I make reference to the fact that insofar as the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court is concerned, there is a paragraph there where the death penalty or capital punishment or life imprisonment is referred to. But whether or not the death penalty shall be imposed is subject to the decision of the Commission.

If the Commissioner has time to go over the draft proposal of the Committee, he will notice that the Committee has tried to be as polite as possible to judges so as not to impair their image. We should be the first to protect the image of the judges. It will also be noted that there are other provisions in our draft which try to ensure better compliance with the present rules. For instance, the date of submission of the case must be certified in its record. The date of

expiration of the period prescribed by law must similarly be certified in the record. We do not say, "Do this or else," because that would be treating judges like kids. But this is the full implication of the provisions referred to.

MR. NOLLEDO: This is definitely the last question, Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): The Gentleman has one minute more.

MR. NOLLEDO: Commissioner Concepcion, this is in connection with Section 14. It was the sense of the 1971 Constitutional Convention to consider the time limit for decision of cases as mandatory, but the Supreme Court, in many cases, ruled that this should only be directory.

What is now the sense of the Committee with respect to Section 14 (1) which reads:

(1) All cases or matters filed after the effectivity of this Constitution must be decided or resolved within twenty-four months from the date of submission for the Supreme Court, twelve months for all lower collegiate courts, and three months for all other lower courts.

MR. CONCEPCION: It is mandatory, but we do not use the word "mandatory"; instead we say "must."

MR. NOLLEDO: How would the Commissioner interpret that? Is that directory or mandatory?

MR. CONCEPCION: It is not directory; it is an order that is why we say "must."

MR. NOLLEDO: The Supreme Court ruling says "must" or "shall" in view of the clogging of cases which made it impossible for the Supreme Court to decide the cases within the stated period.

MR. CONCEPCION: We have not only said "it must do this" but we also say that the Supreme Court shall devise a plan to unclog the dockets of the courts. Furthermore, the Gentleman will notice that there is an addition in the draft which says: "The Chief Justice shall appear before or address the National Assembly at the opening of its regular session." The idea is to encourage him by giving him a better image, and at the same time allow him to confront the representatives of the judiciary and convey their criticisms on the operation of courts.

We did not want to put it in such a language as would debase the dignity of the bench, but expressed our idea in a polite language.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): The time of the Commissioner has expired.

MR. NOLLEDO: Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna) The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer, I ask that Commissioner Padilla be recognized.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): Commissioner Padilla is recognized and is given 15 minutes.

MR. PADILLA: Mr. Presiding Officer and Commissioner Davide, in response to a question propounded by Commissioner Nolleto on the proposed provision that reads: "No law shall be passed reorganizing the judiciary when it undermines security of tenure," may I be permitted to say that the Batasang Pambansa enacted a Judiciary Reorganization Act which was assailed as illegal and unconstitutional. However, the Act was upheld as valid, and the result was the reorganization of the courts, including the Court of Appeals which was renamed the Intermediate Appellate Court; the Courts of First Instance, renamed Regional Trial Courts; and the Municipal Courts renamed Municipal Trial Courts. This resulted in legislating out of their judicial offices some members of the courts lower

than the Supreme Court. That said Reorganization Act not only undermined the independence of the judiciary, but, likewise, was a direct assault against the principle of the security of tenure of judicial officers.

I recall, Mr. Presiding Officer, that one of my first cases before the Supreme Court when I was appointed Solicitor General in 1954 was the case of Ocampo vs. Secretary of Justice. At that time, Congress then approved a law abolishing the positions of judges-at-large and cadastral judges. The 1935 Constitution, as well as the subsequent Constitution, recognized district judges. And the anomalous practice was that sometimes a judge-at-large or a cadastral judge who did not have a judicial district of his own was assigned to a particular trial court to hear a particular case. That was bad, because the designation would be made by the Secretary of Justice and presumably upon the suggestion or direction of the President.

In that case, while I subscribe to the principle of an independent judiciary, I invoked the defense that the law abolishing judges-at-large, or cadastral judges which are not recognized in the 1935 Constitution for it only recognizes district judges, is not a violation of the Constitution but is an implementation thereof. That defense was sustained by three or four of the justices, although the majority still were of the opinion and held that insofar as it could legislate judges out of their judicial position, even if their appointments were judges-at-large or cadastral judges, it was unconstitutional because it violated the tenure of office of those judges-at-large and cadastral judges. That law did not receive the sufficient number of votes, two-thirds of the members of the Supreme Court, to declare it unconstitutional. But even though it was not declared unconstitutional, the fact remains that the majority of the court reiterated the sacred rule, the judicial sanction, I might say, to the fundamental principle of security of tenure to assure the independence of the judiciary.

Mr. Presiding Officer, this sentence, "No law shall be passed reorganizing the judiciary when it undermines security of tenure" was based on a resolution proposed by Commissioner Davide and was restated in this report of the Committee. What is important is the word "re-organizing," as well as the more important phrase "security of tenure," so that the legislature should not be allowed to pass a bill to revamp or reorganize, or use any other term, when its purpose and its effect would be to undermine the security of tenure of judicial officers.

Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

MR. CONCEPCION: Mr. Presiding Officer may I add a few words.

It is not so important whether the President will or will not use the power to reorganize the judiciary. But so long as the power is vested in him, that serves as a sword that will always exist over the heads of all judges. So at all times, judges may have insecurity of tenure.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Bernas be recognized.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): Commissioner Bernas is recognized.

FR. BERNAS: Mr. Presiding Officer, may I just be allowed to ask some clarificatory questions on the same provision that was being discussed just a while ago.

Do I understand the sponsor correctly that this is not a prohibition of reorganization?

MR. CONCEPCION: That is right.

FR. BERNAS: It is not a prohibition of reorganization. In case there is an attempt to reorganize, it must be done in such a way that it does not undermine the security of tenure of judges.

MR. CONCEPCION: That is correct.

FR. BERNAS: And whether or not their attempted organization undermines security of tenure, that is something which is to be decided upon by the Supreme Court.

MR. CONCEPCION: That is right.

FR. BERNAS: In the same way that it was done in the past.

MR. CONCEPCION: Not in the same way, because in the past the number of votes necessary for constituting a majority was offset by the minority, but under our Constitution, we need 10 votes or at least two-thirds of all the Members.

FR. BERNAS: Ultimately, therefore, it will always have to be decided by the Supreme Court according to the new numerical need for votes.

On another point, is it the intention of Section 1 to do away with the political question doctrine?

MR. CONCEPCION: No.

FR. BERNAS: It is not.

MR. CONCEPCION: No, because whenever there is an abuse of discretion, amounting to a lack of jurisdiction. . .

FR. BERNAS: So, I am satisfied with the answer that it is not intended to do away with the political question doctrine.

MR. CONCEPCION: No, certainly not.

When this provision was originally drafted, it sought to define what is judicial power. But the Gentleman will notice it says, "judicial power includes" and the reason being that the definition that we might make may not cover all possible areas.

FR. BERNAS: So, this is not an attempt to solve the problems arising from the political question doctrine.

MR. CONCEPCION: It definitely does not eliminate the fact that truly political questions are beyond the pale of judicial power.

FR. BERNAS: Another question, Commissioner Concepcion.

Line 27 reads: "All other cases including those involving the application or operation of presidential decrees . . ." I understand this to have reference to the application or operation of the presidential decrees, but not to the presidential decree itself.

MR. CONCEPCION: That is right.

FR. BERNAS: So, for purposes of invalidating the application or operation, he needs this type of vote.

MR. CONCEPCION: Yes.

FR. BERNAS: For purposes of invalidating the decree itself, what kind of vote is needed?

MR. CONCEPCION: We will require a majority plus one, of those Members who actually participated in the deliberation.

FR. BERNAS: So it is the same as in the preceding paragraph.

MR. CONCEPCION: That is right.

FR. BERNAS: Thank you.

On page 5, line 5 says: "when they reach the age of seventy years or become incapacitated . . ." Who will decide whether they have become incapacitated?

MR. CONCEPCION: The Committee has not decided on that. But, presumably, the Judicial and Bar Council would be consulted about it and, of course, the Supreme Court.

FR. BERNAS: But if an actual case arises, and we notice that a particular Justice of the Supreme Court seems to be incapacitated and his capacity is challenged, who would decide on that?

MR. CONCEPCION: No. That is not settled by the draft proposal.

FR. BERNAS: Could that matter be settled by ordinary legislation?

MR. CONCEPCION: As to the procedure, I suppose so.

FR. BERNAS: It could be.

MR. CONCEPCION: Yes.

FR. BERNAS: May I go back to page 4, Section 8 which says:

The Members of the Supreme Court and of other courts established by law shall not be designated to any agency performing quasi-judicial and/or administrative functions.

Is this also a prohibition against justices giving advisory opinions to the President?

MR. CONCEPCION: No, not that.

FR. BERNAS: Thank you, Commissioner.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Rodrigo be recognized.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): Commissioner Rodrigo is recognized.

MR. RODRIGO: Will the sponsor yield to a few questions for clarification?

MR. CONCEPCION: With pleasure.

MR. RODRIGO: Mr. Presiding Officer, I want to ask questions on some novel provisions in this proposal. At present, the Constitution provides for a definite number of the votes of justices in order to decide certain matters, for example, at least 10. But here the basis is a majority plus one, of the Members who actually participated. In case of an en banc court, there are, at most, 11 justices.

MR. CONCEPCION: That is right.

MR. RODRIGO: How many of them have to participate?

MR. CONCEPCION: Six of them have to participate.

MR. RODRIGO: So, if only six participated, then the vote of four . . .

MR. CONCEPCION: Four plus one, because three is not a majority — out of six, it is only one-half. So, four plus one, five.

MR. RODRIGO: So, in an en banc decision, even if there are 11 justices actually in the Supreme Court, a vote of only four can already . . .

MR. CONCEPCION: No, a vote of five.

MR. RODRIGO: A vote of four.

MR. CONCEPCION: No; a majority plus one.

MR. RODRIGO: Majority plus one.

MR. CONCEPCION: That is right.

MR. RODRIGO: What is the minimum number of those who should participate?

MR. CONCEPCION: There must always be a quorum.

MR. RODRIGO: Six?

MR. CONCEPCION: Yes, at least, for an en banc decision.

MR. RODRIGO: Let us say that only six participated. Then, mitad mas uno will be . . .

MR. CONCEPCION: That is right, because mitad is not majority.

MR. RODRIGO: Mitad mas uno.

MR. CONCEPCION: No, majority plus one.

MR. RODRIGO: Concurrence of a majority plus one. That is why I wanted that clarified. So, a vote of five is enough to render a decision of the Supreme Court en banc, even if there are 11 justices, although five is not a majority of all the members of the court. In very important matters, is it not better to provide for a vote of a majority of all the justices?

MR. CONCEPCION: It will be better in the court where it is always full. But our experience has shown that during martial law, the majority seldom, if ever, had been fully composed of the number prescribed in the Constitution.

MR. RODRIGO: I mean a majority of all the actual members of the Supreme Court.

MR. CONCEPCION: Yes, but if there are vacancies . . .

MR. RODRIGO: Then, of all the actual members of the Supreme Court.

MR. CONCEPCION: The problem is this: Former Solicitor General Padilla mentioned the case of Ocampo vs. Secretary of Justice. The votes there were seven to four. The four won the case because the law then required eight votes, and we do not want that to be maintained. Secondly, we want the court to act expeditiously in the disposal of cases. And, thirdly, one judge of a lower court can declare a law unconstitutional. Why not five from the Supreme Court?

MR. RODRIGO: Let me go to another point then.

On page 2, Section 5, there is a novel provision about appointments of members of the Supreme Court and of judges of lower courts. At present it is the President who appoints them. If there is a Commission on Appointments, then it is the President with the confirmation of the Commission on Appointments. In this proposal, we would like to establish a new office, a sort of a board composed of seven members, called the Judicial and Bar Council. And while the President will still appoint the members of the judiciary, he will be limited to the recommendees of this Council.

MR. CONCEPCION: That is correct.

MR. RODRIGO: And the Council will, whenever there is a vacancy, recommend three.

MR. CONCEPCION: At least three for every vacancy.

MR. RODRIGO: And the President cannot appoint anybody outside of the three recommendees.

MR. CONCEPCION: Nomination by the Council would be one of the qualifications for appointment.

MR. RODRIGO: Suppose the President does not want to appoint any of the three, will the Council be asked to submit another list?

MR. CONCEPCION: In other words, it is just the same as saying the President is not willing to comply with the Constitution

MR. RODRIGO: No, he is willing to comply, but he does not want to appoint any of the three.

MR. CONCEPCION: That is it. The Constitution requires that the nominee be included in the list of the Council.

MR. RODRIGO: No. That is what I want to know. The Council submits three nominees, but the President does not want to appoint any of them. Can he ask the Council to submit another list of three nominees?

MR. CONCEPCION: Yes, definitely.

MR. RODRIGO: And if he does not want these three new nominees, the Council could still submit another three?

MR. CONCEPCION: Yes. I understand that there is also a proposal requiring the filling of vacancies within a specified period.

MR. RODRIGO: Of the seven members of the Judicial and Bar Council, the President appoints four of them who are the regular members.

MR. CONCEPCION: Yes, that is right.

MR. RODRIGO: So, majority of the members of the Council are appointees of the President.

MR. CONCEPCION: That is right.

MR. RODRIGO: Can the members of the Council be reappointed?

MR. CONCEPCION: They can be reappointed.

MR. RODRIGO: Yes, they can be reappointed, because the tenure of office is staggered — one is appointed for four years, the others are for three years, two and one.

MR. CONCEPCION: The only purpose of the Committee is to eliminate partisan politics.

MR. RODRIGO: So, the member who is appointed for a one-year term can be reappointed for a three- or four-year term. There is no limitation on reappointment?

MR. CONCEPCION: That is right.

MR. RODRIGO: Another point. Under our present Constitution, the National Assembly may enact rules of court, is that right? On page 4, the proviso on lines 17 to 19 of the Article on the Judiciary provides:

The National Assembly may repeal, alter, or supplement the said rules with the advice and concurrence of the Supreme Court.

MR. CONCEPCION: Yes.

MR. RODRIGO: So, two things are required of the National Assembly before it can repeal, alter or supplement the rules concerning the protection and enforcement of constitutional rights, pleading, etc. — it must have the advice and concurrence of the Supreme Court.

MR. CONCEPCION: That is correct.

MR. RODRIGO: This renders the job of the Assembly inutile because it is absolutely dependent on the Supreme Court. It cannot initiate anything; it has to solicit first the advice and concurrence of the Supreme Court.

MR. CONCEPCION: The President is not the Almighty God. He cannot know better than the courts. The courts control internal operation. That is the purpose.

MR. RODRIGO: Why not just remove this power, which is inutile, from the National Assembly?

MR. CONCEPCION: That is the Commission's concern. If it wants to eliminate it, we will not object to it.

MR. RODRIGO: Instead of giving it a power, which is no power at all, we might as well eliminate this.

MR. CONCEPCION: The point is this. We feel that no President can know better than the court what the demands of its internal operations are.

MR. RODRIGO: Yes. I think I made myself clear on that point.

Another point, Mr. Presiding Officer, which we took up in the Committee on the Legislative is that of giving the State or the offended party the power to appeal from a judgment of acquittal in a criminal case. For the benefit of those who are not lawyers in this body, there is the rule at present against double jeopardy, which provides that if an accused is acquitted at any stage of the judicial proceeding, he can no longer be tried. So, if an accused is acquitted in the municipal court, the judgment of acquittal cannot be appealed to the regional court or to the court of appeals.

Section 12, on page 5, states:

An appeal by the State and/or the offended party from a judgment of acquittal may be allowed in the discretion of the Supreme Court by a petition for review on certiorari on the ground that it is manifestly against the evidence and with grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction.

MR. CONCEPCION: That is correct.

MR. RODRIGO: Even if it is not a mere question of law but of appreciation of facts or evidence?

MR. CONCEPCION: If there has been an abuse of discretion, the court has no jurisdiction and, of course, if the court has no jurisdiction, there could be no valid decision. That is it.

MR. RODRIGO: But lack of jurisdiction can be based on a mistake of the appreciation of facts because it says: "review on certiorari on the ground that it is manifestly against the evidence."

MR. CONCEPCION: Yes, it is manifestly against the evidence on record.

MR. RODRIGO: But it says here: "in the discretion of the Supreme Court." I would like to clarify this. Is it only the Supreme Court to which a judgment of acquittal can be appealed? Can a judgment of acquittal of a municipal court be appealed to a regional trial court?

MR. CONCEPCION: When it affects jurisdiction, it goes to the Supreme Court. The power to review cases involving jurisdiction is stated in the Constitution. That is simple — if there is no jurisdiction, there is no authority, and if there is no authority, the decision rendered is null and void.

MR. RODRIGO: So, the offended party may appeal to the Supreme Court. Suppose somebody is acquitted in the municipal court, can the offended party appeal to the regional trial court?

MR. CONCEPCION: I suppose he could not but if he wants to question the jurisdiction, that is another thing. It is not an appeal. I think Commissioner Rodrigo is not speaking of appeal in general.

MR. RODRIGO: By a petition for review on certiorari.

MR. CONCEPCION: It is an appeal based on the allegation that there has been such abuse of discretion that the court which rendered the judgment acted without jurisdiction.

MR. RODRIGO: I go back to my question. Suppose the accused is acquitted in the municipal court and the offended party wants a petition for review on certiorari, can he petition the regional trial court for it or does he have to go to the Supreme Court?

MR. CONCEPCION: I ask Commissioner Padilla, the author of the provision, to answer the Commissioner's question because I do not want to preempt him.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): Commissioner Padilla is recognized.

MR. PADILLA: Mr. Presiding Officer, the provision, as it appears in the committee report, is limited to a petition for review on certiorari to the Supreme Court, subject to the discretion of the Supreme Court. My original proposal referred to the discretion of the appellate court, but the Committee felt that, when the question involves lack or excess of jurisdiction, the petition should be directed or confined to the Supreme Court. I would like to add that the ground is specific and restricted. Besides being discretionary on the part of the Supreme Court, it may dismiss a petition for review on certiorari outright if it has no merits.

In addition, the ground for a petition for review on certiorari is not only if the judgment is manifestly against the evidence but also if it is rendered with grave abuse of discretion. In my original proposal, it was either of these, but the Committee felt that in addition to the judgment of acquittal being manifestly against the evidence, it must also have been rendered with grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction.

MR. RODRIGO: Let me repeat my question. Suppose an accused is acquitted by the municipal court under this provision by the Committee, can the offended party petition for review on certiorari to the next higher court which is the regional trial court?

MR. PADILLA: No, the provision, as redrafted by the Committee, is clear that this petition for review on certiorari may only be filed with the Supreme Court, which has the discretion to dismiss or to give it due course.

MR. RODRIGO: But in the Vice-President's original proposal, this petition for review on certiorari can be filed in the regional trial court.

MR. PADILLA: To an appellate court.

MR. RODRIGO: Which is better, Mr. Presiding Officer? I am sure the Vice-President's own "baby" is better.

MR. PADILLA: Our own proposals, which we sometimes feel are the best, must yield to the better judgment of the members of the Committee, and I did agree, otherwise, I would have insisted on my original proposal.

MR. RODRIGO: I will propound the question to the sponsor now.

There are thousands of criminal cases all over the Philippines, in the municipal, city, and regional trial courts. If all the appeals from judgment of acquittals by the offended party or the State be in the discretion of the Supreme Court, does not the sponsor believe the Supreme Court will be swamped by an avalanche of petitions for review on certiorari?

MR. CONCEPCION: Only God can tell and answer the Commissioner's question whether it will be swamped by petitions for review on certiorari or not.

MR. RODRIGO: Yes.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): Commissioner Rodrigo's 15-minute period is over.

MR. RODRIGO: Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): The honorable Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I ask that Commissioner Bengzon be recognized.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): Commissioner Bengzon is recognized.

MR. BENGZON: May I invite the sponsor's attention to page 5 of the committee report, Mr. Presiding Officer, but not of the draft Article, wherein it is stated that two sections are recommended to be included in the Transitory Provisions.

My question is: Is it not that the function of the Supreme Court in providing for a systematic plan to expedite the decision or resolution of cases or matters filed with the courts or the lower courts is something continuing?

MR. CONCEPCION: Yes, that is correct.

MR. BENGZON: So, why do we not include this section in the Article on the Judiciary?

MR. CONCEPCION: Again, the answer is simple. Not all courts have the same problems, and one court may find a method more suitable than that which would be suitable in other regions. There are regions in the Philippines, for instance, where most of the municipalities are situated in the seacoasts and transportation is rather difficult. In highly urbanized areas, it would not be so difficult because the executive judge and, perhaps, even the judges themselves can get together with the justice/s of the Supreme Court and discuss the problem.

My original thought was this, if the Commissioner may allow me to explain.. There are at present 1,700 judges out of 2,200 positions for judges. If each judge were required to decide one case in addition to his normal number of decisions, we would have 1,700 additional cases disposed of apart from those filed after the adoption of this Constitution. If we multiply 1,700 by 12 months, that would be quite a big number. That is how I see it in Manila. I do not know how it will work in the provinces, especially in Palawan. I was assigned there as a judge, but I have not been to that place since 1940. It was difficult to go from one place to another, for instance, from Puerto Princesa to Brooke's Point which is closest to Java or perhaps Sabah. There are problems of communications, court facilities, and libraries. So, I would prefer that the Supreme Court devise ways and means by consulting local judges with the assistance of the Judicial Administrator to unclog the dockets.

MR. BENGZON: Mr. Presiding Officer, what I am referring to is that since this is a continuing work, the Supreme Court will always have to find ways and means to expedite decisions because of varied reasons. My question is: Should we not make this section a part of the regular Article on the Judiciary instead of putting it in the Transitory Provisions?

MR. CONCEPCION: I do not think the members of the Committee would object to that.

MR. BENGZON: My next question is on the cases heard by a division. On page 2, lines 1 to 3 of the proposed Article on the Judiciary say:

Cases heard by a division shall be decided with the concurrence of a majority of the members who actually participated when the case was submitted for decision.

MR. CONCEPCION: That is right.

MR. BENGZON: Suppose there are five members in a division, if three of them, which constitute a quorum, actually participated in the deliberation of the case, a concurrence of the majority of the three, which is two members, would decide the case for the entire court?

MR. CONCEPCION: That is right. That is also part of the attempt to have the Supreme Court clear the docket. If one judge of a municipal court or one regional judge can declare a law unconstitutional, why can two justices of the Supreme Court not? That is the philosophy, Mr. Presiding Officer.

MR. BENGZON: I am still on page 2, line 30. What was the basic reason of the Committee for its decision on a term of four years for the regular members of the Judicial and Bar Council?

MR. CONCEPCION: One might say it was done at random or because there would be four members to be appointed by the President. Actually, the Committee felt there should be a renewal or change of membership from time to time. That is why their terms are staggered — to assure certain continuity in the policies, so that at no time would the Council have members who are not posted on the policies of the officers who preceded them.

MR. BENGZON: I am going back to Section 6, lines 22 to 25, page 2. One of the problems the Judicial Administrators or Judicial Superintendents had was every justice of the Supreme Court wanted to put in his two cents' worth with respect to recommendations they would make, so there was a great delay in the supervision of the lower courts.

The question is: When we create this Judicial and Bar Council, which is under the supervision of the Supreme Court, how would we obviate such a happening from being repeated?

MR. CONCEPCION: I will start by saying that the Commissioner's major premise is not exactly correct because it is a generalization of some incidental situations during the Marcos regime.

By the way, our committee report mentions the personalities who appeared before the Committee. They were, among others, the solicitor general who represents the government, Chief Justice Teehankee, former Chief Justice Makasiar and Atty. Belo, a prominent member of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines. The general consensus is that the major problem of the judiciary is political interference, particularly the power of reorganization which is dangerous, unless subject to some limitations.

MR. BENGZON: My last question, Mr. Presiding Officer, is — and this is for the record so that it will be properly entered in our Journal — on page 4, Section 7(6) states: "appoint all officials and employees of the judiciary." The Committee is referring to appointments of sheriffs, clerks of court, bailiffs and all the employees in the judiciary.

MR. CONCEPCION: Yes, that is right.

MR. BENGZON: All these appointments are made by the Supreme Court.

MR. CONCEPCION: By the Supreme Court, yes.

MR. BENGZON: Thank you.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): The honorable Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: Before we adjourn, I would like to accommodate the request of Commissioner Gascon to file a motion for reconsideration, which has to be filed now otherwise it will be lost according to our Rules.

So, I ask that Commissioner Gascon be recognized, and that the consideration of that motion for reconsideration be deferred for tomorrow or some other day.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): The Chair recognizes Commissioner Gascon.

MR. GASCON: Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

Yesterday, we approved on Second Reading Committee Report No. 7, the Article on Amendment or Revision. After seriously considering the statements therein, I would like to file a motion for reconsideration so that I may introduce

amendments on Section 2 on initiative which are: to put a period (.) after the word "Constitution" and to delete "nor oftener than once every five years thereafter."

I feel it is awkward to give freedom to the National Assembly as far as proposing amendments to the Constitution is concerned since we do not give the same freedom to the people. So, I would like to file this motion for reconsideration.

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): The Floor Leader is recognized.

MR. RAMA: I move that we defer consideration of the motion for reconsideration for tomorrow.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): Is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

MR. RAMA: Mr. Presiding Officer, I move that we adjourn until tomorrow at nine o'clock in the morning.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Azcuna): Is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the session is adjourned until tomorrow at nine o'clock in the morning.

It was 6:48 p.m.

Excerpts from the Record of the Constitutional Commission, July 26, 1986: Discussions on creating the Office of the Ombudsman

I. SPONSORSHIP SPEECHES

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF COMMISSIONER MONSOD

MR. MONSOD: Madam President, the Committee on Accountability of Public Officers is respectfully submitting its proposed Article in the Constitution, and we would just want to make a few remarks on the articles and sections that we have included.

“SECTION 1. Public office is a public trust.” — We have amended the 1973 provision in order to incorporate the resolution of Commissioner Tadeo to invest public office with more than just the normal requirements of fidelity, integrity and efficiency, but also as an example of modest lives or simplified lifestyle.

With respect to the section on impeachment, we would like the honorable Commissioners to note the inclusion of the Ombudsman among the offices that are subject to impeachment, and the addition of betrayal of public trust as a ground for impeachment. This is derived from a resolution of Commissioner de los Reyes. In the section on the procedure for impeachment, we were benefitted by the suggestions and advice of the honorable President of the Commission. The principal author of this section is Commissioner Romulo. What we seek to institute here is a more liberal interpretation of the impeachment procedures in order to avoid, for example, the deadlock which happened in the last Batasan. While incorporating the procedures arising from the bicameral nature of the future legislation, the body will note that we provided here that a majority of the Members of the House can initiate impeachment upon vote. But what is important is that any Member of the House or any citizen can file a verified complaint. We used the majority rule of the House, although in 1973 the provision was for 20 percent of the Members of the National Assembly. In that case since it was unicameral, the trying body was also the National Assembly.

In the 1935 Constitution, the rule was two-thirds of the House may initiate impeachment proceedings and three-fourths of the Senate shall convict. However, in our proposal, majority of the Members of the House may initiate and two-thirds of the Senate shall convict. This is one section on which we would like to consult with the Members of this body. This is a very important provision, and we would be advised by the consultations and wisdom of this body with respect to this provision, particularly on the numbers and vote necessary to initiate, to try or to convict.

With respect to the Sandiganbayan and the Tanod-bayan, the Committee decided to make a distinction between the purely prosecutory function of the Tanod-bayan and the function of a pure Ombudsman who will use the prestige and persuasive powers of his office. To call the attention of government officials to any impropriety, misconduct or injustice, we conceive, the Ombudsman as a champion of the citizens. As part of the sponsorship presentation, we would like to ask Vice-Chairman Colayco of the Committee, who is the main author of this section, to give us a few words on the ideas of the Committee in this regard, as well as Commissioner Nollado who also has contributed his ideas in the framing of this section. The concept of the Ombudsman here is admittedly a little bit different from the 1973 concept. But I will leave that to Commissioner Colayco to explain later. With respect to the section on the right of the State to recover properties unlawfully acquired — Section 13, page 5 — this is based mainly on the resolution of Commissioner Nollado, with the assistance of Commissioner Azcuna in its formulation. The idea here is to address ourselves to the problem that those who have unlawfully benefitted from the acquisition of public property over the years, through technicalities or practice, have gained immunity and that, therefore, the right of the people to recover should be respected. With that, I would now like to call on Commissioner Colayco to give us his remarks regarding our concept of the Ombudsman.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Colayco is recognized.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF COMMISSIONER COLAYCO

MR. COLAYCO: Thank you, Madam President. The Committee is proposing the creation of an office which can act in a quick, inexpensive and effective manner on complaints against the administrative inaction, abuse and

arbitrariness of government officials and employees in dealing with the people. Under the present Rules, the available remedies are time-consuming and entail expenses beyond the means of many persons with legitimate grounds to complain. On this point, I would like to read a portion of the book prepared by a well-known authority on the Ombudsman and who is a professor at Columbia University. He says:

An important feature of the Ombudsman office is that, because of the simple and cheap way in which complaints are handled, many minor complaints can be satisfied; though important to the complainant, they would not be worth the cost of an elaborate court procedure.

This is the most common situation which confronts most of our economically disadvantaged people. Excuse me for citing a few personal experiences in this regard. Many a time, people have come to me complaining about the refusal or at least inability, much worse, the imposition of material consideration before they can act. I remember very well a lady from Batangas who came to see me in my office a few years back complaining that she had applied for the issuance of a birth certificate of her son who had applied for service in the U.S. Navy. This was one last requirement she could not comply with because she was made to return for more than three weeks, and everytime the lady would go back, the answer was that they could not find the record. Fortunately, I had some acquaintances in the office of Mayor Bagatsing and after calling up one of his executive secretaries, the certificate of birth was issued in less than one hour after the call. This is one of the many instances when poor illiterate people feel that the government does not care.

It is true that the office of the Tanodbayan has jurisdiction over these simple matters, so we requested Justice Gonzalez to give us his opinion on this, and he said: "How can I attend to these minor matters when I am swamped with investigative and prosecutory duties?" The Justice even suggested that it might be advisable to re-create an honest-to-goodness office of the Ombudsman which the 1971 Constitutional Convention tried to create. I would like to read a portion of the report of the Committee which submitted this proposal to the then Constitutional Convention. By the way, during the 1971 Convention, 27 resolutions were filed for the creation of the office of the Ombudsman and the thrust behind these resolutions was stated very eloquently in this passage of the report. After saying that it is the duty of the State to provide a system whereby poor people can have easy access for their petty grievances, the report said:

What we find, however, is a system characterized by the supremacy of the powerful and the wealthy; respect for the dignity and personality of the elite, the ruling feudal master, and superabundance of opportunity for the oppression of the weak, the poor and the "unconnected."

Present reliefs for the protection of citizen's rights are expensive, cumbersome, circuitous and usually available only to the rich and the powerful. Government is plagued by graft and corruption, callous indifference and gross inefficiency, political meddling, immorality, compartmentalization of justice and bankruptcy in national and local leadership. The helpless disillusioned citizen may not bear more, already he has raised his voice in protest and defiance. Because this voice has not reached an official ear, he registers his protest in the streets. Disillusion turns into antagonism and antagonism to bitterness towards the government and the people in the government. The people's faith in our institutions now hangs by a slim thread and is being stretched to the breaking point.

This in fine is the collective plaint of 27 resolutions submitted to this Convention and referred to the Committee seeking the establishment of a constitutional office with two definite objectives, namely: One, the promotion of higher efficiency and justice in the administration of the laws; and, two, the protection of the constitutional rights of the people by securing the right of the citizens to petition the government for redress of grievances.

So, what happened to this beautiful proposal? What came out of it is Presidential Decree No. 1630, creating the Office of the Tanodbayan. There was, therefore, a failure to implement this specific, explicit proposal to create a body that would act as guardian and protector of the rights especially of the underprivileged. Therefore, we have proposed as briefly as possible in our resolution an office which will not require any formal condition for the filing of a complaint. Under our proposal, a person can file a complaint even, by telephone and without much ado, the office of the Ombudsman is under obligation to see to it that the complaint is acted upon, not merely attended to but acted upon. Even in the United States, in the Nassau County, the Ombudsman merely picks up the telephone and

calls up the errant employee. If the employee admits that there was reason behind the complaint, he is told to do what the complainant wanted him to do without much ado. And then that is followed up by the corresponding report to the department of the government which has supervision over the employee at fault, with the proper recommendation.

Under this proposal, the main thrust is remedial action, not the usual one where the poor complainant is told: “Maghanda ka muna ng affidavit,” but he is not even helped in that. So, the complainant, if he is illiterate or poor, is turned off. He says: “Ni wala akong kilalang abogado. Wala akong ibabayad sa abogado.” This is the situation which the Committee is proposing to remedy. One of the most common complaints which I have received myself is the inaction of many judges. They would come to me saying: “Sir, kilala ba ninyo si gano’ng judge? Eh, matagal na po iyong aming asunto, wala pa hanggang ngayon.” If I know the judge, I could do it; if I do not know him, I could do it through another judge who could do it. This role can be very well filled by the Ombudsman whose office we are proposing to create. But that is on the minor level.

Under our proposal, the Ombudsman is empowered to investigate, to inquire into and to demand the production of documents involving transactions and contracts of the government where disbursement of public funds is reported. We read almost everyday of how certain buildings have been constructed improperly and of many other irregularities which are merely reported but which nobody in the government dares or bothers to look into. That role which should have been performed by our own Tanodbayan is not attended to because the Tanodbayan is swamped with work — this was confessed to us during our hearing. The main thrust is action; the disciplinary or punitive remedy is secondary. On a higher level then, the Ombudsman is going to be the eyes and ears of the people. Where administrative action demanded is not forthcoming because under our rules the Ombudsman is required to ask the government official concerned to impose the disciplinary action on the employee at fault and to follow it up and to see to it that it is complied with, he is authorized to make public the nature of the complaint and the inaction of the official concerned, because generally, public officials are afraid of publicity. This measure is commonly followed in the European system of Ombudsman, as well as in the United States.

To give the Ombudsman stature and a certain clout, we are proposing that he be given the status, the role or the rank of a chairman of a constitutional commission, as well as the same salary. If we are going to create an office which will have a lower rank than this, not even an ordinary employee of the government will bother to obey him. Second, to free him from political pressure, the Ombudsman cannot be removed except by impeachment. We hope that with the help of this body, we will receive better and more practical ideas. But we certainly appeal to the Members not to fail our people.

In 1950, for instance, President Quirino created the Integrity Board in an attempt to formalize the procedure for executive direction and control of the bureaucracy. This Board lasted only for six months. When President Magsaysay took over the reins of government in 1953, he created the Presidential Complaints and Action Committee. The primary purpose of this Committee was to expedite action on complaints received by the Office of the President against the manner in which the officials of the executive departments and offices were performing the duties entrusted to them by law, or against their acts, conduct or behavior. So we can see that as early as the time of President Magsaysay, the President already saw the necessity of the Ombudsman as we are now proposing. But again politics came in — this office did not last long. Two months after President Magsaysay’s death, the office was abolished.

Next, President Garcia created his own Presidential Committee on Administration, Performance and Efficiency. Again this office did not last long and was replaced by the Presidential Agency on Reforms and Government Operations or PARGO under the regime of President Marcos. Although these programs were good per se, especially the program of President Magsaysay, the new President discarded it — this is a political block. The incoming President generally tends to discard the policies and the programs of the previous President. The intention, therefore, of our proposal is to constitutionalize the office so that it cannot be touched by the Presidents as they come and go.

This is a very brief summary of our plan; we beg the Commission to give this very careful attention and consideration. Let us not fail our common masses again, as we have failed them in the past.

Thank you.

MR. MONSOD: Madam President, may I ask Commissioner Nolleto to give his remarks.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Nolleto is recognized.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF COMMISSIONER NOLLEDO

MR. NOLLEDO: Thank you, Madam President. I would like to talk briefly on the creation of the Ombudsman because I am the author of Resolution No. 280, entitled: “RESOLUTION TO STRENGTHEN INVIGORATE AND CONSTITUTIONALIZE THE OMBUDSMAN KNOWN AS THE TANODBAYAN.” I would like to talk also in support of my Resolution No. 61 which the Committee incorporated in its report, and which states in essence that the right of the government to forfeit ill-gotten wealth of public officials shall not prescribe.

Madam President, the creation of an Ombudsman which is a proposal, in the words of Commissioner Romulo, “worth dying for,” is in answer to the crying need of our people for an honest and responsive government. The office of the Ombudsman as proposed by the Committee on Accountability of Public Officers, ably headed by Commissioner Monsod, is really an institution primarily for the citizen as against the malpractices and corruption in the government. As an official critic, the Ombudsman will study the law, the procedure and practice in the government, and make appropriate recommendations for a more systematic operation of the governmental machinery, free from bureaucratic inconveniences. As a mobilizer, the Ombudsman will see to it that there be a steady flow of services to the individual consumers of government. And as a watchdog, the Ombudsman will look after the general, as well as specific, performance of all government officials and employees so that the law may not be administered with an evil eye or an uneven hand.

The graft and corruption at all levels of our government is to be deplored, Madam President. Our public officers act as if they are the masters when they are really the servants of the people. The “lagay” system has been condemnably institutionalized in all government offices, including the courts. The day will come, Madam President, when our people will accept corruption as a way of life and will lose their will to fight this corruption, thus resulting in the total decay of our national character and the imminent collapse of our national conscience. The effects of this situation are terrible to contemplate because there would emerge again a system of dictatorship to contain the chaos, widespread dissatisfaction, indifference and anarchy that are the effects of insensitiveness of government to the rightful demands of the people. The emergence of totalitarianism in China, in many countries in South America and other places in the world could easily be traced to unrestricted corrupt ways of government officials.

And so, Madam President, let our Ombudsman, called the eyes and ears of the people, the super lawyer-for-free of the oppressed and the downtrodden, raise a new hope in our people who must be given the reassurance that the government really cares for them. Along with the creation of the office of Ombudsman, I feel grateful to our Committee for embodying substantially my resolution providing that the right of the State to recover properties unlawfully acquired by public officials or employees shall not prescribe. This is a provision designed to enable the government to forfeit ill-gotten wealth of public officers, regardless of the lapse of time.

Madam President, we hear of public officers who believe in the Avelino question of “What are we in power for?” and in the Perez question of “What is wrong with the government officials providing for their future?” and who, after several years in service, find themselves graduating from “pauperism” to “millionairism.” They live in palatial homes, ride in high-class automobiles, hold extravagant parties, go abroad and wear expensive jewelries in utter disregard of the basic rules of decency and honor. Madam President, granting the State the constitutional, imprescriptible right to forfeit ill-gotten wealth of erring public officers is, to my mind, a highly significant reform in public service.

Thank you, Madam President.

II. TANODBAYAN ROOTS

MR. MONSOD: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Monsod is recognized.

MR. MONSOD: May I just close this presentation by saying that in reflecting and trying to put these sections together we realized that there are no one-time solutions to many of our problems, that good government is the cumulative effect of many safeguards within the Constitution, and it is our modest opinion that the concept of the Ombudsman, as presently formulated, will make a contribution towards that end.

Madam President, the Committee now puts itself at the disposal of the Commission for interpellation.

MR. RODRIGO: Madam President.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Rodrigo is recognized.

MR. RODRIGO: Will the Committee yield to a few questions?

MR. MONSOD: Yes, Madam President.

MR. RODRIGO: I notice that the proposed provisions on the Ombudsman retain the Tanodbayan, and there seems to be an overlapping in the functions of the Tanodbayan and the Ombudsman. What is the clear-cut dividing line between the functions of the Ombudsman and the Tanodbayan, so that our people will know when to go to the Tanodbayan and when to go to the Ombudsman?

MR. MONSOD: Madam President, essentially, the difference lies in one being a prosecutory arm and the other a champion of the citizen who is not bound by legal technicalities or legal forms, but I would like to ask Commissioner Nolleto to explain this in detail.

MR. NOLLEDO: If we go over the provisions of P.D. No. 1607, which amended P.D. No. 1487, creating the Office of the Tanodbayan, also called by Mr. Marcos as Ombudsman, there are two parts in the functions of the Tanodbayan: First, to act as prosecutor of anti-graft cases, and to entertain complaints from the public. The second part constitutes the basic function of the Ombudsman. And if we turn to page 3 of the report of the Committee, Section 5 provides, and I quote:

The Tanodbayan, created pursuant to the mandate of Section 6 of Article XIII of the 1973 Constitution, shall continue to function and exercise its powers as provided by law, except those conferred on the office of the Ombudsman created under this Constitution.

This means that we are removing the second part of the functions of the Tanodbayan and vesting the same in the office of the Ombudsman; and, therefore, the Tanodbayan shall continue to discharge his functions under the first part merely as prosecutor, like a fiscal, of anti-graft cases which are filed with the Anti-Graft Court.

MR. RODRIGO: So, the Ombudsman cannot prosecute?

MR. NOLLEDO: No, he cannot. He can refer the cases that should be prosecuted to the appropriate official — he may be the Tanodbayan or he may be the ordinary fiscal.

MR. RODRIGO: Has the Ombudsman any power to compel the prosecuting arm to prosecute or can he only recommend?

MR. NOLLEDO: He can direct.

III. THE OMBUDSMAN'S PREROGATIVE

MR. RODRIGO: Can he command?

MR. NOLLEDO: That is equivalent to commanding the fiscal if the fiscal refuses to file the case. And then in that case, if the fiscal refuses, then there are available remedies. He may appeal to the Ministry of Justice.

MR. RODRIGO: Can the Ombudsman act on his own?

MR. NOLLEDO: Yes, even without a complaint.

MR. RODRIGO: If the fiscal refuses to file the information, can the Ombudsman file the information?

MR. NOLLEDO: No. I understand he will appeal to the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Justice will correspondingly decide on the appeal. If the Ministry of Justice, for example, upholds the Ombudsman, there is no question about that. But if the Ministry of Justice does not uphold him, the Ombudsman perhaps, based on the presidential form of government, may appeal to the President. And the President, where the Minister of Justice is merely his alter ego, may overrule the Minister of Justice.

MR. RODRIGO: An ordinary citizen now can do that. He goes to the fiscal; the fiscal does not want to listen to him or to prosecute, so he goes to the Minister of Justice. And if the Minister of Justice does not want to act, he can appeal to the President. So, what is the use of the Ombudsman then?

MR. COLAYCO: Madam President, of course, he can do that if he has his own lawyer, and he can afford it. But the main thrust of this office is precisely for the Ombudsman to take over after the complainant has filed his complaint.

MR. RODRIGO: May I beg the Gentleman's pardon?

MR. COLAYCO: All that the complainant has to do is to file his complaint and the Ombudsman will do the rest. For instance, there may be a case where another government office could properly attend to the complaint. Now under this provision, he will not tell the complainant, "Pumunta ka doon, puwedeng gawin 'yan.'" No. The Ombudsman must act on his own. And if he thinks that the other office can do it better, he has to take the steps himself to refer the case there and follow it up. The reason why our common people are turned off is that they are not attended to. That is the main point.

MR. RODRIGO: How can we be sure that the Ombudsman will attend to these people? Kung pinababayaan noong fiscal, paano nating masisiguro na hindi pababayaan ng Ombudsman?

MR. COLAYCO: That is a good question, but then that is why we have to choose the right people.

MR. RODRIGO: We try to choose the right people for fiscals and all that.

MR. COLAYCO: We are humans and judges fail in their duties.

MR. RODRIGO: What I am driving at is, we might be providing for a useless appendage.

MR. COLAYCO: No, I do not think so because the appointment will be made by the Judicial and Bar Council which we already have.

IV. APPOINTMENT OF THE OMBUDSMAN

MR. RODRIGO: That is another point I want to raise. Why should the appointment be done by the Judicial and Bar Council or through its recommendation? That is done only to the members of the Supreme Court, while the members of the Constitutional Commissions are appointed by the President with the confirmation of the Commission on Appointments. Why should we rank the Ombudsman with the Justices, of the Supreme Court?

MR COLAYCO: Let me correct the Gentleman's impression. The Judicial and Bar Council will choose all the members of the judiciary, from the Supreme Court down to the lowest level.

MR. RODRIGO: Yes, and the judges. But then the Judicial and Bar Council has nothing to do with the appointment of the members of the Constitutional Commissions. The Gentleman also stated that the Ombudsman will have the rank of a chairman of a Constitutional Commission and the members will also have the rank of the members of the Constitutional Commissions.

But then we have already approved the report on the Constitutional Commissions, and the chairman and the members of the Constitutional Commissions do not go through the Judicial and Bar Council; they are just appointed by the President with the confirmation of the Commission on Appointments. Why do we segregate the Ombudsman from the Constitutional Commissions?

MR. NOLLEDO: Madam President, I think the purpose is very basic and obvious: to maintain the independence of the Ombudsman. If we will allow the Commission on Appointments to interfere in the appointment of an Ombudsman, knowing how politicians are, they can appoint their men, perhaps their followers, to be Ombudsman. And, therefore, the Ombudsman will be subjected to possible future interference from these politicians.

MR RODRIGO: If the intention is to maintain the independence of the Ombudsman, with more reason do we want to maintain the independence of the Constitutional Commissions — the Commission on Elections or the COMELEC; the Commission on Audit or the COA; and the Civil Service Commission — and we have already acted on it.

Why is it that in the case of the Ombudsman, the sponsor would want to rank them with judges and segregate them from the Constitutional Commissions — the COMELEC, COA, Civil Service — whose members are appointed by the President with the confirmation of the Commission on Appointments? The sponsor wants to make a class out of the Ombudsman.

MR. MONSOD: Madam President, there is a distinction between the qualifications required of an Ombudsman and the qualifications required of the members of the Constitutional Commissions. In the case of the Commission on Civil Service, the members are people who have experience in public administration; in the case of the Commission on Audit, they could be people with auditing experience and certified public accountants; and in the case of the Commission on Elections, they could be people with a college degree who are not necessarily lawyers.

In the case of the Constitutional Commissions, it might not be proper to have the prescreening done by the Judicial and Bar Council because the reach of the nominees goes beyond experience in law. In the case of the qualifications of the Ombudsman, the proposal is that they be members of the bar and, therefore, we made the presumption — rightly or wrongly — that perhaps the Judicial and Bar Council would be an appropriate prescreening body as far as looking for the right man for the job is concerned.

MR. RODRIGO: Does the Committee feel very strongly about this stand?

MR. COLAYCO: I was going to say that. I think the Committee, as I announced earlier, is open to suggestions.

MR. RODRIGO: Thank you.

MR. COLAYCO: Yes, because what we want is that this body be created, and so, we are inviting suggestions because this is something new to us.

V. FUNCTION

MR. MONSOD: May I just go back to another comment the Gentleman made earlier on the lack of prosecutory functions of the Ombudsman. We discussed this in the Committee and I will admit that the distinction is not clear-cut. However, one of the concepts of the Ombudsman is his ability to persuade reforms, and we felt that perhaps, giving him a prosecutory function might be a bit contradictory with that function because it is better if he attains it through goodwill. However, we also wanted to invest in the event that public officials are not responsive by investing him with certain powers he can resort to in order to see to it that the omission or the act is rectified. For example, he may direct the proper officials to do so. Another power that he has which depends a lot on his prestige is his ability to publicize a wrong or an injustice, because then you have public opinion operating against the erring public official.

MR. RODRIGO: So, the Ombudsman does not have a prosecutory function nor punitive powers.

MR. COLAYCO: None.

MR. RODRIGO: All that he relies upon is his persuasive power.

MR. COLAYCO: Yes. Persuasive power plus the ability to require that the proper legal steps be taken to compel the officer to comply.

MR. RODRIGO: Yes, but what is meant by “required” is that the Ombudsman cannot compel.

MR. COLAYCO: We must distinguish this.

MR. RODRIGO: Can the Ombudsman compel a fiscal so file . . .

MR. COLAYCO: Not to file but to investigate. That is a duty which is compellable by mandamus, and the Ombudsman will be empowered to do that.

MR. RODRIGO: To file a mandamus case?

MR. COLAYCO: Yes, to compel him to investigate.

MR. RODRIGO: But on his own power, the Ombudsman cannot compel; he has to go to court. If the fiscal does not want it done, he has to go to court to file.

MR. COLAYCO: But that can be easily inserted among the powers. That is our idea. We would like to receive fresh ideas.

MR. RODRIGO: Let us go back to the division between the powers of the Tanodbayan and the Ombudsman which says that:

The Tanodbayan . . . shall continue to function and exercise its powers as provided by law, except those conferred on the office of the Ombudsman created under this Constitution.

The powers of the Ombudsman are enumerated in Section 12.

MR. COLAYCO: They are not exclusive.

MR. RODRIGO: So, these powers can also be exercised by the Tanodbayan?

MR. COLAYCO: No, I was saying that the powers enumerated here for the Ombudsman are not exclusive.

MR. RODRIGO: Precisely, I am coming to that. The last of the enumerated functions of the Ombudsman is: “to exercise such powers or perform such functions or duties as may be provided by law.” So, the legislature may vest him with powers taken away from the Tanodbayan, may it not?

MR. COLAYCO: Yes.

MR. MONSOD: Yes.

MR. RODRIGO: And it is possible that pretty soon the Tanodbayan will be a useless appendage and will lose all his powers.

MR. COLAYCO: No. I am afraid the Gentleman has the wrong perception of the system. We are leaving to the Tanodbayan the continuance of his functions and the exercise of the jurisdiction given to him pursuant to . . .

MR. RODRIGO: Law.

MR. COLAYCO: No. Pursuant first to the Constitution and the law which mandated the creation of the office.

MR. RODRIGO: Madam President, Section 5 reads: “The Tanodbayan shall continue to function and exercise its powers as provided by law.”

MR. COLAYCO: That is correct, because it is under P.D. No. 1630.

MR. RODRIGO: So, if it is provided by law, it can be taken away by law, I suppose.

MR. COLAYCO: That is correct.

MR. RODRIGO: And precisely, Section 12 (6) says that among the functions that can be performed by the Ombudsman are “such functions or duties as may be provided by law.” The sponsors admitted that the legislature later on might remove some powers from the Tanodbayan and transfer these to the Ombudsman.

MR. COLAYCO: Madam President, that is correct.

MR. MONSOD: Madam President, perhaps, it might be helpful if we give the spirit and intentment of the Committee. What we wanted to avoid is the situation where it deteriorates into a prosecution arm. We wanted to give the idea of the Ombudsman a chance, with prestige and persuasive powers, and also a chance to really function as a champion of the citizen.

However, we do not want to foreclose the possibility that in the future, the Assembly, as it may see fit, may have to give additional powers to the Ombudsman; we want to give the concept of a pure Ombudsman a chance under the Constitution.

MR. RODRIGO: Madam President, what I am worried about is, if we create a constitutional body which has neither punitive nor prosecutory powers but only persuasive powers, we might be raising the hopes of our people too much and then disappoint them.

MR. MONSOD: I agree with the Commissioner.

MR. RODRIGO: Anyway, since we state that the powers of the Ombudsman can later on be implemented by the legislature, why not leave this to the legislature?

MR. MONSOD: Yes, because we want to avoid what happened in 1973. I read the committee report which recommended the approval of the 27 resolutions for the creation of the office of the Ombudsman, but notwithstanding the explicit purpose enunciated in that report, the implementing law — the last one, P.D. No. 1630 — did not follow the main thrust; instead it created the Tabodbayan.

MR. RODRIGO: Another question, Madam President. This office will be composed of five members. Will they all come from Manila?

MR. MONSOD: No, please read further.

MR. RODRIGO: Does the office of the Ombudsman have to act as a body?

MR. COLAYCO: It can act both as a body and along, because the head of the office is the Ombudsman himself.

MR. RODRIGO: Let us say that one Ombudsman comes from Mindanao. What I know is that this Ombudsman should be appointed but will have his office in Manila.

MR. COLAYCO: No, Madam President.

MR. RODRIGO: Does the Ombudsman have to be in Mindanao?

MR. COLAYCO: Yes, that is correct.

MR. RODRIGO: How about somebody from Sulu or Zamboanga who wants to complain?

MR. COLAYCO: Unless we make a start, when can we begin to comply and fulfill the needs of our people? Unfortunately, we know that there are many of us who need this. Of course, we cannot say from the very start that there will be five Deputy Ombudsmen for Mindanao alone.

MR. RODRIGO: No, I did not say that. It says here there will be five, one Ombudsman and four members.

MR. COLAYCO: For a start.

MR. RODRIGO: Yes. I just want to get right to the point. There are five members, and we have 54 million Filipinos, who all want to complain. Will the Ombudsmen be accessible to all, especially the poor people in the barrios who are the ones supposed to be benefited by this provision? How can they make themselves available?

MR. MONSOD: Madam President, the intention of the provision is that there will be an office of the Ombudsman, not that there will be only five people in that office. I think we prefaced our presentation with the qualification that there are no one-time solutions to all the problems. But we would like to institute one office that could be an answer to some of the problems of our countrymen. This is certainly not a solution to all the complaints of 55 million Filipinos. If we use that argument, then why institute offices that are not located in each and every barrio? Why have courts only in certain areas? Why not in each and every barangay?

I think our position is that, as Commissioner Colayco said, we want to give the concept a chance because it could be a vehicle for our people to correct injustices and misconduct and impropriety.

MR. RODRIGO: Madam President, my question is, will this Ombudsmen have a representative in every municipality, like there is a court in every municipality and city in the Philippines, so that the office will be accessible to the people who want to complain?

MR. MONSOD: Madam President, it is possible in time as the concept is developed, refined and accepted by the people, like in other countries where they have set up different types of Ombudsman — there is an Ombudsman for the military affairs; an Ombudsman for the youth and so on. But then this becomes a complicated and comprehensive view which can be handled subsequently by Congress.

MR. RODRIGO: Thank you.

MR. RAMA: Madam President, I ask that Commissioner Regalado be recognized.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Regalado is recognized.

MR. REGALADO: Thank you, Madam President.

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MR. BENGZON: Apropos of the points raised by Commissioner Rodrigo, in all of these enumerated functions of the Ombudsman, am I correct in saying that the Ombudsman is a troubleshooter and some kind of a “sumbongero” for the people?

MR. ROMULO: Yes, he is a busybody.

MR. BENGZON: Thank you.

MR. SARMIENTO: Madam President, I ask that the honorable Commissioner Maambong be recognized to speak for five minutes.

THE PRESIDENT: Commissioner Maambong is recognized.

MR. MAAMBONG: Thank you.

Considering that the Acting Floor Leader said that I will speak for five minutes, I will now manifest my intention that after my time I might have to ask for an extension of just a few minutes because I feel that there are very important matters that I have to discuss with the Committee.

First of all, I will not repeat the concerns of Commissioners Rodrigo and Bengzon about the creation of the Ombudsman. I would just like to indicate for the record my objection to this creation considering the following: I have made a comparative study between the Sandiganbayan, the Tanodbayan and the Ombudsman.

As far as powers are concerned, the Sandiganbayan is a court of law. It is created not directly by the Constitution but by P.D. No. 1606 by virtue of the mandate of the Constitution. We will notice that the Sandiganbayan as a court of law, according to Section 1 of P.D. No. 1606, has the same level as the Intermediate Appellate Court with all the inherent powers of a court of justice. And yet in the present formulation of impeachable officers, the Committee failed to indicate whether its members or justices are impeachable or not, in spite of the fact that in the same Section 1 of P.D. No. 1606, it is clearly indicated that the justices of the Sandiganbayan are impeachable officers. Incidentally on this note, I would like to recall that when we filed a petition before the Supreme Court in the case of *Rufino Nuñez vs. Sandiganbayan and the Republic of the Philippines*, which incidentally we lost, we questioned the mention of justices of the Sandiganbayan as impeachable officers because they have never been indicated as such in the Constitution.

Compared to the Tanodbayan, while the Sandiganbayan is a court of law, the Tanodbayan is a prosecutory body. When we go down the line to the Ombudsman, what is it under the present configuration of the proposal? Its power is only recommendatory; it directs people to do something, nothing more. As far as I am concerned, the Ombudsman under the present proposal is inutile as far as powers are concerned. On the other hand, it is mentioned that it has the duty to act promptly on complaints. And I would like to agree with Commissioner Bengzon on this point. So I would repeat that its power is only recommendatory; it only directs, nothing more. Of course, there is that phrase in the proposal which says: "and perform other functions and duties as may be provided by law."

Second point: As far as impeachability of officers is concerned, in the present configuration of the proposal, as I said, the Sandiganbayan justices do not appear to be impeachable, although under Section 1 of P.D. No. 1606 they are supposed to be impeachable. As far as the Tanodbayan justices are concerned, they are not included among the impeachable officers. As regards the Ombudsman and his deputies, the proposal says they are impeachable. Here is a body which is only recommendatory, not a court of law, nor even a prosecutory body and yet, we consider its members impeachable officers.

Third point: The Sandiganbayan is created by a mandate of the Constitution. That is why we have P.D. No. 1606 amending P.D. No. 1486. In the case of the Tanodbayan, it is also created by a mandate of the Constitution. That is why we have P.D. No. 1607 amending P.D. No. 1487. In the case of the Ombudsman, the proposal now is to create this directly on the level of a constitutional commission. And yet — I will refer back to its power — it is only recommendatory and directory.

Let us go to the fourth classification as to their immunities. The Sandiganbayan justices do not have immunities under P.D. No. 1606. In the case of the Tanodbayan justices, however, Section 20 of P.D. No. 1607 clearly indicates their immunities which incidentally are the very same immunities which had been copied almost verbatim in the case of the executive order granting powers to the Presidential Commission on Good Government. In the case of the Ombudsman and his deputies, there is no mention that they are immune from civil prosecution.

So we have a situation where a court of law has no immunities. We have a prosecutory arm in the Tanodbayan which has immunities and we have the Ombudsman which has none.

I would like the Committee to please consider these things because I understand from the Chairman that the Committee will think about this during this weekend.

I will now go to the more important point, I have already reached my time.

MR. NOLLEDO: May we have the questions?

MR. MAAMBONG: Yes, Madam President.

MR. NOLLEDO: Does the Commissioner have questions to ask of the Committee?

MR. MAAMBONG: I have questions on the next matter which I will discuss, and I now move, Madam President, that I be given a time extension of a few minutes, if it is all right with the body.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

MR. MAAMBONG: Thank you.

I will now concern myself with the statement of the Chairman that this impeachment proceeding is very important in the light of the previous happenings in this country. I would like to believe that he was referring to the impeachment case filed against the former President which was covered by Resolution No. 644.

My questions will be directed to this point in order that in the future we will not have difficulties. I will not ask on the procedural aspect. I understand Commissioner Davide will take care of that. I am more concerned about the nature of the impeachment proceedings on which we, members of the Committee on Justice and Good Government that took cognizance of that impeachment proceeding against the former President, really had a lot of difficulty.

We have now in the present proposal the following grounds for impeachment: culpable violation of the Constitution, treason, bribery, other high crimes, graft and corruption or betrayal of trust. I think we have no problem in the case of treason and bribery because these are all covered by law. I do not think we have also any problem in the case of graft and corruption because it is covered by RA 1319, which was promulgated on August 17, 1960. We will now concern ourselves with the interpretation of the phrases "other high crimes" and "betrayal of trust." I will start by asking the Committee this question: What is really the thinking of the Committee as far as impeachment proceedings are concerned? Are impeachment proceedings criminal in nature or not? In order to answer this very clearly, I would like to indicate the following: In the case of *State v. Larse*, 70 Nebraska 92, which is a United States case, the Supreme Court ruled that the proceeding is likened to a proceeding by indictment in a court of criminal jurisdiction. It is in its nature highly penal and is governed by rules of law applicable to criminal prosecution. On the other hand, I would like to indicate this to the Committee that in the case of official misconduct, we have here statements which I think the Committee should comment on. Official misconduct is supposed to fall into three categories: One, exceeding the constitutional bounds of the powers of the office in derogation of the powers of another branch of government; two, behaving in a manner grossly incompatible with the proper function and purpose of the office; and, three, employing the power of the office for an improper purpose or personal gain.

The provision which we have here says:

... impeachment and the criminal law serve fundamentally different purposes. Impeachment is the first step in a remedial process. The purpose is not personal punishment. Its function is primarily to maintain constitutional government. The general applicability of the criminal law also makes it inappropriate as the standard. In an impeachment proceeding, a President is called to account for abusing powers which only a President possesses. Impeachable conduct may include the serious failure to discharge the affirmative duties imposed on the President by the Constitution. Unlike a criminal case, the cause for removal may be based on his entire course of conduct in office. It may be a course of conduct more than individual acts that has a tendency to subvert constitutional government. (Power of Impeachment — Guide to Congress, p. 149)

For purposes of proper elucidation, what is the thinking now of the Committee as far as this impeachment procedure is concerned? Is this a criminal proceeding? If so, we have to use the principle of criminal law.

MR. ROMULO: Yes. Firstly, we agree with the quotation that the Commissioner has just read. Insofar as we are concerned, the procedure is analogous to a criminal trial but it is not a criminal prosecution per se. The goal of an impeachment is merely to remove the fellow from office for the crimes indicated. However, Section 3 (6) of this proposed Article itself — and this is really very close to the provision of the 1935 Constitution — says:

Judgment in cases of impeachment shall not extend further than the removal from office and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust, or profit under the Government of the Philippines, but the party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to prosecution, trial and punishment according to law.

In essence, I think that answers the Commissioner's question. He is then subject to a separate prosecution, whether civilly or criminally, for the acts that he had committed.

MR. MAAMBONG: May I proceed now to two very short questions considering that we have already identified the problem and the answer is that it is not a purely criminal prosecution in terms of procedure. We have here a statement in the book of Simpson which reads:

A person subject to impeachment by Congress is entitled to due process of law although presently there is little judicial authority. It can be suggested that he is also entitled to his privilege against self-incrimination, right to

counsel, right to be informed of the nature and the cause of the accusation against him, and the right to be confronted with adversary witnesses. (Treaties on Federal Impeachment, p. 27)

Would this statement be applicable to an impeachment proceeding?

MR. ROMULO: As the provisions now read, I think the Senate, as well as the House, will set up its own rules. I do not know whether or not we have to adhere to that because what the Commissioner has read, strictly speaking, is a criminal proceeding. But the President like any citizen is entitled to the bill of rights, like confrontation of witnesses, notice of the charges and so on. I think those are fundamental and he is entitled to them.

MR. MAAMBONG: Let us go to a bottom-line question then. When the Senate acting as a body will now try the impeachment case, will it conduct the proceeding using principles of criminal procedure?

MR. ROMULO: I do not think, strictly speaking, that it need be criminal procedures. The important thing, I believe, is that the involved party should know the charges. He must have the opportunity to answer the charges and the proceedings must be, in total, fair and impartial. I do not think we have to go to the minutiae of a criminal proceeding because that is not the intention. This is not a criminal proceeding per se.

MR. MAAMBONG: In the matter of presentation, for example, of evidence, when it comes to treason and bribery, would the rules on criminal procedure be applied, considering that I am now particularizing on the ground which is punishable by the Revised Penal Code, like treason or bribery?

MR. ROMULO: Yes, but we will notice that, strictly speaking, for the crime of treason under the Revised Penal Code, he is answerable for that crime somewhere else. So my conclusion is that obviously, it is in the criminal court where we will apply all the minutiae of evidence and proceedings and all these due processes. But we can be more liberal when it comes to the impeachment proceedings, for instance, in the Senate, because we are after the removal of that fellow, and conviction in that case really amounts to his removal from office. The courts of justice will take care of the criminal and civil aspects.

MR. MAAMBONG: Last point, just to enrich our records. I would like the Committee to comment on this quotation from Philippine Constitution by Former Chief Justice Fernando, wherein he said:

In the United States Constitution, the term is high crime and misdemeanors. The Philippine Constitution speaks only of high crimes. There is support for the view that while there need not be a showing of the criminal character of the act imputed, it must be of sufficient seriousness as to justify the belief that there was a grave violation of the trust imposed on the official sought to be impeached. (pp. 460-461)

Would the Committee agree to this statement?

MR. ROMULO: Yes. Let me say that essentially, impeachment is a political act.

MR. MAAMBONG: Yes. I will also quote the report of the General Committee on the impeachment of President Quirino, Volume IV, Congressional Records, House of Representatives, 1553:

High crimes refer to those offenses which, like treason and bribery, are indictable offenses and are of such enormous gravity that they strike at the very life or orderly working of the government.

Would the Committee agree to this?

MR. ROMULO: Yes, of course, especially if the President is involved.

MR. MAAMBONG: Finally, I will again refer to the committee report on the impeachment of President Quirino on the phrase "culpable violation of the Constitution," and I quote:

Culpable violation of the Constitution means willful and intentional violation of the Constitution and not violation committed unintentionally or involuntarily or in good faith or thru an honest mistake of judgment.

Would the Committee agree?

MR. ROMULO: Yes, we agree with that.

MR. MAAMBONG: And this is really the final quotation which I would like the Committee to comment on. Chief Justice Fernando also said:

Culpable violation implies deliberate intent, perhaps even a certain degree of perversity for it is not easy to imagine that individuals in the category of these officials would go so far as to defy knowingly what the Constitution commands.

Could this be an agreeable interpretation to the Committee?

MR ROMULO: Yes, subject to exception, such as the last administrator we had.

MR. MAAMBONG: The Commissioner has been very kind.

Thank you very much. Thank you, Madam President.

MR. NOLLEDO: Madam President, before the Acting Floor Leader calls for the next interpellator, I would like to make a comment on the statements of Commissioners Rodrigo and Maambong that the function of the Ombudsman is merely recommendatory and that the office may constitute as a useless appendage in the government . . .

Suppose a common tao goes to a public office and he is not attended to, so he complains to the chief of the division. The usual happening is that there is indifference. He feels aggrieved, he goes home and he does not pursue his case anymore. He does not know where to go. So he goes to the Ombudsman, and the Ombudsman assists him by being his lawyer for free. In this case, does the Commissioner think we are not doing service to our people by giving him a lawyer for free to champion his cause in order that possible abuse on the part of government officials may be minimized, if not eradicated?

I would like the body to know that it is not exactly true to state that the basic function of the Ombudsman is recommendatory. If we look on page 4, Section 12, one of the functions of the Ombudsman is:

To direct, upon complaint or at its own instance, any public official or employee of the government, as well as of any government-owned corporation or institution, to perform and expedite any act or duty required of him by law, or to stop, prevent, and correct any abuse or impropriety in the performance of duties.

Many of the valid complaints of the common tao who go to public offices are not publicized: no one assists them, so they just leave the government offices in utter exasperation. But when the public officers know that there is an office of the Ombudsman that will champion his cause, government officials will also be careful in mistreating the common tao. They know that their actions can be publicized. They know that the Ombudsman can recommend their removal. They know that the Ombudsman will direct them to perform their duties. And when they do not perform their duties, they will be investigated. These are factors that should be considered to deter public officials from discharging their duties with inefficiency.

Thank you, Madam President.

...

MR. REGALADO: In connection also with that concern of Commissioner Rodrigo regarding the Ombudsman being merely a duplication, I have here the records of the former Ombudsman to show that one of the reasons he could not function in his administrative or recommendatory capacity was the number of cases for prosecution which took almost all his time. So I believe that there should really be an Ombudsman to take care of the recommendatory, policy-determining, policy-suggesting or administrative aspect of his position. The whole task of prosecution should be left to a regular Tanodbayan.

One more thing, and I think the Commissioner should look into this: In the Committee on Constitutional Commissions and Agencies where the Chairman and I enjoy each other's company, there has been submitted Proposed Resolution No. 365 which seeks to constitutionalize a Commission on Human Rights with investigatory, reportorial and recommendatory powers insofar as violations of human rights are concerned. Would the Commissioner consider the possibility of having these functions of the proposed constitutional Commission on Human Rights ingrafted into the functions of the Ombudsman so that there will be no need to create another constitutional commission only for that purpose? But if these functions are taken over by the Ombudsman who himself is a constitutional officer, then, possibly, it will not only be economical for the government but it will result in nonduplication of the same investigatory, recommendatory and reportorial functions because these are limited under this proposed resolution to human rights violations. I think those functions should properly be absorbed by the Ombudsman because, after all, his functions cover all governmental institutions.

MR. MONSOD: Madam President, the Chairman of the Committee on Constitutional Commissions and Agencies is not here, but I am a member of that Committee and we would like to tell the body that the Chairman and the members have accepted the idea of setting up a Commission on Human Rights because the violation of human rights is a very special problem in our country, and the Ombudsman really has a wide enough area of activities already. I think we should look at the Ombudsman not only as somebody who looks into offenses or crimes but also into government inefficiency, impropriety and misconduct that may not really amount to crime. And by definition that is already quite a wide and broad range of functions.

MR. REGALADO: Madam President, I am the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Proposed Additional Constitutional Commissions in the same Committee, but I was never consulted on this matter. That is why when I went over this proposed resolution which seeks to create a new and additional constitutional commission, that was the first time I went over the proposed functions of that Commission on Human Rights and I had toyed with the idea that possibly they could be placed also under the duties and functions of the Ombudsman.

MR. MONSOD: Madam President, I was informed by the Chairman that he is sorry if the same views have not been shared with the Commissioner. Perhaps, it is a tentative conclusion on his part, and I am sure that that can be ironed out over the weekend.

MR. REGALADO: Yes, because I got my copy of that proposed resolution only yesterday, although I am the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Proposed Additional Commissions.
Thank you.

VI. QUALIFICATIONS

MR. NOLLEDO: In that case, assuming that we give that P.D. No. 1606 a category of the law, if that law is repealed by the legislature, the basis will be lost, meaning, the provision on whether or not they are removable by impeachment will also be correspondingly repealed. So I do not see any anachronism involved in the situation because the provision authorizing impeachment is not a constitutional provision, but a mere statutory provision. And when it is a statutory provision, it can be repealed.

MR. REGALADO: When I said the provision is an anachronism, I am referring to the present state of the law. But if the Commissioner will agree that this provision be eliminated, then the anachronism will not exist.

MR. MONSOD: For the information of the Commissioner, we were addressing ourselves here to the continuity of the institution, and we would welcome any suggestions or amendments at the proper time.

MR. REGALADO: Yes, that is why I said that this is without prejudice to an amendment, so that the Committee can enjoy its weekend going over these provisions. I think we should clarify Section 8 a little more, because it says:

The Ombudsman and his Deputies shall be natural-born citizens of the Philippines, at least forty years old, with a college degree, or a member of the Philippine Bar.

Unless otherwise recast, it would appear that the Ombudsman himself need not be a member of the Philippine Bar, but with only a college degree.

MR. MONSOD: I believe there might have been a typographical error here and, again, an amendment would be in order.

MR. REGALADO: Yes, thank you.

On Section 10, regarding the Ombudsman, there has been concern aired by Commissioner Rodrigo about who will see to it that the Ombudsman will perform his duties because he is something like a guardian of the government. This recalls the statement of Juvenal that while the Ombudsman is the guardian of the people, "Quis custodiet ipsos custodies," who will guard the guardians? I understand here that the Ombudsman who has the rank of a chairman of a constitutional commission is also removable only by impeachment.

MR. ROMULO: That is the intention, Madam President.

MR. REGALADO: Only the Ombudsman?

MR. MONSOD: Only the Ombudsman.

MR. REGALADO: So not his deputies, because I am concerned with the phrase "have the rank of." We know, for instance, that the City Fiscal of Manila has the rank of a justice of the Intermediate Appellate Court, and yet he is not a part of the judiciary. So I think we should clarify that also and read our discussions into the Record for purposes of the Commission and the Committee

MR. ROMULO: Yes. If I may just comment: the Ombudsman in this provision is a rank in itself really. That is how we look at it. But for purposes of government classification and salary, we thought we have to give him a recognizable or an existing rank as a point of reference more than anything else.

MR. REGALADO: Yes, but my concern is whether or not he is removable only by impeachment, because Section 2 enumerates the impeachable officials, and it does not mention public officers with the rank of constitutional commissioners.

MR. ROMULO: But we do mention them as the Ombudsman is mentioned in that enumeration. We use the word "Ombudsman" because we would like it to be his title; we do not want him called "Chairman" or "Justice." We want him called Ombudsman.

MR. REGALADO: In connection also with that concern of Commissioner Rodrigo regarding the Ombudsman being merely a duplication, I have here the records of the former Ombudsman to show that one of the reasons he could not function in his administrative or recommendatory capacity was the number of cases for prosecution which took almost all his time. So I believe that there should really be an Ombudsman to take care of the recommendatory, policy-determining, policy-suggesting or administrative aspect of his position. The whole task of prosecution should be left to a regular Tanodbayan.

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Remarks of President Corazon Aquino to a Toast to President Wee Kim Wee

**Remarks
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To a toast to President Wee Kim Wee**

[Held in Singapore, August 26, 1986]

CLOSING RANKS BEHIND ASEAN

In brief remarks preparatory to a toast to Singapore's leaders, the President cites common ASEAN problems like an increasingly protectionist world market and acute debt problems. Thus, for ASEAN to succeed, regional interests must prevail over narrow considerations of national costs and benefits.

Free trade is neither new nor imported to our region. The region now known as Southeast Asia was one free trade zone. Chinese, Malays, Indonesians traded freely with one another. The seas were our highways of commerce.

Those were simpler times, of course, and we don't pine for them. But something of the ideal of interdependence within this region; of free commerce and the innate economic strength of each trading partner to enjoy the rich variety of open trade endured, and found expression again in the goals of ASEAN. And now that ideal has found new life from the common injuries that have been inflicted on us by an increasingly protectionist world market and acute debt problems. This was shown in the vigorous support from among the members of ASEAN for Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's speech before the U.S. Congress forcefully expressing the common case of ASEAN against economic protectionism.

In the face of this common danger, we share Singapore's concern for a more cohesive economic arrangement within ASEAN. Regional interests must prevail in ASEAN's decision-making process over narrow considerations of national costs and benefits.

We therefore commend Singapore's initiative in proposing a formula for facilitating ASEAN's transition to higher levels of economic cooperation. This formula would allow economic projects to proceed upon agreement of three or four ASEAN members for so long as the other members do not object.

We are confident that with the energetic participation of Singapore, the forthcoming ASEAN summit in Manila will bring about the regional economic solidarity that we all seek

In this spirit, I ask you to stand and join me in a toast to the good health of President Wee Kim Wee; to the good health of Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew that his achievements may increase as one of Asia's great leaders; and to the continuing brotherhood of the peoples of our two nations.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Remarks of President Corazon Aquino to a Speech preceded by Ronald Reagan on Democracy

Remarks of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines To a Speech preceded by Ronald Reagan on Democracy

[Delivered at South Lawn, The White House, Washington, D.C., September 17, 1986]

A GOOD BEGINNING

Filipinos have recovered their self-confidence and pride, and hence their ability to deal with their major ally on equal footing – the only basis for a relationship between friends. The text of Mrs. Aquino's speech is preceded by President Ronald Reagan's remarks.

President Reagan: It was truly a pleasure to welcome and meet today with Philippine President Corazon Aquino. Her courage and her commitment to democracy, mirroring those same qualities in the Filipino people, have inspired the world and it's been an honor to have her as our guest.

President Aquino and I discussed her strenuous efforts to bolster the democratic institutions of her country and to insure its security and strengthen its economy. And I assured her that all America wants the Philippine democracy to succeed and to prosper and that we'll do what we can to help.

These have been trying times in the Philippines. President Aquino has been overseeing a historic transition. In the coming months a new constitution will be submitted which will pave the way for strong, democratically elected local and national governments. In the meantime, President Aquino has been doing her level best to unite her richly diverse people under a banner of freedom and opportunity.

Her efforts to reconcile all elements of her society and bring them into the democratic process are applauded here. I might add that her personal bravery in this heroic endeavor to diffuse conflict has won the hearts and imagination of the people everywhere.

Despite President Aquino's efforts, however, well-armed communist guerrillas remain a threat to democracy in the Philippines. President Aquino and I discussed her strategy to meet this challenge. It includes attacking the root political economic and social problems that feed insurgencies. The second half of the formula is building the Philippine military into a professional, properly armed and trained force that is capable of dealing with any threat.

The United States stands ready to assist President Aquino in her quest to create a stable and secure land, as well as in her commitment to invigorate the Philippine economy.

During our discussion today, President Aquino reaffirmed her belief that free enterprise is the surest path to development, the surest method of opening the door of opportunity and advancement to all her people. Her government stands for free trade and is encouraging private investment. She knows in the long-run nothing would better serve the Filipino people than unleashing the entrepreneurial spirit and putting the creative and economy-building power of the marketplace to work.

As one might surmise after hearing this, I'm bullish on the Philippines. I would hope American as well as foreign investors take notice of this incredible opportunity to help build a country. For our part, we will mold our efforts to encourage development in the Philippines. Today, for example, we discussed the idea of increasing Philippine exports to the United States, including improved treatment under our generalized system of preferences.

We also considered ways in which the Philippines can provide a larger share of the goods and services consumed by the US military facilities within that country.

And just a side note. When talking about those bases, our two countries share common interests in the peace and stability of the Pacific region. I'm confident that we will continue to enjoy a strong mutual defense relationship for the foreseeable future.

President Aquino reaffirmed today that the military bases agreement will be respected through its current term. I understand and am comfortable with her position. The next review of our defense relations is scheduled in 1988, and that gives us and the people of the Philippines plenty of time to think about it.

In the meantime, I will continue to ask Congress for appropriate levels of economic and military assistance above and beyond existing US base-related commitments.

The latest installment of our current aid effort, a \$100 million grant of economic support funds, which I am pleased to announce will be signed by our respective Cabinet members in a few moments – a \$50 million grant of military assistance, along with a \$20 million package of medical supplies and services – has been approved.

In the future, to the largest extent possible, US aid will be designed to provide the greatest benefit without exacerbating the country's debt burden.

And one last thought. Today governments, businesses, financial institutions and individuals are dealing with a new kind of government in the Philippines. We are dealing with a noble and honest people – people with ideals, people we can trust, and we place a high value on character and hope everyone appreciates this and takes it into account.

A great Filipino hero, Dr. Jose Rizal, once wrote, "God is justice: he cannot abandon his cause – the cause of liberty without which no justice is possible." Well, Jose Rizal, like President Aquino's husband, died for freedom and inspired his nation.

President Aquino and I reaffirmed the commitment of our two peoples to the ideals which so many Americans and Filipinos have given their lives, and we also reaffirm the bonds of friendship and affection between the United States and the Philippines.

It was truly an honor to have her here.

President Aquino: Thank you, President Reagan. This has been an opportunity to get to know each other, to explore common issues together. Above all, though, I can say that for my part the most important aspect has been the chance to meet each other.

We are both politicians who set great store on face-to-face encounters. Government-to-government contacts have their proper place, yet when the leadership of a country changes in such a dramatic fashion, as happened in the Philippines, it is only right that the Presidents of two such close allies meet and get to know each other. Issues do not generate of their own accord the decisions that will resolve them. In the end, decisions will be made by the people who have the responsibility to make them.

From this meeting today, both our governments will go out with a clear sense of priorities, with a recognition that we must both work hard to strengthen the bonds between us. I hope we have set the tone and direction for a new relationship. By recovering our democracy, we Filipinos have recovered our self-confidence and pride, and hence our ability to deal with our major ally on an equal footing. This is the only basis for a relationship between friends. And I think we were able to start on that agenda today. I was able to explain to President Reagan the problems we have inherited, all of them rooted in a devastated economy. I was also able to outline to him what we are doing to set things right. I am gratified that President Reagan understands and supports what we are trying to do.

As you know, we have placed our faith in the private sector as the stimulus of growth. I also briefed the President on the wide range of reforms we have embarked on to resolve our difficulties. A new constitution is in the final stages of drafting. There will be a referendum on it followed by elections early next year.

We are carrying out a long overdue program of military reform. Within this context of an economic reconstruction, political rebuilding and military reform, we can combat our remaining problem – the insurgency. As you know, we are pursuing a political approach, but this is backed by the military option. In all these areas of rebuilding, I hope we can count on American support and understanding.

But most important, reform is being done in a new environment of freedom, human rights, and democracy. So, as today's discussions showed, we have a lot of values in common again. We admire freedom and hard work in just the way you do. For two countries who have faith in God, in freedom, in the family, and in democratic values, we should allow nothing to come in the way of an evergrowing friendship.

Today was a good beginning and I thank you all for it.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Sponsorship speech of Commissioner Guingona on the draft of the 1987 Constitution, October 12, 1986

Sponsorship speech of Commissioner Serafin V.C. Guingona:
On the entire draft of the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines

Batasang Pambansa, Quezon City

October 12, 1986

This sponsorship speech is for the entire draft of the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines.

Today, we have completed the task of drafting a Constitution which is reflective of the spirit of our time -a spirit of nationalism, a spirit of liberation, a spirit of rising expectations.

On June 2, forty-eight men and women met in this hall-men and women from different walks of life with diverse backgrounds and orientations, even with conflicting convictions, but all sharing the same earnest desire to serve the people and to help draft a Constitution which will establish a government that the people can trust and enthusiastically support, a Constitution that guarantees individual rights and serves as a barrier against excesses of those in authority.

The men and women who drafted the 1986 Constitution were moved by the same spirit as that described by Clinton Rossiter who, in writing about the framers of the 1787 Constitution of the United States, said that the spirit of the framers was a blend of prudence and imagination, of caution and creativity, of principle and practicability, of idealism and realism about the governing and self-governing of men.

A Constitution of the people and for the people derives its authenticity and authority from the sovereign will; the power of the people precedes it. As such, it should reflect the norms, the values, the modes of thought of our society, preserve its heritage, promote its orderliness and security, protect its cherished liberties and guard against the encroachments of would-be dictators. These objectives have served as the framework in the work of drafting the 1986 Constitution.

The form and structure of our government under the draft Constitution is built within the context of the principle that the Philippines is a democratic and republican State. As such, the Constitution has provided for a presidential form of government with a bicameral legislature, where the President, the Vice-President, the members of the two Houses of Congress as well as certain officials of local governments are to be elected directly by the people by a majority vote. The draft Constitution has sought to broaden citizen participation by providing that the disabled and illiterates shall have the right to vote and the Congress shall provide for a system of absentee voting by qualified Filipinos abroad.

The concept of checks and balances has been maintained but with modifications to the traditional provisions with the end in view of making the three departments as coordinate and coequal as possible.

The executive power is vested in the President of the Philippines who possesses similar broad powers given to the Chief Executive under the 1935 Constitution. But conscious of the abuses perpetrated by the former President turned-dictator, some of these powers have been curbed. As Commander-in-Chief of all the Armed Forces of the Philippines, he may suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus or place the Philippines or any part thereof under martial law. However, in order to exercise such powers there must be an actual invasion or rebellion and not just an imminent danger thereof. Although the President may exercise these powers on his own authority, Congress may revoke such proclamation or suspension. Martial law does not suspend the operation of the Constitution nor supplant the functioning of the civil courts or legislative assemblies, nor does it automatically suspend the privilege of the writ.

Another restriction, Mr. Presiding Officer, on the powers of the President is contained in the provision that the President may contract or guarantee foreign loans on behalf of the Republic of the Philippines only with the concurrence of the Monetary Board and subject to such limitations as may be provided by Congress.

A significant innovation, as far as the legislative department is concerned, refers to the composition of the members of the House of Representatives. Representation in the Lower House has been broadened to embrace various sectors of society; in effect, enlarging the democratic base. It will be constituted by members who shall be elected in the traditional manner, representing political districts, as well as by members who shall be elected through the party list system. For three consecutive terms after the ratification of the draft Constitution, a definite number of seats shall be drawn from labor, peasant, urban poor, indigenous cultural minorities, women, youth and other sectors as may be provided by law.

Another important innovation, Mr. Presiding Officer, of the proposed Charter which exhibits its populist, pro-people orientation is the system of initiative and referendum, whereby the people can “directly propose and enact laws, or approve or reject any act or law or part thereof passed by the Congress or local legislative body.”

To promote a high standard of integrity in the legislature, Senators and Congressmen are obliged to make a full disclosure of their financial and business interests upon their assumption of office. There are also safeguards built into the Constitution to prevent the phenomenon of “juggling” appropriations for the benefit of politicians or of favored electoral districts.

The draft Constitution vests the judiciary with additional powers to make it meaningfully independent. Such independence is sought to be enhanced by making it immune from intrusions from the other branches of government, so that it can be an effective guardian and interpreter of the Constitution and protector of the people’s rights.

The President’s power to appoint members of the judiciary shall be subject to the provision that only recommendees from a Judicial and Bar Council created under the supervision of the Supreme Court may be appointed to vacancies for membership in the judiciary. Appointments to the judiciary shall not be subject to confirmation by the Commission on Appointments.

Judicial power, Mr. Presiding Officer, includes the duty “to determine whether or not there has been a grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction on the part of any branch or instrumentality of the government.” This duty has far-reaching implications. The Supreme Court cannot, like Pilate, wash its hands from its responsibility of reviewing acts of public officials and offices, as the Supreme Court had done during the Marcos administration where vital issues that concerned civil liberties and human rights were summarily left unresolved on the ground that they were “political questions.”

Congress may not deprive the Supreme Court of its jurisdiction over cases enumerated in the Constitution. Neither shall any law be passed reorganizing the judiciary when it undermines security of tenure. The Supreme Court shall have administrative supervision over all courts and the personnel thereof, and it shall have the power to appoint all officials and employees of the judiciary. Moreover, the judiciary shall enjoy fiscal autonomy.

Like the Congress and the judiciary, and to protect their independence, the constitutional commissions shall enjoy fiscal autonomy and shall appoint their officials in accordance with law.

The Civil Service Commission is charged with the task of adopting measures to promote the morale, efficiency, integrity, responsiveness, progressiveness and courtesy in the civil service. Restrictions are imposed on the eligibility of elective officials for appointment to any public position.

The Commission on Elections would have the power to file petitions in court for inclusion or exclusion of voters from the registry and to prosecute cases of violations of election laws. A free and open party system shall be allowed to evolve.

The Commission on Audit is given the exclusive authority to define the scope of its audit and examination. No law shall be passed exempting any entity of the government or its subsidiary, or any investment of public funds, from its jurisdiction.

The Constitution is not just a written legal document which fleshes out the form of government of a State and engineers its structure, but it also serves as a symbol to represent the solidarity of a people in a pluralistic society.

The proposed Charter seeks to widen the taxing powers of local governments, enabling them to impose taxes, fees and charges which shall accrue exclusively to them. These units shall have a just share in the national taxes which shall be automatically released to them. They are entitled to the equitable share of the proceeds in the utilization and development of the national wealth within their respective areas.

The draft Constitution creates two autonomous regions: one for Muslim Mindanao and the other for the Cordilleras.

The philosophy underscored, with regard to public officials, in the draft Constitution is that

Public office is a public trust and that public officers and employees are accountable to the people.

The draft Constitution provides that:

The State shall maintain honesty, and integrity in the public service and take positive and effective measures against graft and corruption.

An additional ground for impeachment, “betrayal of public trust,” which need not be an indictable offense, has been introduced. The House of Representatives shall have the exclusive power to initiate all cases of impeachment. The committee to which the verified complaint is sent cannot quash the same through nonreferral to the House, as was done during the Marcos regime.

The present anti-graft court known as the Sandiganbayan continues to function in the new Constitution. The independent office of the Ombudsman is created, the principal function of which is to investigate on its own or on complaint by any person, any act or omission of any public official, employee, office or agency, when such act or omission appears to be illegal, unjust, improper or inefficient.

The institutions through which the sovereign people rule themselves are essential for the effective operation of government. But these are not enough in order that the body politic may evolve and progress. There is need for an underlying socio-economic philosophy which would direct these political structures and serve as the mainspring for development. So it is that the draft Constitution contains separate Articles on Social Justice and National Economy and Patrimony.

Talk of people’s freedom and legal equality would be empty rhetoric as long as they continue to live in destitution and misery, without land, without employment, without hope. But in helping to bring about transformation, in helping the common man break away from the bondage of traditional society, in helping restore to him his dignity and worth, the right to individual initiative and to property shall be respected.

The Social Justice Article, to which our Commission President, the Honorable Cecilia Muñoz Palma, refers to as the “heart of the Constitution,” provides that Congress shall give highest priority to the enactment of measures that would reduce social, economic and political inequalities. The same article addresses the problems of (1) labor — local and overseas, organized and unorganized — recognizing the rights of all workers in the private as well as in the public sector, the rank and file and the supervisory, to self-organization, collective bargaining and peaceful and concerted activities including the right to strike in accordance with law; (2) the farmers, the farm workers, the subsistence fishermen and the fishworkers, through agrarian and natural resources reform; (3) the underprivileged and homeless citizens in urban centers and resettlement areas, through urban land reform and housing; (4) the health of the people, through an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development; (5) the women, by

ensuring the fundamental equality of women and men before the law, and (6) people's organizations, by facilitating the establishment of adequate consultation mechanisms.

The nation's economic policy must strike a healthy equilibrium between the need to spur growth and the goal of effective Filipino control of our economy. Our nation's patrimony should be protected without, however, closing our doors completely to those who wish to aid us in our task of economic recovery.

In the Article on National Economy and Patrimony, the State recognizes the indispensable role of the private sector, encourages private enterprise and offers incentives to needed investments. It sets these objectives: (1) economic self-reliance; (2) freedom from undue foreign control of the national economy, especially in strategic industries; and (3) equitable distribution of income and wealth, thus reducing economic inequality. These objectives are sought to be attained through such provisions as: (1) The state shall promote the preferential use of Filipino labor, domestic materials and locally-produced goods; (2) The Congress shall enact measures that will encourage the formation and operation of enterprises, the capital of which is wholly owned by Filipinos; and (3) The State shall regulate and exercise authority over foreign investments within its national jurisdiction in accordance with its national goals and priorities.

It may be stressed that socio-economic development would depend in large measure on the existence of peace and order. In this respect, the proposed Constitution hews to the principle that civilian authority is at all times supreme over the military. It establishes a national integrated police force which is civilian in character and provides for the professionalization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

The rights that are enshrined in the Constitution reflect the people's growing concern for their inherent and inalienable rights which are given legal recognition and enforceability in this Constitution. The clamor for human rights intensified during the tyrannical years of the Marcos rule. The 1986 Constitutional Commission, conscious of this longing of our people, has sought to adopt an expanded enumeration of these rights. Although it is not claimed that we have reached millennium as far as human rights are concerned, we have in our efforts marked a milestone of progress leading to it through the expanded enumeration of these rights. A few of these include the following: whereas under the 1973 Constitution a search warrant or warrant of arrest may be issued by a judge or such other responsible officer as may be authorized by law, under the draft Constitution only a judge may issue warrants subject to the requirements specified by the Constitution. The right to bail shall not be impaired even when the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus is suspended. No person shall be detained merely by reason of his political beliefs and aspirations. No torture, force, violence, threat, intimidation or any other means which vitiates the free will shall be used against him. Secret detention places, solitary incommunicado or other similar forms of detention are prohibited. The employment of physical, psychological or degrading punishment against any prisoner or detainee shall be dealt with by law.

The draft proposal has added the right to education, which includes free public education in the elementary and secondary levels, and the maintenance of a system of scholarship grants and other incentives, including direct subsidies to students.

The draft Constitution contains a separate Article on the Family in which the State recognizes the Filipino family as the foundation of the nation, and marriage as an inviolable social institution.

A Commission on Human Rights has been created to make permanent the government's commitment to champion the cause of man's basic rights through a body which would investigate all forms of human rights violations involving civil and political rights, and provide appropriate legal measures for the protection of human rights of all persons within the Philippines.

These are some of the provisions which we have constitutionalized. These are some of the innovations that we have introduced. These are the ideas, values and institutions which we have drawn and which we trust would serve as the foundation of our society, the keystone of our national transformation and development, the driving force for what we pray would be our irreversible march to progress. In brief, this is what the men and women of the 1986

Constitutional Commission have drafted under the able, firm and dedicated leadership of our President, the Honorable Cecilia Muñoz Palma.

The Constitution that we have drafted is a practical instrument suited to the circumstances of our time. It is also a Constitution that does not limit its usefulness to present needs; one which, in the words of U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall, and I quote, “is intended to endure for ages to come and consequently to be adapted to the various crises of human affairs.”

As we present the proposed fundamental law, we pray that our efforts would pave the way towards the establishment of a renewed constitutional government which we were deprived of since 1972, that these efforts would ensure that the triumph at EDSA so deservedly won by the people shall continue to be enjoyed by us and our posterity for all time, that these efforts would result in the drafting of a democratic Constitution — a Constitution which is the repository of the people’s inalienable rights; a Constitution that enshrines people’s power and the rule of law; a Constitution which would seek to establish in this fair land a community characterized by moral regeneration, social progress, political stability, economic prosperity, peace, love and concern for one another; a Constitution that embodies vital living principles that seek to secure for the people a better life founded on liberty and welfare for all.

Mr. Presiding Officer, on behalf of this Commission’s Sponsorship Committee, I have the honor to move for the approval of the draft Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines on Second Reading.

Source: **CD Asia**

Closing remarks of the President of the Constitutional Commission at the final session, October 15, 1986

Closing remarks of Constitutional Commission President Cecilia Muñoz-Palma:

During the final session of the Constitutional Commission

Batasang Pambansa, Quezon City

October 15, 1986

Thank you, Mr. Vice-President Ambrosio Padilla.

My beloved colleagues in the Constitutional Commission, and with your kind permission, may I also address our guests this morning:

Your Excellencies of the Diplomatic Corps, the Acting Chief Justice and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court, Members of the Cabinet and other dignitaries of government, my countrymen:

On June 2 of this year, 48 men and women gathered in this hall for the inaugural session of the Constitutional Commission of 1986, and took their solemn oath to write a new Charter for the Republic of the Philippines which, in the words of President Corazon Aquino will be, and I quote: “truly reflective of the aspirations and ideals of the Filipino people.”

Today, October 15, the closing session of the Constitutional Commission is taking place in this same hall where its Members have labored from morning till evening for no less than 111 working days. The 48 was reduced by one; several became sick and were hospitalized as the work progressed, and one is too sick to be present at these closing ceremonies.

Everyday we opened our plenary sessions with a prayer, led by a Commissioner called in alphabetical order, and in every prayer was reflected our full surrender to a Supreme Being, to God Almighty, seeking Divine guidance, wisdom, physical and spiritual strength, to enable the Commission to accomplish its sacred mission of drafting a new fundamental law that will rule the destiny and life of the Filipino nation.

My colleagues, today we are called upon to present to the Filipino people and to the community of nations the historic document which our hearts and minds have brought into existence with much love and dedication. Today we are called upon to make an accounting of every single word, phrase and sentence, of every punctuation mark, of every paragraph, section and Article written and, most importantly, of every thought, idea and principle enunciated in that document. Our people expect and await the new Charter with great expectations, clouded, however, with no little amount of misgivings as to what may have been produced.

My colleagues, as your President, it becomes my task and duty today to submit and offer to the Filipino people the Constitution you have written and drafted, and I assure you it will be a most happy task. The document admittedly is a lengthy one. The research of one of our Commissioners shows that it consists of 18 Articles, 321 long sections, and numerous subsections. With humility intertwined with profound pride, I can state that the new Constitution is a worthy legacy to the Filipino people of today, tomorrow and posterity.

The fires of patriotism which erupted in the Philippine Revolution of 1896 and produced the Magna Carta of Malolos, the intense desire and clamor for independence from foreign rule which inspired the eminent nationalists who framed the 1935 Constitution for the Philippine Commonwealth and which eventually became the Constitution of the Philippine Republic, the bitter experiences of the nation under a Constitution imposed upon the people under the aegis of martial rule — all these forces played a part in the framing of the new Charter of 1986 in this year of Our Lord.

A beautiful irony which cannot be overlooked is the fact that this new Constitution was discussed, debated, and finally written within the walls of this hall which saw the emergence of what was called by its author a

“constitutional authoritarianism,” but which, in effect, was a dictatorship, pure and simple. This hall was the seat of a combined executive and legislative power skillfully placed in the hands of one man for more than a decade. However, the miracle of prayer and of a people’s faith and determined struggle to break the shackles of dictatorship toppled down the structure of despotism and converted this hall into hallowed grounds where the seeds of a newly found freedom have been sown and have borne fruit.

My countrymen, we open the new Charter with a Preamble which is the beacon light that shines and brightens the path in building a new structure of government for our people. In that Preamble is expounded in positive terms our goals and aspirations. Thus, imploring the aid of Almighty God, we shall establish a just and humane society, a social order that upholds the dignity of man, for as a Christian nation, we adhere to the principle that, and I quote: “the dignity of man and the common good of society demand that society must be based on justice.” We uphold our independence and a democratic way of life and, abhorring despotism and tyranny, we bind ourselves to live under the rule of law where no man is above the law, and where truth, justice, freedom, equality, love and peace will prevail.

For the first time in the history of constitution-making in this country, the word “love” is enshrined in the fundamental law. This is most significant at this period in our national life when the nation is bleeding under the forces of hatred and violence. Love which begets understanding is necessary if reconciliation is to be achieved among the warring factions and conflicting ideologies now gripping the country. Love is imperative if peace is to be restored in our nativeland, for without love there can be no peace.

We have established a republican democratic form of government where sovereignty resides in the people and civilian supremacy over the military is upheld.

For the first time, the Charter contains an all-embracing expanded Bill of Rights which constitutes the cornerstone of the structure of government. Traditional rights and freedoms which are hallmarks of our democratic way of life are reaffirmed. The right to life, liberty and property, due process, equal protection of the laws, freedom of religion, speech, the press, peaceful assembly, among others, are reasserted and guaranteed. The Marcos provision that search warrants or warrants of arrest may be issued not only by a judge but by any responsible officer authorized by law is discarded. Never again will the Filipino people be victims of the much-condemned presidential detention action or PDA or presidential commitment orders, the PCOs, which desecrate the rights to life and liberty, for under the new provision a search warrant or warrant of arrest may be issued only by a judge. Mention must be made of some new features in the Bill of Rights, such as: the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus can be suspended only in cases of invasion or rebellion, and the right to bail is not impaired during such suspension, thereby discarding jurisprudence laid down by the Supreme Court under the Marcos dispensation that the suspension of the privilege of the writ carried with it the suspension of the right to bail. The death penalty is abolished, and physical, psychological or degrading punishment against prisoners or detainees, substandard and subhuman conditions in penitentiaries are condemned.

For the first time, the Constitution provides for the creation of a Commission on Human Rights entrusted with the grave responsibility of investigating violations of civil and political rights by any party or groups and recommending remedies therefor.

From the Bill of Rights we proceed to the structure of government established in the new Charter.

We have established the presidential system of government with three branches — the legislative, executive, and judicial — each separate and independent of each other, but affording an effective check and balance of one over the other.

All legislative power is returned and exclusively vested in a bicameral legislature where the Members are elected by the people for a definite term, subject to limitations for reelection, disqualification to hold any other office or employment in the government including government-owned or controlled corporations and, among others, they may not even appear as counsel before any court of justice.

For the first time in our Constitution, 20 percent of Members of the Lower House are to be elected through a party list system and, for three consecutive terms after the ratification of the Constitution, 25 of the seats shall be allocated to sectoral representatives from labor, peasant, urban poor, indigenous cultural communities, women, youth and other sectors as may be provided by law. This innovation is a product of the signs of the times when there is an intensive clamor for expanding the horizons of participatory democracy among the people.

The executive power is vested in the President of the Philippines elected by the people for a six-year term with no reelection for the duration of his/her life. While traditional powers inherent in the office of the President are granted, nonetheless for the first time, there are specific provisions which curtail the extent of such powers. Most significant is the power of the Chief Executive to suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus or proclaim martial law.

The flagrant abuse of that power of the Commander-in-Chief by Mr. Marcos caused the imposition of martial law for more than eight years and the suspension of the privilege of the writ even after the lifting of martial law in 1981. The new Constitution now provides that those powers can be exercised only in two cases, invasion or rebellion when public safety demands it, only for a period not exceeding 60 days, and reserving to Congress the power to revoke such suspension or proclamation of martial law which congressional action may not be revoked by the President. More importantly, the action of the President is made subject to judicial review, thereby again discarding jurisprudence which render the executive action a political question and beyond the jurisdiction of the courts to adjudicate.

For the first time, there is a provision that the state of martial law does not suspend the operation of the Constitution nor abolish civil courts or legislative assemblies, or vest jurisdiction to military tribunals over civilians, or suspend the privilege of the writ. Please forgive me if, at this point, I state that this constitutional provision vindicates the dissenting opinions I have written during my tenure in the Supreme Court in the martial law cases. *[Applause]*

With these safeguards, it is hoped that never again will the Filipino people undergo the harrowing experiences of a dictatorship.

Of the three branches of government, it is said that the weakest is the judiciary. The new Charter clothes the judicial branch of government with the mantle of independence in order that it may attain once more its lost prestige and regain the faith of the Filipino people. The provisions on the judiciary aim to make the courts of justice the true and faithful “guardian of the Constitution, protector of people’s rights and freedoms, and repository of the nation’s guarantees against tyranny, despotism, and dictatorship.”

For the first time and breaking all traditions in the history of the judiciary in our country, judicial power is now expressly defined in the Constitution as to include the duty of the courts of justice to settle actual controversies involving rights which are legally demandable and enforceable and to determine whether or not there has been a grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction. What does this mean? Former Chief Justice Roberto Concepcion in his dissenting opinion in *Javellana vs. Executive Secretary* has the answer:

When the grant of power is qualified, conditional or subject to limitations, the issue on whether or not such conditions have been met is justiciable or nonpolitical and the courts have a duty rather than the power to determine whether another branch of government has kept within constitutional limits.

With this broad definition of judicial power, therefore, our highest tribunal can no longer evade adjudicating on the validity of executive or legislative action by claiming that the issue is a political question. Aside from the above, for the first time the judiciary is placed beyond the reach of politics and politicians through the creation of a Judicial and Bar Council and security of tenure of judges is assured with a specific prohibition that the legislature may not organize the courts when it shall undermine the security of tenure of the judges. Administrative supervision of the courts is placed in the hands of the Supreme Court.

Having presented to you the organic parts of the government structure, let us now look into the source of the bloodstream that gives life and substance to the provisions of the new Charter.

The Constitution has an Article on Declaration of Principles and State Policies and an Article on General Provisions.

My colleagues, the Article on Social Justice which we have framed is the heart of the new Constitution.

When Pope Paul II came to the Philippines and visited the slums of Tondo, he indicated the obligations of justice that confront society and all who have power, whether economic, cultural or political. He called attention to the intolerable situations that perpetuate the poverty and misery of the many who are constantly hungry and deprived of their rightful changes to grow and develop their human potential, who lack decent housing and sufficient clothing, who suffer illness for want of employment and protection against poverty and disease.

The Article on Social Justice answers these challenges and addresses itself to specified areas of concern – labor, agrarian and urban land reform, health, working women, indigenous cultural communities, and people's organizations. The agrarian reform program is founded on the right of farmers and farmworkers who are landless to own directly or collectively the lands they till or to receive a just share of the fruits of the land. This provision answers Pope John Paul II when he said:

. . . the land is a gift from God that he makes for all human beings and it is not to be used in such a way that its benefits are to the advantage of only a few while the vast majority are excluded from sharing in the benefits of the land and are condemned to a state of want, poverty and borderline existence.

The Article on the National Economy and Patrimony sets out our goal that the State shall develop a self-reliant and independent national economy effectively controlled by Filipinos. There lies the reason for our statement that this Constitution is not only pro-poor and pro-people, but also pro-Filipino, notwithstanding claims to the contrary by some. For the first time, the use and enjoyment of the nation's marine wealth are reserved exclusively for Filipinos; agricultural lands of the public domain may be alienated only to Filipino citizens; executive and managing officers of public utilities must be citizens of the Philippines; the practice of all professions shall be limited to citizens of the Philippines: while the Filipino-First policy has been constitutionalized. These provisions, to my mind, demonstrate a significant step towards an effective control of business and the profession by Filipinos, while the "maligned" 60-40 equity ratio found in the article does not in itself preclude the government from increasing the Filipino equity even to 100 percent should conditions and the economic situation in the country in the near future justify such an economic policy. After all, the ultimate decision lies in the hands of the Filipino people acting through their elected national leaders in government.

Very close to my heart are the provisions on the family. For the first time, the Constitution devotes a separate Article on the Family thereby giving due recognition to the fact that the family is a basic autonomous social institution and, therefore, the State shall uphold the sanctity of family life, protect the stability of marriage and the right to found a family in accordance with one's religious beliefs and convictions, and responsible parenthood. At this time in the history not only of our country but of all mankind when the institution of the family is subjected to assaults against its inherent dignity as an instrument to God's creation, constitutional provisions which give protection and guarantees to rights and duties of parents are safeguards against the erosion of moral and spiritual values.

For the first time, the new Charter upholds the right to life of the unborn from conception. We believe that to destroy human life in the womb of the mother not only violates the sacredness of a living, growing and developing human being but also attacks society by undermining respect for all human life.

For the first time, the rights of the youth to free public elementary and secondary schooling and to quality education that will instill in them the virtues of patriotism, nationalism, morality and service to one's fellowmen are guaranteed.

For the first time, there is a positive declaration that the State guarantees the fundamental equality before the law of women and men. *[Applause]*

For the first time, there is a declaration against nuclear weapons in the country subject, however, to the demands of national interest. *[Applause]* This must be so for who can foretell the future? And must we close the doors to

safeguard the security and welfare of coming generations by not providing for such a saving clause? There is also a prohibition against foreign military bases after 1991, unless there is the consent of the elected representatives of the people and of the Filipino people themselves expressed in a referendum, if necessary.

For the first time, people power is enshrined in this new Constitution by way of initiative, referendum and the power of recall. *[Applause]*

Decentralization in local government is assured and autonomous regions in Muslim Mindanao and the Cordilleras, subject to a plebiscite, are provided for.

Equally important is the provision on the accountability of public officers. Public office is a public trust and all officials in government from the highest to the lowest are accountable for their actions in office. *[Applause]* The immunity from suit found in the 1973 Constitution has been discarded and the procedure of impeachment for the impeachable public officials has been liberalized. *[Applause]*

My countrymen, we in the Commission admit that the document we have framed is not perfect. It has been said by one of the Commissioners that there is no perfect document on earth except the Word of God found in the Holy Scriptures. The Charter is lengthy, it is true, contrary to standard and traditional requirements of a written Constitution. But if the document is somehow detailed, although tremendous efforts were made to cut down its length and breadth, that is attributed to the fact that the 47 men and women who come from different walks of life and of diverse political, social and cultural persuasions have such a rich background on the issues confronting the nation that each had numerous contributions to the document which could not just be ignored.

The collective work of the Commission has produced a good inspiring Charter, but I cannot close this address of mine without stating here the distinctive legacy of each Commissioner in the new Charter. And thus, with your indulgence, let me state:

Yusup Abubakar — a valiant defense on the definition of our national territory; *[Applause]*

Domocao Alonto — establishment of an autonomous Muslim Mindanao; *[Applause]*

Felicitas Aquino — the fundamental equality before the law of women and men and the rights of labor; *[Applause]*

Adolfo Azcuna — the nuclear weapons-free principle; *[Applause]*

Teodoro Bacani — the right to life of the unborn from conception and teaching of religious instruction in public schools during reasonable class hours; *[Applause]*

Jose Bengzon — effective steering of the proceedings and the legitimacy of the tenure of office of President Aquino and Vice-President Laurel on the basis of the February presidential elections; *[Applause]*

Ponciano Bennagen — the right to self-determination of indigenous cultural communities and the creation of a separate Article on Social Justice; *[Applause]*

Joaquin Bernas — the composition of the Bill of Rights with particular reference to the definition and limitations of the martial law powers of the Chief Executive; *[Applause]*

Florangel Braid — provisions on cooperatives and mass communications; *[Applause]*

Jose Calderon — catalyst of the views on the U.S. military bases; *[Applause]*

Crispino de Castro — benefits for veterans and provisions on the Armed Forces of the Philippines that it is the protector of the people and the State; [*Applause*]

Jose Colayco — creation of the Office of the Ombudsman who shall act as defender of the people against government abuses and inefficiency; [*Applause*]

Roberto Concepcion — definition of judicial power and the composition of the Article on the Judiciary; [*Applause*]

Hilario Davide, Jr. — author of innumerable amendments but with particular mastery of the legislative department of the government; [*Applause*]

Vicente Foz — the right of workers in public and private enterprises to self-organization including the right to strike; [*Applause*]

Edmundo Garcia — role of people's organizations and creation of the Commission on Human Rights; [*Applause*]

Jose Luis Gascon — democratization of opportunities to education such as free public secondary education, subsidies, scholarships and grants to poor and deserving students; [*Applause*]

Serafin Guingona — people's right to education contained in an Article on Education, Science and Technology, Arts, Culture and Sports; [*Applause*]

Alberto Jamir — prohibition against block voting in elections and the 60-40 ratio amendment in public utilities which triggered a momentary crisis in the Commission; [*Applause*]

Jose Laurel, Jr. — advocacy of the features of a good Constitution that it should be brief, concise and definite which led to the consolidation of many provisions; [*Applause*]

Eulogio Lerum — rights of labor, more particularly the rights of workers to self-organization and to form associations not contrary to law; [*Applause*]

Regalado Maambong — application on the floor of the parliamentary procedure but more significantly his mastery of the sectional arrangement of the Constitution which we have today; [*Applause*]

Christian Monsod — innumerable amendments to reconcile government functions with individual freedoms and public accountability, and the party-list system for the House of Representatives; [*Applause*]

Teodulo Natividad — creation for the first time of the Philippine National Police, civilian in character and to be administered by NAPOLCOM, and prohibition against subhuman conditions in penitentiaries; [*Applause*]

Teresa Nieva — Article on Social Justice which reaches out to the underprivileged sectors of society; and family rights; [*Applause*]

Jose Nollado — local government autonomy and decentralization of functions and elimination of political dynasties; [*Applause*]

Blas Ople — authored the industrialization provision in the Article on the National Economy and the principle of initiative as the people's reserve power to amend the Constitution; [*Applause*]

Ambrosio Padilla — adoption in the Article on the Declaration of Principles of a provision on "peace and order" and of "private initiative in enterprises"; [*Applause*]

Cecilia Muñoz Palma — the Article on the Family; [*Applause*]

Minda Luz Quesada — integrated health development to improve the quality of life, especially for the poor, sick, elderly and disabled; [*Applause*]

Napoleon Rama — authored the statement in the Article on the Declaration of Principles that the prime duty of the government is to serve and protect the people; he was an effective floor leader; [*Applause*]

Florenz Regalado — clear and definite definition of the presidency, presidential succession, and cases of disability of the Chief Executive; [*Applause*]

Rustico de los Reyes — protection to communal fishing and rights of subsistence fishermen; [*Applause*]

Cirilo Rigos — the separation of Church and State and religious instruction; [*Applause*]

Francisco Rodrigo — champion of the bicameral legislature and jealous guardian of the legislative authority of the Senate; [*Applause*]

Ricardo Romulo — creation of the Judicial and Bar Council which is a vital feature of the independence of the judiciary; [*Applause*]

Decoroso Rosales — the six-and three-year terms for national elective officials; [*Applause*]

Rene Sarmiento — Bill of Rights with particular reference to compensation and rehabilitation of victims of violations and adequate legal assistance to the poor and the creation of the Commission on Human Rights; [*Applause*]

Jose Suarez — security of tenure of judges and civil service employees plus the Articles on Amendments to the Constitution and Transitory Provisions; [*Applause*]

Lorenzo Sumulong — creation of the Article on the Executive; [*Applause*]

Jaime Tadeo — agrarian land reform which, according to him, however, is still full of loopholes; [*Applause*]

Christine Tan — urban land and housing reform for the poor especially the so-called squatters in depressed areas; [*Applause*]

Gregorio Tingson — the inspiring Preamble where “love” is enshrined and the justification of the non- inclusion in the Constitution of a provision on a zone of neutrality for the Philippines; [*Applause*]

Efrain Treñas — speedy disposition of cases by the courts of justice, making the periods mandatory in character; [*Applause*]

Lugum Uka — his irrepressible sense of humor and guarantees to Muslim customs, traditions in relation to an autonomous region in Mindanao; [*Applause*]

Wilfrido Villacorta — principal author of sectoral representation in the House of Representatives; [*Applause*]

Bernardo Villegas — principles of solidarity and subsidiarity and the social function of property in the Article on the National Economy, and the right to life of the unborn from conception. [*Applause*]

My colleagues, today I render a public tribute to your creative minds which enriched the proceedings of the Constitutional Commission and produced the document which I have presented to our people.

It is a document which reflects the changing conditions of the time, the emerging social order, and, in the words of Commissioner Ed Garcia, it speaks of the people's "struggle to be truly free — free from want and hunger, free to determine and build and create a future of their own, free to sing their own song and to dream their own dreams." Although Commissioner Garcia says that the Charter is "imperfect" and represents an "unfinished quest," still it is a document which brings hope to our people.

I, therefore, pay tribute to your sincere and unselfish devotion to duty, your fiery patriotism and nationalism, your deep concern to improve the quality of life of our people, and your capacity to strike a working balance between various forces demanding changes in the economic and social levels of our society. For all these, you richly deserve the gratitude of a people long denied the blessings of truth, justice and freedom and now eagerly awaiting the dawn of a new constitutional democracy.

For my part, I thank each and everyone of you for having lightened the burdens and responsibilities of my office as President of the Commission. Without your zealous cooperation, understanding of my inadequacies, and readiness to accommodate where principles are not involved, this glorious day in Philippine history would not have been possible. If we have accomplished the mission given to us by our people it was because we rose above our personal biases and animosities and worked in peace and harmony to attain a common goal, the full liberation of the Filipino people.

I also thank the working force of the Commission headed by our active and learned Secretary-General, Atty. Florida Ruth Romero, and her technical staff — the debate stenographers, those responsible for the efficient, prompt and accurate preparation of the daily journals, all the personnel of the Commission and of the Task Force, all of whom were exemplary in the performance of their respective duties. All of them have contributed in the making of history. *[Applause]*

One last word, the Constitutional Commission has framed a new Constitution with a vision — peace and happiness — for the Filipino people. But the vision will remain a mere vision if we the people do not give life to it by our deeds. We must live it and live by it. The final responsibility lies in our hands — shall the new Charter be a mere "rope of sand" that can be washed away by the strong currents of time or shall it be a rock, firm and indestructible, unyielding to forces of greed and power?

As the great nationalist Claro M. Recto, President of the Constitutional Convention of 1935, had said:

. . . to drive away all danger of anarchy as well as dictatorship, whether by one man or a few, it is necessary that both the government authorities and the people faithfully observe and obey the Constitution.

Yes, we must be ready to defend and uphold this fundamental law with our lives, if necessary, so that never again will it be trampled upon and desecrated by men of evil designs.

Today, as we draw the curtain on the work of the Constitutional Commission, I make a plea to our people — judge not this new Charter for its imperfections and inadequacies, but rather judge it for the unprecedented measures taken to protect and defend our rights and freedoms, uphold truth, justice and the rule of law, to give a better quality of life for the working man, the sick, the elderly, disabled, the indigenous cultural communities who have long been neglected and abandoned. Look upon this new Charter as a giant step towards rebuilding our shattered democracy and regaining our pride and dignity as a free and liberated noble nation.

I close with a prayer that Almighty God who has been with us all these days will continue to guide us and the Filipino people in order that the vision of the new Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines will be transformed into a golden reality of a vision fulfilled.

Thank you for your attention.

Source: **CD Asia**

Luncheon Address of President Corazon Aquino at St. John's Institute

**Luncheon Address
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At St. John's Institute**

[Released on October 16, 1986]

NEGROS MUST CHANGE

The sugar industry is finished, not only here but in many parts of the world. Thus, Negros must no longer depend solely on sugar, and should develop substitutes or alternative sources of income. On the government's policy to rationalize the sugar industry, the President says no hasty decisions will be made on closing down sugar mills and refineries. Another immediate concern is to clarify the Philippine National Bank's financing policy for the present and coming crop years.

I understand that we have here, in the audience, people representing the sugar industry, Negros commerce and industry, and civic and church leaders. To you I say we have essentially the same task and that is to dismantle the heritage of the past and build essentially from scratch. I had to remove many of the institutions that could serve only the purposes of tyranny and in the process I have upset even the people who would clearly benefit from my actions. From the dismantling of monopolies, the abrogation of privileges in the form of easy borrowing, the removal of control on information, I have heard the same basic complaint about the sense of a lack of direction this created in the affected sectors. I have had constantly to remind them that our Revolution essentially had to do with giving the initiative back to people along with their liberties, and this means the uncomfortable need to make your own way in the world, in the direction that common sense dictates. Relating this immediately to Negros, this means, at least, clearly getting out of the island's age-old and singular dependence on sugar.

Those to whom I have appealed for support in our national reconstruction effort have clearly stipulated, almost as a condition, the radical transformation of the agriculture of Negros, a near complete turning away from sugar. The industry is finished, not only here but in many parts of the world. There is just too much being produced for a market that has enough substitutes or alternative sources for it. They were so convinced of this that I got the feeling they were prepared to see Negros suffer continuing deprivation just to drive home the point that Negros must change. And these were people in whose genuine concern for the development of the Philippines, and for the lot of the Negros people, I have reason to believe. But just as strongly as I believed in their sincerity, I told them to share my faith in the intelligence of the people of Negros. They know the score. A total change is necessary. But the way things are in Negros, we need time to effect the transformation; time to learn new agricultures and implement what we have learned; time during which the people must eat. And so I must tell you that such moves as the friends of Philippine democracy have made to alleviate the plight of the sugar industry in Negros, have been made with much reluctance and lack of conviction, and largely as a gesture of support during my U.S. visit.

The U.S. Senate approved in the last week of September 11, two bills, one of which would give most favored nation treatment to the Philippines, that effectively increased the Philippine share of U.S. sugar imports for 1987 from 13.5% to 34%. Both bills are due to be taken up in a conference committee with representatives from both Houses of Congress. And last October 2, the Senate vote to override the veto of the South Africa Sanctions Bill effectively added 23,000 tons for the Philippines if the most favored nation bill passes. There is some opposition to this. But, in the meanwhile, we are making the effort, through the Sugar Regulatory Administration, to get the balance of South Africa's 1986 sugar quota for the Philippines.

I hope these efforts abroad bear fruit, and soon. But I have always said that the main effort of our recovery must be and will be ours, or it won't happen. And so, in that spirit, I turn to our domestic efforts.

One of the main issues of great concern to you, is the threat of foreclosure of mills and refineries with high arrearages to government banks. The thrust of this government is the rationalization of the sugar industry, and this should include the closure of several sugar mills and refineries. But rest assured that no hasty decisions will be made. We are aware that the matter is not just one of reducing the mills to the number the industry can support in theory. There are other considerations that have been pointed out to me, such as the irreplaceable role that an excess mill in the general scheme nonetheless plays in sustaining the viability of the farms around it.

Another immediate concern, is the need to clarify the PNB's financing policy for the present and coming crop years. Starting crop year 1987-88, the PNB will extend loans to sugar planters based on their sugar quedans for 1986-87. This PNB special financing scheme will also involve waiving penalty charges incurred by the planters during the crop year 1984-85 and lowering the interest to a rate approximating the handling charges.

But these, along with those measures abroad I mentioned, are stop-gap measures, ways to buy us time to turn Negros away from sugar. Another such measure is one that I shall tell the Cabinet to give serious thought to, which is the development of the ethanol program. But I know none of these measures will lull you into thinking that there is a way to avoid a radical change in the ways of Negros agriculture. There is no help for it. Upon the timely transformation of Negros depends the lasting solution of the insurgency problem.

I will conclude my remarks with a restatement of my government's policy regarding the insurgency. I have said that I shall explore the path of negotiation with the rebels to the utmost, but I have equally stressed the efforts of the government to prepare for the eventuality that our offer of peace is spurned. I have made it clear, I shall use any means to protect our Christian values, our democratic institutions, our dream of a free and prosperous Philippines against any who seek to subvert and destroy them. I will not accept any configuration of Philippine destiny other than that which accommodates its basic democracy and its commitment to God. We do not negotiate out of fear, neither do we fear to negotiate. We speak to the enemy because we believe that he shares our human concern for the hurt that this insurgency continues to inflict on our nation. With every death on either side, our country dies a little. We hope we are right for our sake and theirs. But, rest assured, we are prepared for the event that this belief turns out wrong. We must use whatever means lies at hand to bring our estranged brothers and sisters down from the hills to share the blessings of our new democracy.

The friends of the deposed dictatorship accuse Governor Lacson and Bishop Fortich of using foreign assistance funds to attract the rebels back into the fold of the law, to join our national recovery effort. Well, if the accusation is true, Governor Lacson and the good Bishop are even smarter than I thought. I commend their efforts highly. This is the kind of energy and initiative I look to for the early attainment of our goal of national reconciliation and recovery.

The consultations I have attended already show a brighter future for Negros. The work has clearly begun, in the only way it will be essentially completed: by our own efforts.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Remarks of President Corazon Aquino before Prime Minister Nakasone of Japan

Remarks of Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino President of the Philippines Before Prime Minister Nakasone of Japan

[Delivered on November 11, 1986]

THE CHALLENGE OF NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

Twenty years ago, the President tells an audience headed by Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone, the Philippines was second only to Japan in terms of wealth in our region. All this was squandered by the previous government. But the Philippines can learn from the Japanese who, through discipline and hard work, rose from the ashes of war.

The rebuilding will not be easy, the President notes. But with the People Power revolution in February 1986 serving as the cornerstone of the new Philippines, and with the support and cooperation of friends like the government and people of Japan, the President has high hopes for the country's future.

It is a great honor for me to be invited here today. Both the Philippines and Japan are members of the same Asian family.

Our two countries have a shared history that goes back a long way. And I think both of us, knowing the lessons of the past, look to a future together with hope and expectation.

There is a lot we can do together. Both our nations are part of a region whose future seems certain to be one of dynamic achievement. There is a wealth of opportunities to bring progress and prosperity to even the most downtrodden and impoverished area of this region, and therefore a lasting peace to the Pacific.

Sometimes, as I view all that can be done and consider how far short of the great promise we have fallen, I think it is only the follies and failings of men that have held us back. Mine is a country blessed with resources, with cost-efficient labor, with a large well-educated managerial and entrepreneurial class, with potential access to many markets because of our geographical location and political and historic links. Indeed, 20 years ago we were second only to you in our region in terms of wealth. Despite such blessings, our political leaders managed to squander everything and leave us broken at the bottom of the pile. Yet if I am tempted to condemn men for squandered opportunities, I have only to turn to your great country and its unbroken line of wise and patriotic leadership to be reminded of what man can achieve.

It was human endeavor and discipline that rebuilt your great country from the ashes of war. When the omens were bleak and the resources at hand slight, the people and leadership of Japan showed what can be done when the will to succeed is there. You came back from the darkness of economic devastation because you had the will. Yours is a success founded on national commitment. Everybody was a member of the team that put Japan on course for the economic successes that have transformed your country.

We now in the Philippines face a similar challenge of reconstruction. My government took over an economy laid waste by its predecessor's war against, and plunder of its own people. As was the case in Japan, the beginning is not easy. Old conflicts have to be put to rest; a new consensus on which the nation can build its future has to be found.

Yet the foundation for that is in place. The People Power revolution in February, when our nation rose in the streets to confirm their verdict at the polls, is the stone on which the new Philippines is being built. The people rose not just

against the old regime but for certain values that now shape our future. These are democracy, the rule of law, and above all freedom. But this is the freedom where neighbor lives in respect and harmony with neighbor; where each Filipino respects and contributes to the common goal of bringing progress to all.

Our new freedom is too precious to allow its abuse. Hence we have moved as quickly as we can to underwrite the victory of democracy with a new Constitution. At this time, only I and my Vice President Salvador Laurel are democratically elected officials. We had to dismantle the non-democratic and corrupt power structures and move as quickly as we could to democracy in a framework of constitutional law and protected freedoms. Now the constitution is drafted and will be put to a popular plebiscite in early February. If the Constitution is approved, this will be followed by national and local elections within next year. Thus, in just a little over a year after the People Power revolution, my presidency will be supported by the fully fledged institutions of a democratic state.

This swift transition back to full democracy has been helped by the democratic mandate that I have enjoyed. As has often been pointed out, ours was not a revolution to depose a government, so much as one to install the duly elected one in its place. An enabling revolution to continue the work of democratic change began by my electoral victory and soon to be completed by the establishment of all the other necessary institutions of a democracy and the elections of officials to fill them. While the process is not complete, there is no reason for apprehension for it proceeds from the unshakeable foundation of the people's victory in my election to the Presidency. My Presidency is the cornerstone of the new house that we are building for democracy in my country.

And so let me be clear: there is no room in the new Philippines for those who will not accept the ways of democracy. While I am anxious to resolve the communist insurgency bloodlessly, I will not tolerate a non-democratic challenge to our government and people from any quarter.

With a strong democracy in place we have a firm basis for moving forward as a united country. My Presidency runs until 1992 and in that time I have every expectation that I will oversee the same concerted burst of directed national energy that did so much for Japan. Many of the economic conditions for this are already in place. My economic ministers have been able to re-engage our economy by proper management at home and through successful negotiations with the IMF and the World Bank. They have given us the seal of good housekeeping. They have eased the terms and conditions for our economic recovery program. The restoration of honesty and discipline to the management of our economy has enabled us to win the endorsement of the international lending institutions for a growth rate next year of 5.5 percent.

The role of your government as a bilateral donor has also been one of support and understanding. You understand both the humanitarian imperative and the capacity of the Filipino to help himself and his neighbors once he is given the means. We applaud you for it. The Philippine people are emerging from a great national trial and I think the Japanese people both sympathize with what we have gone through and recognize the role for Japan to help in our endeavor of recovery and development.

We have been honored by the attention the drama of our election and revolution attracted here in Japan. There was a bond of support amongst the Japanese people that we appreciate. And if I may add a personal note I remember also with gratitude the reaction of the Japanese people to the assassination of my husband, Ninoy Aquino. We appreciated your support then and we appreciate it now. We are encouraged in our effort to rebuild our country by the unwavering support and steady assistance that the people and government of Japan have given to our country in the past, a record of commitment to the welfare of our people that is the ground of our hope for your continuing help in our new effort.

I hope what we are seeking to do in the Philippines can be a source of pride not just to us but our friends in Japan. And not just shared pride, but a sense of regional security as well. For a strong Philippines will shore up the Free World's defenses in the Pacific and nail down the stability of the region. We want to succeed in the Philippines so we can do our part for the rest of Asia and the world. Under your leadership, Prime Minister Nakasone, Japan understands this desire to reach for goals transcending strictly national interest and will therefore appreciate our haste to recover the strength to carry our share of our common dream of peace and progress in the Pacific.

In concluding my remarks, I wish to express my sincere hope that the Philippines and Japan will cooperate hand in hand to contribute to the peace and prosperity in the Pacific.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Toast of President Corazon Aquino to Mayor Dianne Feinstein of San Francisco

**Toast
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To Mayor Dianne Feinstein of San Francisco**

[Delivered at the Malacañang Palace, November 20, 1986]

RENEWING SAN FRANCISCO TIES

In a toast to Dianne Feinstein, Mayor of San Francisco, the President expresses appreciation for the colorful and very enthusiastic welcome she received in that American city.

The welcome you gave us, Mayor Feinstein, left us breathless. In one burst of music and color, you distilled the California experience – all the warmth, humanity, and beauty of your great state and city. The warmth was there from the start of my American journey. The welcome you gave me on my arrival set the tone for the rest of my trip. It gave me the confidence, and therefore the strength to finish the grueling schedule I had set for myself. I knew from the start that America loved the Filipino people, and all would be well. And during the trip you added your influential voice to the call for America to stand by its old friend and ally. This is truly appreciated. As I said, your welcome was an auspicious beginning and the farewell you gave me was truly unforgettable. What else can I say, Mayor Feinstein, except thank you so very much for all the wonderful things you did. They were a celebration of the renewed ties of friendship and cooperation between our two nations, and our cities. Tonight we try, in some small measure, to express our gratitude and our affection for you. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast, to her Honor, Dianne Feinstein, the Mayor of San Francisco, may she enjoy a long life and good health as surely as she has earned a permanent place in the affectionate memory of our people. To Mayor Feinstein.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1986). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : August 8 – December 31, 1986*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Remarks of President Corazon Aquino at the ASEAN State Dinner, December 14, 1987

**Remarks
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
During the ASEAN State Dinner**

[Released on December 14, 1987]

FOR A TIGHTER UNITY

The President emphasizes that no external factor should influence an ASEAN decision to meet and act as a community. This meeting in Manila will be regarded as a great stroke of diplomacy as the President reaffirms her commitment to stand by all the members of the ASEAN family.

Your Majesty and Your Excellencies,

I was asked, Why hold the Summit now? Why hold it here in Manila? Would not my government be embarrassed if the Summit was cancelled, if one or all of the heads of state and leaders of government begged off for this one. Why take the risk?

These were very good questions.

There were those who wished to postpone the Summit not just to a more propitious time, but to another stage of economic development. It was pointed out that the European Community's concrete achievements as a regional economy presupposed a high level of industrialization. It made sense to regionalize because it was possible, at least broadly, to achieve the complementation of economies enjoying distinct comparative advantages.

Twenty years after the foundation of ASEAN, we have barely scratched the possibilities of regional cooperation. And to be frank, we still view each step towards complementation as a sacrifice of advantages each of us might exclusively enjoy.

In the case of the Philippines, which has had to relive a political transition and reestablish the foundation of a progressive economy, it seems an odd time to think regional, when national concerns should monopolize its attention and energies.

Should the Summit, therefore, have been held at another time?

My answer is, No.

I submit that this became the best time for a Summit when the pressure became great to cancel or defer it.

In fact, the date and place of any meeting scheduled by the consensus of the ASEAN leaders is the best time and place for that meeting. Only another consensus, freely and willingly arrived at, would justify a postponement. Other than such a consensus, no external factor should influence an ASEAN decision to meet and act as a community. For ASEAN is preeminently about resolve, about a conscious commitment to think and act in regional terms because we have posited community as our first and highest value and not because we are compelled by external necessity to combine.

No regional economic advantage attracted us to each other 20 years ago. If the geo-politics of 1967, the year of foundation, suggested anything, it was that the superpowers alone would decide everything, assuring the peace and security of our part of the world at whatever cost in war and insecurity to us.

And yet our countries met, against the backdrop of one of the greatest conflicts in history. A sense of helplessness in the face of so much power and destruction converging in one corner of the world might have convinced us of the futility of such a meeting. But still we met because, however improbably, we had decided that we would decide the destiny of our region. Not the alien powers with their great armies and navies, but we, who live and work here.

It was a fortunate decision. For when the end came, there was no panic among us. We knew each other's thoughts on that tragic event and its dire implications. We had gotten into the habit of constant consultations. We knew the victor might overreach himself in the flush of victory, but we knew how we would stand individually and collectively in that event. Our united response to the Kampuchean crisis demonstrated our common sense of those events and of the measures required.

And so, many years after the fall of Saigon, we are all still here, the predicted dominoes of Southeast Asia, all standing tall and firmly established in the cement of mutual trust and common regard that binds the Association. And all because, once, in the most improbable of circumstances, a group of neighboring countries decided to meet and join hands for their common progress.

Our decision to meet again today, here in Manila, despite the circumstances, will one day prove to be just as fortunate, and will be regarded as a great stroke of diplomacy. For we have shown today that ASEAN is not a passing combination of convenience but an unshakeable commitment to making ASEAN the key to the future of our region.

My statement this morning reaffirms this commitment on the part of the Philippines, for, as I said, our relative security from external threat has not, and will not ever, diminish our commitment to stand by all the members of the ASEAN family. In the way of ASEAN peoples, it is not necessity but the bond of friendship and regional kinship that is the firm surety of ASEAN's enduring unity in crisis and in prosperity.

Your Majesty, the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei Darussalam;

Your Excellency, President Soeharto of Indonesia;

Your Excellency, Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad of Malaysia;

Your Excellency, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore;

Your Excellency, Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda of the Kingdom of Thailand;

Distinguished delegates to the Third ASEAN Summit, my fellow workers in government, honored guests,

Please join me in a toast to ASEAN in the 21st Century, another 20 years of continuing trust and support, of tighter unity and greater strength.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Toast of President Corazon Aquino for Ambassador Sumiya, February 3, 1988

**Toast
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
For Ambassador Sumiya**

[Released on February 3, 1988]

A CONSUMMATE DIPLOMAT

During his term, Ambassador Sumiya helped strengthen the friendship between Japan and the Philippines based on mutual respect, trust and understanding.

I received the word of Ambassador Sumiya's departure with much regret and sadness. For Ambassador Sumiya has been a great help to us. In his helpfulness, in his exquisite tact and manners, and in his deep appreciation of Japanese-Philippine relations, he rendered invaluable service to both his country and ours. Ambassador Sumiya witnessed the birth of a new Philippines, one that Japan had had no experience of for at least 15 years. It was a new country, a proud country, sometimes excessively sensitive. Ambassador Sumiya was the man for the job of reestablishing the friendship between our two nations upon a higher plane of mutual respect, trust and understanding.

On a personal plane, I must express my deep admiration for this man whom I regard as the consummate diplomat, a diplomat in the best sense of the word as representing, by his circumspection, wisdom and manners, the best of the Japanese, and therefore the best argument for the friendship and cooperation of our two peoples. Whenever I sought his advice, it was invariably right – for Japan and for the Philippines. It goes without saying that you will always be remembered, for you have left a notable mark in Philippine-Japan relations. But, more meaningfully, you will be missed – by all of us.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast to the continued good health and success of Ambassador and Mrs. Sumiya, to the Emperor whom he has served so well, and the enduring friendship of our two nations.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Prayer of President Corazon Aquino on the Second Anniversary of the EDSA Revolution, February 25, 1988

**EDSA Revolution
Second Year
Anniversary
February 25, 1988**

PRAYER FOR PEACE

The following is the full text of the prayer delivered by President Aquino on the Second Anniversary of the EDSA Revolution on February 25, 1988.

Lord, look down on God,
this as we gather in this us
where history was made
two years ago.

Lord, unless you labor build in our nation
we who build it. vain

Lord, unless you and its protect deep and our lasting people
from poverty labor in wounds,
we who try to protect them. vain

Lord, unless you write the laws
in the hearts of men,
we labor in vain
to enforce them.
God of of Mercy,
God of love,
give us the gift
of give us the unity,
of peace. gift

Look on us,
You can see into the depths of every heart,
As if we were made of glass.

Look upon those of us

who unfortunately believe in violence;
and show us the true meaning
of the words You spoke in the garden:
“Those who take the sword
shall perish by the sword.”

Look upon those of us
who reminding them can of the words only of the criticize,
“God is in of the Prophet:
Thou upon let earth,
Therefore thy
words be few.”

Show us the words is You the gave to meaning
of the words is You the gave to us:
“There is a a time
for tearing is a down;
And there is a time
for *building*!

For this is the time to build!

Give us the gift of *courage*!

Give us the gift of *hope*!

Give us the gift of *joy*!
Courage to us the carry gift on
when everything goes wrong
Hope in the day after that follows night,
the sun after the the rain.
Joy in everything!

Give us the gift of *laughter*,
so that us we bear our troubles
and smile through our tears,

Lord God,
You helped us on EDSA two years ago and we thank
you for helping us all through these difficult two years.

We believe
that Your hand has touched us.

We believe
that you led us out of bondage.

We believe
that it was *You*
who made us free.

On this our second anniversary

Please touch our minds with wisdom,

Please touch our hearts with love.

Please touch our wills with courage,

and make us strong with the strength of God.

We ask
through Christ Our Lord.

You this

Amen.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Closing remarks of President Corazon Aquino at the 6th National Trisectoral Congress of the National Social Action Council

**Closing Remarks
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
At the 6th National Trisectoral Congress of the National Social Action Council**

[Held in Baguio, April 7, 1988]

A TESTED MODEL FOR PROBLEM SOLVING

The task of nation-building does not only lie in the hands of the President but it specifically lies in the cooperation and participation of all sectors of our society on a continuing and total-commitment basis. President Aquino is grateful for the contributions the NASAC has been giving to the task of nation-building.

Before anything else, permit me to congratulate you on the successful conclusion of your Sixth National Trisectoral Congress in Baguio.

I am pleased to be with you on this occasion, even if only for this very brief ceremony. I had originally looked forward to joining you in Baguio last Tuesday but other pressing matters intervened and kept me in Manila.

So instead of you welcoming me to your Congress in Baguio, it is my pleasure now to welcome you to Malacanang.

The theme of your Congress – “Directives for Nation-Building” – and the various observations and resolutions that resulted from your three-day sessions speak very highly of your sense of purpose and of your sensitivity to the fundamental issues and concerns that face our nation and government today.

Government is not blind or insensitive to these issues and concerns. Their immediate redress if not outright solution forms the core of our government programs. I am referring your various observations and suggestions to the appropriate government agencies concerned for their attention.

But the government cannot do it all by itself. We need the support, cooperation and even direct participation of all sectors of our society on a continuing and total-commitment basis.

This is where NASAC comes in.

The very structure and interaction process of NASAC, which is trisectoral provides a tried and tested working model for problem solving at all levels of government and society.

Many of the problems now facing government and our people might not have escalated to their present proportions, or would not have lasted very long, if the NASAC formula of trisectoral consultation in a spirit of mutual good had been applied to them.

I would like to close with heartfelt thanks to each and everyone of you, for the contribution you have just made to our joint task of nation-building.

Thank you and more power to NASAC.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Aquino, C. C. (1988). *Speeches of President Corazon C. Aquino : 7 November 1987 – 30 May 1988*. [Manila : Office of the President of the Philippines].

Response of President Corazon Aquino to President Cossiga of Italy, June 16, 1988

**Response
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To President Cossiga of Italy**

[Delivered in Rome, June 16, 1988]

LIKE ITALIANS IN POLITICS

The Filipinos and Italians share the same hopes born of recent events like the perceptible decline of terrorism by revolutionaries against governments, and the de-escalation of conflicts in a manner where no one shamefully appears as the loser. President Aquino reiterates that reconciliation, at times is the most practical wisdom.

Our commitment to democracy and political reconciliation is grounded as deeply in practical considerations as in idealism.

Filipinos will accept government only in a free republic, and will respect only directives and laws in which they see their own imprint. At the root of their innate republicanism are a proud sense of self worth as individuals and an instinctive disbelief that any individual or group can have all the right answers. In short, Filipinos are like Italians in politics.

The only system that will last with my people, even if it does not always work well, is democracy.

There are other similarities, particularly in our respective struggles for national liberation, even to the extent of suffering from the same imperialism in the 16th century, and using the power of song to express our people's aspirations for nationhood and freedom, as in the Risorgimento and in our People Power Revolution.

The resemblances in our past are matched by our shared aspirations for the future: for a world that is free of the threat of total extinction in a nuclear war, yet equally free of the threat of totalitarian domination. A world where peace will be the natural flowering of true understanding, deep sympathy, and willing cooperation among all nations, rather than the paralyzing effect of a universal fear of mutually assured destruction.

We share the same hopes born of recent events: capitalism and communism toasting to each other's health and longevity in the Kremlin, the withdrawal of foreign armies from many lands, the slow but perceptible decline of terrorism, by revolutionaries against governments and by governments against their own citizens, and the de-escalation of conflicts in a manner where no one shamefully appears as the loser. Reconciliation is not just an outpouring of humanity, but, as I said, at times it is the most practical wisdom.

We are pleased to note other striking similarities, as in the graciousness of Italian manners, the generosity of your praises, and the affectionate warmth of the hospitality you have shown us since our arrival. And in your kind references to the conditions of Filipino workers in Italy, we note the same infinite capacity to understand experiences that Italians themselves have had in foreign lands, when Italy was still struggling to achieve social and economic progress.

To the diplomatic and economic advantages to our two countries which this visit hopes to achieve, we must add its most important result:

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast: To His Excellency, President Cossiga for His continued good health and success. To the greater friendship and cooperation of the Italian and Filipino peoples,

And to the long life and economic progress of their democracies. Mabuhay.

Source: **Presidential Museum and Library**

Response of President Corazon Aquino to the Mayor of Rome, June 17, 1988

**Response
of
Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Philippines
To the Mayor of Rome**

[Delivered in Rome, June 17, 1988]

WARMTH OF ROMAN HOSPITALITY

The President is personally gratified by the satisfying qualities of Rome as she savors the beauty and the art scattered throughout the city, a testament to human excellence and Italian genius. She wishes it were not a state visit so that she could explore the place and enjoy without formalities the warmth of Roman hospitality.

I thank you for these gifts, whose symbolism I appreciate.

The beauty of this City, the art so lavishly scattered throughout it, particularly that dating from the Renaissance, remain the most eloquent testaments of human excellence and of the eternal vitality and inexhaustible spring of Italian genius. To discover the highest aim of human development, we must look not to the future but to Rome. Now I understand why Rome had to be the home of St. Peter's rock, the center of the Faith. Amidst this glory one could say, indeed, without embarrassment: man is made in God's image.

I wish I were not here on a state visit so that I could explore all the beautiful places of this city, but most of all, so I can enjoy without the formalities more of the graciousness and warmth of Roman hospitality that is so much like our own.

But the personally satisfying qualities of this City must await the time when a leader can return like Cincinnatus from the stern satisfactions of public service to the equally profound joys of family life, wherein lies anyway the strength of the State – as the Romans knew.

But these joys of a private visit to Rome are reserved for the future. For the present, I must come to Rome to draw strength of purpose from its example, and practical wisdom from its history; for Rome indeed symbolizes statecraft's highest achievement, as her history reveals the secret of the strong and enduring state:

The collective and irresistible force of a people, and their unwavering commitment to the State, made possible by the impartiality and justness of her laws and by the incorruptible and brave examples of her public servants.

There is a legend, that it was the cackling of geese that alerted the Romans to the approach of a hostile army, but it was the civic virtue of the Romans that provided the strength to defeat them. This is one of Rome's great lessons: making noises is not enough. You have to match your words with actions.

I want to thank you for the very warm reception you have given us. But most of all, I wish to express my country's deep appreciation for your commitment to continue extending to Filipinos in Rome the full and equal protection of her laws.

This commitment on your part and my own commitment to the ideals of Rome make it possible for Filipinos to say, with gratitude: Civis Romanus Sum.

Thank you.

Source: Presidential Museum and Library

Provision on the national territory of the 1987 Constitution

Provision on the National Territory of the 1987 Constitution

ARTICLE I

The National Territory

The national territory comprises the Philippine archipelago, with all the islands and waters embraced therein, and all other territories over which the Philippines has sovereignty or jurisdiction, consisting of its terrestrial, fluvial and aerial domains, including its territorial sea, the seabed, the subsoil, the insular shelves, and other submarine areas. The waters around, between, and connecting the islands of the archipelago, regardless of their breadth and dimensions, form part of the internal waters of the Philippines.

Source: **The Philippine Claim to a Portion of North Borneo**

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In a country where the majority live below the poverty line, the ideology of the left is tantalizing. The promise of equalizing every one by depriving each of his individual right to find his economic level is just too tempting to those who have nothing at all.

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The Final Report of the Fact-Finding Commission: II: Political Change and Military Transmission in the Philippines, 1966 – 1989: From the Barracks to the Corridors of Power

II

POLITICAL CHANGE AND MILITARY TRANSFORMATION IN THE PHILIPPINES, 1966 – 1989: FROM THE BARRACKS TO THE CORRIDORS OF POWER

This chapter examines the factors, both external and internal, which influenced the politicization of the Philippine military and predisposed it to the launching of coups.

Traditionally, the military establishment is an organization whose sole function is to provide external defense. An extension of that function is internal security, or defense against aggression from within (internal subversion). In many Third World countries, however, the military has had to assume another role — that of maintaining peace and order. The Philippines is no exception to this phenomenon.

A. Historical Development of the Armed Forces of the Philippines

When the American Military Commander of the Philippines — upon instructions from the President of the United States of America on 4 July 1901 — turned over the government to civilian authorities, the Philippine-American War (1898 -1902) had not yet ended. To meet this situation, the Governor General ordered the formation of an Insular Police Force on 8 August 1901 under Capt Henry Allen. Initially, 74 American officers were appointed to man it. By 31 December 1901, the number grew to 180. To reinforce the American officers, Filipinos, deliberately selected from various ethnic groups, were organized as scouts. In 1905, a three-month course was offered at the Sta Lucia barracks in Intramuros for Filipino recruits to be trained as officers in the Insular Police Force. In 1917, the Revised Administrative Code changed the name of the Insular Police Force to the Philippine Constabulary, tasked mainly to provide internal security.¹ External security was provided by the US.

On 15 November 1935, the Philippine Commonwealth was formally inaugurated. It was a creation of the American government which retained control over Philippine affairs while granting a certain measure of autonomy to Filipinos.

A.1. The National Defense Act

In his inaugural address, President Manuel Quezon stressed the urgent need to formulate an adequate defense program for the Philippines. Since the Commonwealth period would last for 10 years, a military institution would be needed to protect the state. Besides, Japan's aggressive policies indicated its intention to establish a sphere of influence in the area which in all certainty would include the Philippines.² Quezon requested the services of Gen Douglas MacArthur as Military Adviser to assist in the development of the Philippine military.

MacArthur formulated the National Defense Plan. As he envisioned it, the Philippine military establishment would primarily be a "citizen army" with two main components: the Regular and Reserve Forces. The Regular Force would be "made up of individuals who follow the profession of arms as a career, and who were constantly in the service of the government. The Reserve Force would consist of those able-bodied male citizens between the ages of 21 and 50 who have been duly trained for the military."³ For MacArthur, the development of a reasonably adequate defense was important for the Filipinos and the Americans. American pride and prestige would suffer a severe blow should the Philippines ever fall under the control of another foreign power.⁴

Commonwealth Act No. 1, otherwise known as the National Defense Act, approved on 21 December 1935, authorized the organization of the Philippine Army. It was tasked to protect the state against external attack, to promote internal security, and to maintain peace and order.⁵

On 11 January 1936, to implement the National Defense Act, Quezon issued Executive Order No. 11 formally establishing the Philippine Army. The Philippine Constabulary, which arose out of the Insular Police Force, became the nucleus of the regular force of the Philippine Army.

The Philippine Constabulary Air Group which was activated on 2 January 1935, was redesignated as the Philippine Air Force on 3 July 1947. In 1939, an Off-Shore Patrol (OSP) was organized as a unit of the Philippine Army. It was often referred to as the “mosquito fleet.” In October 1947, the OSP was renamed Philippine Naval Patrol and on 5 January 1951, it became the Philippine Navy. On 23 December 1950, President Elpidio Quirino issued Executive Order No. 389 designating the four major services to compose the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). The Philippine Army (PA) became responsible for land defense, the Philippine Air Force (PAF) for air, the Philippine Navy (PN) for sea, and the Philippine Constabulary (PC) which, as the national police, was responsible for the security of rear areas in case of emergency.⁶ Providing the command over the major services was General Headquarters, Armed Forces of the Philippines (GHQ, AFP). The Commander of the AFP was known as the Chief of Staff, AFP (CSAFP), who reported to the President as Commander-in-Chief.

A.2. US Role in the Formation of the AFP

American participation in the formation of the AFP was clear from the start, with MacArthur as Military Adviser to Quezon formulating and implementing the first National Defense Plan. The US defined and shaped the functions of the AFP. By assuming external defense, the US caused the AFP to concentrate on internal defense and peace and order. By financing the cost of organizing the military, the US necessarily determined its size, training, equipment, and supplies.

As the Pacific War drew to a close and the promised restoration of independence approached, the US began to plan for the transfer of sovereignty to the Philippines. It prepared to provide military assistance to rebuild the army which it limited to 37,000 troops, to train and equip them, and to establish a group of American army, navy, and air force officers to provide military advice.⁷ A program of military assistance was formulated through the 1946 Military Assistance Act authorizing \$19.75 million to be administered in the Philippines by the Joint United States Military Advisory Group (JUSMAG). This relationship was sealed by the Military Assistance Agreement between the two countries on 21 March 1947, an agreement which remains in effect until the present.⁸

The US turned over 33,000 army, 2,000 air force, and 1,800 naval forces to the Philippines on 30 June 1946 with second-hand US army equipment and supplies already located in the Philippines. Under the Agreement, the US had sent a select group of Filipino officers to American military academies and service schools since independence.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff articulated on 22 May 1950 the assumption behind US military assistance to the Philippines thus

A sound military policy for the Philippines at the present time justifies maximum emphasis and expenditures upon forces required for the maintenance of internal security and a minimum expenditure upon forces contributing largely to national military prestige or to forces and resources largely designed for defense against external invaders.⁹

Thus, the AFP was not able to develop external defense capability. This was exacerbated by the fact that the Military Bases Agreement between the two countries signed on 14 March 1947 and the Mutual Defense Treaty of March 1951 reinforced external defense dependence on the US. US military presence in the bases, their largest overseas, and reliance on US assistance during peace and in case of external attack left the AFP developing largely an internal security function.

A.3. The AFP and the Huk Insurgency

From its establishment until the early 1940s, the AFP was confined to its original functions of defending the state. But the absence of a viable and immediate external threat to the Philippines, the emergence of the Huk (Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon or Hukbalahap, more commonly known as Huks) insurgency, and US defense umbrella in the

Philippines and the larger Asian region led the AFP to assume a leading role in the peace and order drive in the country.

During this time, the AFP was completely subordinated to the civilian political authority. The President, being the Commander-in-Chief, enjoyed considerable control powers over the military. Congress fully used its authority to allocate funds and confirm senior military promotions.

In the late 1940s, the rise of the Hukbalahap insurgency necessitated the expansion of the role of the AFP beyond its original functions. The Huks originated as a peasant-based movement pressing for agrarian reform. Having fought against the Japanese during the latter's occupation of the Philippines, the end of the war found them heavily-armed and well-organized. Contrary to their expectations, they were excluded from receiving pensions and other benefits because the government did not recognize them as guerrillas. The Huks criticized the government's failure to initiate an agrarian reform program that would correct the inequitable land distribution in Philippine society, particularly in Central Luzon. In the 1946 elections, several congressmen-elect sympathetic to the Huks, including Luis Taruc, better known as the Huk Supremo, were prevented from assuming their seats. Losing faith in the electoral process and the government, the Huks then escalated their armed struggle under the slogan "bullets, not ballots."¹⁰

The AFP embarked on an extensive campaign to defeat the Huks. However, the strategy was not confined to armed combat. Under the direction of Defense Secretary Ramon Magsaysay, the strategy became a fusion of political, socio-economic, and military activities, thus signaling the start of the expansion of the military's protection, security, and peace-keeping functions. In addressing the Huk problem, Magsaysay used two different approaches: a mailed-fist policy and a policy of attraction. He said that "With my left hand I am offering to all dissidents the road to peace, happy homes and economic security, but with my right, I shall crush all those who resist and seek to destroy our democratic government."¹¹ He countered the Huk slogan with one of his own, "ballots, not bullets."

Magsaysay was assisted by the JUSMAG. When Lt Col Edward Lansdale arrived in the Philippines in September 1950, the Huk insurgency was already escalating. Lansdale was not just a military adviser attached to JUSMAG. He was also the head of the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) clandestine and paramilitary operations in the country. With him was Capt Charles Bohannon from the US army intelligence unit. Together, they embarked on psychological warfare based on the premise that a popular guerrilla army cannot be defeated by force alone.

Lansdale's team conducted a careful study of the superstitions of the Filipino peasants. In one operation, Lansdale's men flew over Huk areas in a small plane hidden by clouds and broadcast in Tagalog mysterious curses on any villager who would dare to give food or shelter to the Huks.¹² Another "psywar" operation played on the superstitious belief in the *aswang*, a mythical vampire. Psywar squad entered a town and planted rumors that an *aswang* lived in the neighboring hill where the Huks were based. After giving the rumor time to circulate, the squad laid an ambush for the Huk rebels along a trail used by them. The ambushers snatched the last man in the Huk patrol, punctured his neck with two holes, vampire fashion, held his body by the heels to drain the blood, and put the corpse back on the trail. When the Huks discovered their bloodless comrade, they fled from the region.¹³

Lansdale also held regular coffee sessions with Filipino officials and military personnel. Out of this came the Economic Development Corps (EDCOR) to lure the Huks with a program of resettlement. EDCOR became the government's response to the "land for the landless" slogan of the Huks. The plan of forming such an entity actually started even before World War II when ex-Senator Camilo Osias suggested it for the public schools. After liberation, the idea of an economic development corps was espoused by the Army for the purpose of integrating 20-year-old recruits who were to be trained on mechanized farms into the pattern of national defense. But it was not until Magsaysay became the Secretary of National Defense that the plan turned into a reality. EDCOR was placed under military control. This was his "left hand" approach in attracting the dissidents to surrender. Six months after he took office, on 22 February 1951, the first EDCOR farm project was established at Kapatagan, Lanao del Sur. The project consisted of 1,600 hectares of farm land for distribution to ex-Huks at the rate of about six to eight hectares per family. The Army would furnish each family with farm implements, a carabao, a house, seeds and other paraphernalia. In May 1947, the first batch of 56 ex-Huk families was taken at the Army's expense to Lanao. Six years later, a total of 978 families or nearly 5,000 persons had been settled in the four EDCOR farms in Mindanao.

and Isabela in Luzon.¹⁴ However, only 246, or 25 percent of these families were ex-Huks. Most were members of Magsaysay's armed forces.¹⁵

The AFP also embarked on a host of socio-economic activities such as the building of roads, bridges, irrigation systems, ditches, and school buildings, in line with their counter-insurgency (COIN) program. They also provided free dental, medical, and legal services to residents in the rural areas.

After assuming office on 30 December 1953 as the third President of the Republic, Magsaysay continued the use of the military in his socio-economic programs. He retained the defense portfolio until 14 May 1954.

But despite the fact that the military performed duties beyond their traditional roles, the civilian political authority still remained supreme. Congress continued to exercise effective control over the military through its constitutional powers over the defense budget and the promotion of senior officers.

However, discontent within the military establishment could not be dismissed as non-existent. As an aftermath of the 1949 presidential elections where there were charges of massive electoral fraud committed by Quirino, a guerrilla leader, one Col Medrano of Batangas, led a local rebellion and was reported to have solicited the support of the military. Similarly, in 1958, after Carlos P. Garcia became president following the death of Magsaysay, rumors of a coup were in the air. Although these rumors were never substantiated, Garcia took decisive action by dismissing Gen Jesus N. Vargas as Secretary of National Defense.¹⁶

But these were just plans which were never implemented, for it can be said that during that time, the demarcation lines between civilian and military authority were clearly defined. Civilian political institutions were relatively strong, regular elections provided the mechanism for changing leaders, and the military establishment faithfully adhered to the dictum that civilian authority is supreme over the military establishment.

A.4. The AFP from 1957 to 1965

At the time of Magsaysay's death in 1957, the AFP had become involved in civic action and counter-insurgency functions, and in such various socio-economic projects as the building of schoolhouses, roads and bridges, digging of artesian wells, and the provision of medical and legal assistance to rural residents.

During the incumbency of Garcia, the Socio-Economic Military Program (SEMP) was adopted as a military responsibility. It aimed to use the resources of the military in the socio-economic development of the country. It authorized the Chief of Staff to utilize military personnel for land resettlement, rural development, food production, and public works construction. A number of SEMP settlements were established in Mindanao, Luzon, and Panay islands. However, this endeavor was not then undertaken on a full-scale and permanent basis.

President Diosdado Macapagal, who won the 1961 elections, did not believe that the military's role should be extended to involvement in civic action, unlike Magsaysay and Garcia. He terminated the AFP civic action programs arguing that civic action only encouraged the military to engage in politics. He strongly believed that civic action was not a function of the military. By 1965, there had been a substantial reduction in the AFP's presence in national life. They returned to their barracks and the regularity of military life.

But it can be said that the military's involvement in counter-insurgency, in keeping with its function of providing internal security and maintaining peace and order, led it to participate in socio-economic activities, a task beyond its traditional role.

B. The Involvement of the AFP as a Partner in National Development: 1966 – 1971

After President Ferdinand E. Marcos assumed office on 30 December 1965, he made the AFP an integral component of his economic development program. In his State of the Nation address, he emphasized that

. . . the primary threat to our national security within the immediate future lies in internal subversion rather than from any external aggression. The military establishment will be developed along this basic premise in the years to come. However, since the development of our economy provides the permanent solution to this threat, I intend to harness to a greater extent the resources of our defense establishment in our task of nation building. It would be culpable negligence on our part if the peaceful uses of military forces were not availed of to the fullest extent possible in our continuing program of economic development.¹⁷

The Four-Year Economic Program formulated in September 1966 and approved by the National Economic Council noted that

. . . the Armed Forces of the Philippines with its manpower, material and equipment resources plus its organizational cohesiveness and discipline possesses a tremendous potential to participate in economic development which should be exploited to the maximum. Such participation becomes imperative considering that the problem besetting the country is socio-economic rather than military and that the resources available to solve this problem are scarce and limited.¹⁸

The foregoing policy pronouncements provided the rationale for the AFFs massive participation in socio-economic development.

B.1. Career Development Programs to Suit Their New Role

The AFFs new function required skills and expertise that would be necessary to make the military better qualified for Marcos's plans. In his 1966 State of the Nation address, Marcos called for "increased training, new equipment and heightened morale . . ." ¹⁹ Imbuing the AFP with civilian management skills became one of the goals of his defense program. Service schools were re-equipped and re-staffed with career soldiers. At the first year of his presidency, it was reported that

. . . 2,781 officers and enlisted men completed courses in local and foreign service schools. And 60,000 ROTC [Reserve Officers Training Course] cadets completed the required instructions in colleges and universities in the Philippines. Of all the major services the army was the most actively involved in professionalizing its forces. Special training was conducted during the year for 167 officers. Several combat exercises were also undertaken. Refresher courses were completed by 1,360 officers and men in the Constabulary, and 92 officers from the Air Force. In the Navy, 68 officers participated in training courses. Under the Military Assistance Program (MAP), 145 officers were trained in the U.S. . . . ²⁰

The National Defense College of the Philippines (NDCP), activated on 9 September 1963, became the apex of the officer's military education.

It is the only institution in the country with the mission of educating senior military leaders, as well as civilian executives from the government, for top positions in the national government and in national and international security structures.

The NDCFs first regular course¹ started on 6 February 1966. By June 1972, a total of 93 students in six classes had been graduated. In the next six years (July 1972 to June 1978), it graduated another 251 students in six classes or 151 percent over the first six classes.

Majority of its graduates were holding key and sensitive positions in their respective offices by 1977. Most of these graduates were responsible for the formulation of national or agency policies regarding national security. Among its graduates from the military, 37 had been promoted to the grade of general as of 1977.²¹

Occupying the next rung below NDCP in the officer's military education is the AFP Command and General Staff College (CGSC) which was activated in 1969, with its first class held in July of that year. Previously, each major

service command, except the PC, had its own command and staff school, the Army being the first to establish one. All of these command and staff schools were integrated into the CGSC.

Just like its previous counterparts in the different military services, the CGSC aims to prepare officers for senior level positions. However, in its briefing paper, the CGSC explains that training of top military men should not be limited to military matters. Although it is not explicitly stated, the institution appears to be concerned with training military men for civilian leadership roles. It envisioned the ideal of a military professional with a broad perspective of a committed leader and the incisive and analytical mind of a statesman. When the CGSC started, most of the subjects were military courses. Through the years, changes in the curriculum were mostly in terms of management courses.

The CGSC had conducted the following courses: Command and General Staff Regular Course (CGSRC), Command and General Staff Associate Course (CGSAC), Command and General Staff Special Course (CGSSC), Technical Service Command and Staff Course (TSCSC), Non-Residence Correspondence Course (NRCC), and Battalion Commanders' Course (BCC). The CGSC also conducted important seminars as Crisis Management on Hostage Negotiations, Curriculum Development Course, and briefings on human rights. To date, the CGSC has graduated 2,322 AFP officers as shown in Table II-1.

The Philippine Military Academy (PMA) is the country's only military academy for professional career officers. The Academy traces its beginnings to the officers' school of the Philippine Constabulary in Manila which opened on 17 February 1905. With the passage of Commonwealth Act No. 1, the Constabulary Academy rose to full college status. It offers an academic curriculum of four years leading to a degree of bachelor of science. Graduates are commissioned as second lieutenants in the regular force.

**Table II – 1 — Number of Graduates
From CGSC By Service Command**

Course	PA	PC	PAF	PN	
CGSRC	559	452	296	256	
CGSAC	75	102	24	24	
CGSSC	13	8	4	9	
TSCSC	—	—	—	—	
NRCC	54	12	8	2	
BCC	18	10	2	6	
Total	719	584	334	297	

Source: AFP Command and General Staff College, Fort Bonifacio, Makati, Metro Manila.

Other military schools include the following: the Metropolitan Citizen Military Training Command (MCMTTC), Armed Forces of the Philippines Training Command (AFPTC), Philippine Air Force Flying School (PAFFS), PA Training Command (PA TRACOM), Naval Training Command (NTC), and the Philippine Constabulary Training Command (PC TRACOM). A discussion of the kind of training that candidate-officers undergo at the PMA and at the aforementioned military schools is made in the next chapter.

The AFP also sent their men to take advance degrees at various civilian schools and universities, including the College of Public Administration at the University of the Philippines, the Asian Institute of Management, and at the graduate schools of business of Ateneo de Manila University and De La Salle University.

Other training programs undertaken by the military establishment to make its men better prepared for their newly-assigned roles included the training and equipping of the AFP engineering battalions from 1967 to 1968 in exchange for the Philippine government's commitment to send a civic action team to Vietnam. This was undertaken with a \$7 million grant from the US.²²

The AFP also relied on the training programs provided by the US as a form of military aid under the Mutual Assistance Program. By 1971, Philippine military personnel, numbering 13,588, had received training from the US. Specifically, some 8,729 were trained within the continental US. One hundred and fifty-three senior officers had attended US command and general staff schools. During 1969 and 1970, five US military teams were detailed to assist the AFP in training, supply, maintenance, and equipment operations at an estimated cost of \$300,000.²³

The AFP also participated in training programs provided by other countries. Under the Defense Cooperation Program (DCP), AFP personnel have undertaken training courses and study visits in Australia since 1960. A total of 1,021 military personnel have participated in DCP training programs from the time it was initiated until the present year as shown in Table II-2.

The AFP also participated in study visits under the DCP to familiarize senior AFP officers with Australian Defence Force activities and procedures. Study visits included the following:

- a. Dockyard
- b. Personnel
- c. Australian Army
- d. Management
- e. Logistics
- f. Studies
- g. Formulation of Training
- h. Senior Executive
- i. Technical
- j. Explosive Safety
- k. Army Health

Table II-2 — Number of AFP Personnel Who Participated in DCP Training Programs: 1960 – 1990

Year	No. of AFP Personnel	Year
1960	3	1975
1961	2	1976
1962	2	1977
1963	6	1978
1964	4	1979
1965	3	1980
1966	2	1981
1967	2	1982/8
1968	2	1983/8
1969	3	1984/8
1970	4	1985/8
1971	0	1986/8
1972	7	1987/8
1973	10	1988/8
1974	13	1989/9

Source: Office of Education and Training (OJ-8), Armed Forces of the Philippines, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

Other Allied countries, also offered training programs through diplomatic invitation to the AFP for command and general staff courses as shown in Table II-3. Data for the years 1966 to 1973 were not available as the records perished in the fire which destroyed the GHQ building in Camp Aguinaldo in 1987. Similarly, annual

accomplishment reports of the AFP from 1970 to 1986 relating not only to the education and training but to other changes in the military, were all burned during the fifth coup attempt on August 1987.²⁴

Table II-3 — Number of AFP Personnel Who Participated in Training Programs of Allied Countries

Country	Year Started
France	1989
Germany	1975
India	1974
Indonesia	1973
Korea	1982
Malaysia	1975
Singapore	1985
Spain	1975
Thailand	1987

Source: Office of Education and Training (OJ-8), Armed Forces of the Philippines, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

B.2. National Development Programs Undertaken by the AFP

With the decision in 1966 to tap military resources for economic development, the AFP embarked on a socio-economic program of unprecedented scale under the banner of “civic action.” Projects under civic action fell into two general groupings: those in support of national development program, and those in support of regional or community development programs. Under the former were the construction of highways, feeder roads, and pre-fabricated schoolhouse buildings, irrigation development, flood control, dredging and reclamation, manpower development, land resettlement, and industrial site planning. Under the latter were the civic action centers (Home Defense Centers or HDCs), servicing of regional development programs, and assisting the Department of Health in the provision of medical and dental services to the rural population.²⁵

The most significant achievements of the civic action program were in the field of public works. In the first Four-Year Economic Program, Marcos stressed the need for a public works program amounting billion, with P960.4 million or 31.06 percent for the construction of new roads and the improvement of existing ones. Considering the magnitude of the construction program and the relatively short period within which it was expected to be accomplished, Marcos mobilized the manpower, material, and equipment resources of the AFP. Three major engineering units were directly involved in the infrastructural development program — the 51st Engineer Brigade which was composed of one Special Support Company and 10 Engineer Construction Battalions, the 515th Engineer Forestry Company and the Waterfront and Dredge Company of the Philippine Navy. The 10 Engineer Construction Battalions of the 51st Engineer Brigade were increased to 15 by 1967.

For a period of one year (1966), the 51st Engineer Brigade alone completed 13 major construction projects with a total cost of P3.16 million which was more than 50 percent of what was undertaken by the Corps of Engineers in twelve and one half years under previous administrations.

From 1966 to 1973, an approximate comparison can be made of the total national accomplishment with that of the AFP’s on a number of infrastructure activities as shown in Table II-4.²⁶

Table II-4 — Percentage of AFP Infrastructure Projects, 1966 -1973

Project	AFP (in kms.)	National Total (in kms.)
Highways	113.645	6,431

Secondary Roads	72.736	11,748
Feeder	2,172.724	7,196
Bridges	1,468.560	37,677

Source: Col Florencio Magsino, “An Assessment of the Employment of the AFP for National Development” (Masteral Thesis, National Defense College of the Philippines, 1974), p. 54.

Although the AFFs contribution in the construction of highways, secondary roads, and bridges was very minimal in terms of the national total, its contribution to the construction of feeder roads was very substantial, amounting to 30 percent of the total. Feeder roads are those made of dirt or gravel to connect rural and far-flung areas to towns and cities.

In meeting the acute shortage of schoolhouses, the AFP constructed 4,185 units of Army-type pre-fabricated schoolhouses and fabricated 6,500 units of the Marcos-type from 1966 to June 1969. This constituted 46 percent of the administration’s pre-fabricated school building output from 1966 to 1969.²⁷

The Navy, for its part, implemented dredging programs. The Air Force, by 1969, covered more than 3.2 million hectares with photo-grammetry for mapping purposes.²⁸ In 28 provinces, 37 HDCs were established in the same year. These HDCs served as the focal point for coordinating inter-agency support for community self-help projects. The activities undertaken by the HDCs were many and varied, from community irrigation in Luzon to seminars in deep sea fishing in Sulu.

The AFP also provided free medical and dental services, especially in rural areas. By 1969, there were 25 military rural health teams operating in 17 provinces, attending to the public health in medically-distressed areas. In fiscal year 1968 -1969, 89,613 medical and 43,403 dental patients were treated.²⁹

B.3. Internal Security and Peace and Order

Despite the preoccupation with civic action, the AFP continued to undertake its role of maintaining peace and order in the country. Law enforcement was continually carried out by the PC. They were quite successful in their drive against smuggling during the first year and a half of Marcos’s incumbency.³⁰ The PC, with assistance from the Philippine Navy, arrested at least 100 of the most important smugglers.

In the Greater Manila Area (GMA), crime figures were on the rise when Marcos became president. GMA was composed of 4 cities and 13 municipalities, each having its own police force. In 1968, Marcos established the Metropolitan Area Command (METROCOM) of the PC. It assisted local police forces in GMA in dealing with urban unrest among workers and students. Other units of the AFP were transferred to the METROCOM, beefing it up to a force of 1,700 officers and enlisted men, from a meager 300-man team. From 1 August 1968 to 1 July 1970, the METROCOM was under the administrative and operational control of GHQ, but after this period, the PC took over, making the METROCOM one of the major subordinate commands of the PC with a status equal to that of a PC Zone Command in the provinces.³¹ Aside from assisting the local police forces in general crime fighting, the METROCOM also assisted local police agencies in the arrest, detention, search and seizure of suspects in criminal investigation and prosecution, especially in cases involving illegal possession of firearms, carnapping, and other serious offenses. Trained by the US in crowd control techniques, METROCOM obtained the opportunity to apply what it learned in dispersing demonstrations held at the US Embassy, Malacañang and in other places in 1970 and 1971.

The AFP was also deputized during elections. In 1969, the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) mobilized the military in manning the polls. In 1971, military personnel were asked to keep the polls orderly and to guard the ballot boxes from the electoral precincts to the tabulating center in Manila.³²

B.4. Structural Changes in the Military

When Marcos assumed the presidency, he retained the defense portfolio for the first 13 months of his term, following the precedent set by Magsaysay. Marcos immediately undertook the largest reshuffle in the history of the Philippine military.³³ Of the 25 flag officers, 14 were forced to retire, including the AFP Chief and Vice Chief of Staff, the Commanding General of the Army, the Chief of PC, all four Constabulary zone commanders, and approximately one-third of the provincial commanders.³⁴ A number of key appointments were given to officers from Marcos's home province of Ilocos Norte. Retired BGen Ernesto Mata was recalled to active duty and was appointed Chief of Staff. BGen Segundo Velasco became Chief of PC and Col Fabian C. Ver was appointed commander of the Presidential Security Command (PSC). All three were from Ilocos Norte. These moves can be seen as an early attempt on the part of Marcos to place men loyal to him in key positions in the AFP.

In the South, increasing criminal activities such as smuggling, cattle-rustling, and the conflict between the Christians and the Muslims led to the establishment of the Southwest Command (SOWESCOM) in Zamboanga City on 21 September 1968. It became the first unified command in the AFP. It was composed of elements of the Army, Constabulary, Air Force, and the Navy. It guarded the southern backdoor. Its operations included the maintenance of peace and order, anti-smuggling, anti-piracy, anti-subversion, and campaign against other acts inimical to national security. On 1 May 1976, SOWESCOM became the Southern Command (SOUTHCOD), with jurisdiction over the whole of Southern Philippines and the responsibility of maintaining peace and order, assisting in the socio-economic development of the area, and guarding it from external and internal threats.³⁵

B.5. Participation in a Foreign War

The Philippines also sent a unit to Vietnam. The Philippine Civic Action Group Vietnam (PHILCAG V) was the country's contribution to the Allied efforts in that country. PHILCAG V was involved in the construction and repair of roads, bridges, buildings, in the resettlement of the refugees, and in attending to the sick and wounded from both sides of the battlefield in Vietnam.

From all of the foregoing discussion, it can be concluded that the role of the AFP increased under Marcos. But the utilization of the armed forces in socio-economic development programs is not a novel idea. It has been done in other countries. Marcos was not a pioneer in the field. The AFP also undertook socio-economic programs during the Magsaysay era. However, it was only during Marcos's term when the non-military role of the AFP became institutionalized. Before Marcos, military role expansion took place within a political environment where the political institutions were relatively strong, the rules of the political game were observed, and the supremacy of civilian authority over the military was intact.

C. Martial Law 1972 -1986: Political Consequences and Impact on the AFP

With Proclamation 1081, Marcos placed the Philippines under martial law. He claimed that it was warranted by threats to public safety and the security of the nation arising from increased terroristic activities of insurgent groups, specifically, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the Muslim rebel groups in Southern Philippines. Proclamation 1081, signed on 21 September 1972, stated that

... on the basis of carefully evaluated and verified information, it is definitely established that lawless elements who are moved by a common or similar ideological conviction, design, strategy and goal, and enjoying the active moral and material support of a foreign power and being guided and directed by intensely devoted, well-trained, determined and ruthless groups of men and seeking refuge under the protection of our constitutional liberties to promote and attain their ends, have entered into a conspiracy and have in fact joined and banded their resources and forces together for the prime purpose of, and in fact they have been, and are actually staging, undertaking and waging an armed insurrection and rebellion against the Government of the Republic of the Philippines in order to forcibly seize political and state power in this country, overthrow the duly constituted Government, and supplant our existing political, social, economic and legal order with an entirely new one. . . .³⁶

As Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Marcos ordered the military to "maintain law and order throughout the Philippines, prevent or suppress all forms of lawless violence as well as any act of insurrection or rebellion and

to enforce obedience to all laws and decrees, orders and regulations. . . .³⁷ Marcos clarified that the proclamation of martial law was not a military takeover.³⁸ The military authorities would only be implementing martial law to protect the country. He cited the 1935 Constitution and assured that the AFP would continue to uphold the supremacy of civilian authority.³⁹

Contrary to these pronouncements, however, the military was actually involved in the decision to put the country under martial law. In a speech before the AFP in celebration of Loyalty Day, Marcos revealed that 12 high defense officials formed the key group, who were in constant consultation with each other regarding the decision to place the country under martial law. The 12 men had been variously called the “Twelve Disciples,”⁴⁰ the Twelve Apostles,⁴¹ and the “Rolex 12.”⁴² They were Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile, AFP Chief of Staff Gen Romeo Espino, PA Commanding Officer MGen Rafael Zagala, PC Chief MGen Fidel V. Ramos, PAF Chief MGen Jose Rancudo, PN Commander RAdm Hilario Ruiz, PSC Chief MGen Fabian C. Ver, AFP Chief of Intelligence MGen Ignacio Paz, 1st PC Zone Commander BGen Tomas Diaz, PC METROCOM Commander BGen Alfredo Montoya, Rizal PC Commander Col Romeo Gatan, and Congressman Eduardo Cojuangco, Jr. The latter was recalled to active duty with the rank of colonel.⁴³ Vice Chief of Staff Gen Rafael Iletto was against the plan because he thought the declaration of martial law would not be proper at that time. He was subsequently named Philippine Ambassador to Iran, becoming the first active duty officer to hold an ambassadorial post in the country’s history.⁴⁴

Soon after the declaration of martial law, Congress was abolished, mass activities were prohibited, political parties were outlawed, and civil and political rights were suspended. Newspaper publications were ordered closed and curfew was strictly implemented.

General Order (GO) No. 1 gave the President the power to “govern the nation and direct the operation of the entire government including all its agencies and instrumentalities.”⁴⁵ GO No. 2 ordered the arrest of individuals who were perceived to be participants in a conspiracy to seize political and state power.⁴⁶ This was later amended by GO No. 19 which authorized the arrest and detention of any person who shall utter, publish, distribute, circulate, and spread false news and information.⁴⁷ GO No. 4 ordered the observance of curfew hours from 12:00 midnight to 4:00 in the morning.⁴⁸ Rallies, demonstrations, and other forms of group actions were prohibited,⁴⁹ as well as the possession of firearms unless duly authorized.⁵⁰

The abolition of civilian institutions like Congress, the weakening of the judiciary, and the outlawing of political parties, left the military as the only other instrumentality of the national government outside of the Presidency. The military had been called to save the Republic and restore confidence in the “democratic traditions” cherished by the Filipinos. In a country with no militaristic tradition — and where the military was traditionally low key — the AFP became very visible, performing a more expanded mission, such as security, law and order, administration of justice, greater management and administrative functions, and developmental, political and miscellaneous roles.⁵¹

C.1. Military Participation in Politics

C.1.a. Martial Law Implementor

The military became one of the vital supports of the regime. Apart from external defense, the AFP was also charged with the suppression of rebellion and the enforcement of all laws, decrees, orders, and regulations issued by Marcos. They enforced nationwide curfew, collection of unlicensed firearms, and the suppression of rallies, strikes, and demonstrations. Letter of Instructions (LOI) No. 98 vested in the PC the task of maintaining peace and order in corn procurement areas and the enforcement of pertinent rules of the National Grains Authority (NGA) in line with the government’s massive corn procurement program.⁵² The military was also ordered to assist other government offices in the implementation of price control imposed on commodities such as corn and milled rice.⁵³ The Secretary of National Defense was directed to provide assistance in the collection of loans incurred from rural banks, the Philippine National Bank, and the Agricultural Credit Administration.⁵⁴ The agrarian reform law, by virtue of Presidential Decree (PD) No. 27, was also implemented by the military. LOI No. 45 authorized the PC Provincial Commanders to receive sworn statements of landowners to be submitted to the Secretary of National Defense.⁵⁵

C.1.b. Centralization of Police Forces

Peace and order problems continued to be the responsibility of the PC. In 1975, police forces were incorporated into the Integrated National Police (INP) and placed under the command of the PC chief. These efforts may be viewed as an attempt to centralize political control by taking away a very important power from local governments.⁵⁶ The PC also supervised other law enforcement agencies technically outside the jurisdiction of the military. The PC/INP absorbed as special agencies the law enforcement units of the Land Transportation Commission (LTC), the Central Bank (CB), Bureau of Customs, Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), the Bureau of Fisheries, and the Bureau of Forest Development.⁵⁷

C.1.C The Presidential Security Command

The security role of the PSC was also expanded. Initially, the security of the President and Malacañang was the responsibility of the Presidential Security Unit (PSU). Under Ver, the PSU was expanded to battalion strength and became the Presidential Security Battalion (PSB). Much later, the PSB became an independent command, with more men than a battalion, and was renamed Presidential Security Command (PSC). It became one of the stepping stones of Ver in his rise to power. When he became the AFP Chief of Staff in August 1981, Ver relinquished formal command of the PSC to BGen Santiago Barangan. In reality, however, Ver and his sons exercised *de facto* control over PSC. Col Irwin Ver was the PSC's Chief of Staff and Lt Col Rector Ver was Commander of the PSU.⁵⁸

The PSC was also involved in intelligence work, since its commander was also the head of the National Intelligence Security Agency (NISA).⁵⁹

Originally, the intelligence structure of the AFP was drawn up from the individual service commands. Joint intelligence became the function of the Intelligence Service of the AFP (ISAFP). The National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) was responsible for super-vision and coordination of all intelligence services. NISA took over the functions of NICA. It became the dominant intelligence force and the "eyes and ears" of the regime.⁶⁰

AFP units in a region were also unified in a composite force under a commander and his staff. This gave birth to the Regional Unified Command (RUC). RUCs were composite divisions where PC, PAF, PA, and PN, as well as Marine units were integrated under one command to facilitate better coordination of combat and support operations. Aside from artillery support, the RUCs were also provided with armored fighting vehicles and air support. It was contended that such centralization would result in efficient disaster control and relief operations, and greater responsiveness in civic action programs.⁶¹ However, centralization also helped prop up the dictatorship of Marcos and the control of the AFP by Ver.

C.1.d. Participation in Judicial Functions

The military was also vested with judicial functions. GO No. 8 empowered the Chief of Staff to create military tribunals to try and decide cases of military personnel and other such cases as may be referred to them.⁶² These other cases were spelled out in GO No. 12⁶³ which included crimes against national security, violations of the Anti-Subversion Law and the Laws on Espionage, crimes against public order, and crimes committed by public officials, among others. By 1974, 20 military tribunals had been set up. In December, LOI No. 237 was issued. It ordered the return of many cases from the military tribunals to civilian courts. Despite this directive, some cases still remained with Military Commissions such as those against Senator Benigno S. Aquino, Jr (Ninoy), Jose Ma Sison (Joma) and Lt Victor Corpuz.

C.1.e. Management Functions

The military was also tasked with the control and management of all media communication and public utilities such as the Manila Electric Co, the Philippine National Railways, Philippine Airlines Inc, and the National Waterworks and Sewerage Authority. The military was empowered to take over and control the assets of corporations as the Jacinto Steel, Inc, Jacinto Iron and Steel Sheets Corp, J and P Shipping Corp, Perro Products, the Iligan Integrated Steel Mills, the Elizalde Steel Co, and the Elizalde Rolling Mills, Inc. The then AFP Chief of Staff Espino became the board chairman of the Jacinto companies.

Many military personnel were detailed to civilian offices and individuals. Military personnel were designated as representatives of Marcos to and military supervisors of certain civilian offices, such as the Board of Transportation, Land Transportation Commission, the offices of the city and district engineers, the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), and the Philippine Sugar Commission.

GHQ issued a circular dated 18 June 1974 which laid out the policies, procedures and guidelines regarding the detail of military personnel to civilian offices. Detailed military personnel were classified into categories:⁶⁴

Category I	–	Those detailed with utility firms, public utilities, civilian government agen
Category II	–	Those detailed with government corporations and private agencies
Category III	–	Those detailed with the Ministry of National Defense
Category IV	–	Those detailed with the Office of the President and the National Intelligen

Since the declaration of martial law until 1980, there were 349 officers and 830 enlisted personnel, or a total of 1,179 detailed outside the AFP.⁶⁵ In April 1980, GHQ ordered the return of military men to the AFP as a response to the personnel shortage of the combat and combat support units in the field, especially in Southern Philippines. After the recall, 115 officers and 298 enlisted men continued to be detailed outside the AFP. As shown in Table II-5, of the 115 officers, 20 were from the PAF, 34 from PN, 26 from PC and 28 from PA. Seven came from the Technical Services.

**Table II-5— Officers and Men Detailed
Outside the AFP As of April 1980**

Grade	Branch		
	PAF	PN	PC
OFFICERS	20	34	26
ENLISTED PERSONNEL	35	48	107

Source: AFP Inventory of Military Personnel Detailed Outside the AFP (Office of the Adjutant General, AFP, April 1980), as cited in Rodolfo D. Dimaano. “The Detail of Military Personnel to Individuals, Offices and Establishments Outside the AFP: An Appraisal” (Masteral Thesis, National Defense College of the Philippines, 1981), p. 22.

Most of these officers and men were detailed with the Ministry of National Defense (MND) in various capacities. Others were assigned in civilian offices like the PCA, the Jacinto Corporation, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), BIR, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Agriculture, and the Philippine National Oil Co.⁶⁶

C.1.f. Investment Activities

Marcos also rewarded the military with investment corporations. PD No. 257 created the Philippine Expeditionary Forces to Korea Investment and Development Corporation (PEFTOK-IDC).⁶⁷ PEFTOK-IDC was granted “P4 million in capital stock. The decree granted the corporation the power to engage in various commercial enterprises as the creation of all kinds of investment opportunities, development of agriculture, acquisition of lands for agricultural, pastoral and related purposes, and engagement in the business of general and wholesale merchants and exporters, among others.

Another investment corporation that was created for the military was the Philippine Veterans Investment Development Co (PHFVIDEC), established in 1973.⁶⁸ The initial capitalization was valued at \$500,000 which was expanded to P10 million by the end of 1973. It was exempted from tax and was opened to military personnel on active duty.

C.1.g. Developmental Roles

The military institution also embarked on developmental roles, in keeping with the tradition started by Magsaysay and was utilized to the fullest in the first years of the incumbency of Marcos.

From 1972 to 1977, the AFP participated in the construction of 2,866 school buildings with an aggregate cost of P97.7 million. They also participated in the construction and repair of irrigation systems, rural electrification systems, and resettlement homes worth P244 million. The military helped the government in its anti-pollution campaign through the inspection of factories and industrial sites, as well as the clearing of 23,168 square meters of waterways and 269,155 square meters of esteros in the GMA. For the same period, 1.3 million medical and dental patients were treated.

The AFP had also conducted 1,301 air evacuation missions, 506 airlift and 88 search and rescue missions. All over the country, 2,237 hectares of agricultural land within military camps had been cultivated and 11,567 heads of cattle and hogs were raised. The AFP also planted more than 100,000 trees in support of the national reforestation program, and 683 rain-making sorties were undertaken by the Air Force to preserve the viability of watersheds and agricultural lands.⁶⁹

In the field of construction, AFP engineer battalions completed a total of P1.33 billion worth of infrastructure projects from 1973 to 31 July 1982 as shown in Table II-6.⁷⁰

**Table II-6 — Total Value of AFP
Infrastructure Projects: 1973 – 1981**

Year	
1973	
1974	
1975	
1976	
1977	
1978	
1979	
1980	
1981	

Source: Juan Ponce Enrile, "The Supportive Role of the Defense Ministry in National Development," in Fookien Times Yearbook. (Manila: Fookien Times Yearbook Publishing Co, 1982 – 1983), p. 113.

Military officers were also appointed as Presidential Regional Officers for Development (PROD). The PRODs were regional implementing officers for specific programs of reform and other vital projects as agrarian reform, the establishment of farmers' cooperatives, agricultural production, self-employment, and community development. LOI No. 36 granted them the authority to utilize the prerogatives of the Office of the President in their supervision of projects to enable them to harness the manpower and other resources in the area to achieve their regional objectives. Three out of the original 11 PRODs were military officers: Region II was under the Commanding General of the Northeast Command, Region IX was under the Commander of SOWESCOM, and Region X was under the Commanding General of the 4th Infantry Division (4 ID). By 1978, six out of the 12 regions had military men as PRODs: Region II was under Col Gil Manuel, Region III was under Col Benjamin Santos, Region VII was under BGen Mario Espina, Region IX was under RAdm Romulo Espaldon, Region X was under BGen Alfonso Alcosaba, and Region XI was under Col Emilio Ahorro.⁷¹ Obviously, military men were assigned as PRODs in areas with insurgency problems, where the military did not only perform its role of protecting the country from internal subversion, but also assumed a developmental role as part of the overall counter-insurgency strategy.

C.1.h. Political Functions

Marcos appointed active duty officers to perform civilian functions in government and state organizations. A number of officers acted as officials of political units. For example, BGen Benjamin Duque was appointed as Governor of Sultan Kudarat in Maguindanao province while RAdm Espaldon became Governor of Tawi-Tawi, on the basis of the rationale that these were areas with serious problems of internal security. With the dismantling of Congress and the ban on political parties and activities, the military was able to replace traditional politicians, and became the dispensers of political patronage.⁷²

Other roles and functions contributed to the visibility of the military. By authority of Paragraph 4, Section 2 of Article X of the 1973 Constitution, COMELEC was granted the power to deputize, with the consent or at the instance of the Prime Minister, law enforcement agencies of the government including the AFP to ensure free, orderly, and honest elections. From then on, the military was used extensively during elections in the succeeding years. COMELEC Resolution No. 1313, promulgated on 4 April 1978, deputized the AFP during the elections on 7 April 1978. Similarly, COMELEC Resolution No. 1434, promulgated on 14 January 1980, called on the AFP to help in the 30 January 1980 local elections.

C.2. The Growth and Expansion of the AFP

This expansion in role was accompanied by an increase in size and budget. The AFP grew from 57,100 in 1971 to 113,000 in 1976, with a marked increase of 97.89 percent over a five-year period. To complement the regular forces in the battle against the New People's Army, the Integrated Civilian Home Defense Forces (ICHDF) was formed. By 1985, the defense establishment included about 274,300 regulars and paramilitary personnel, plus another 124,000 men as reserves as shown in Table II-7. For purposes of comparison, the figures for 1990 for the major services are also shown. The military budget also increased by 500 percent in four years, from P880 million in 1972 to P4 billion in 1976.⁷³

Table II-7 — Strength of the AFP: 1971 – 1990

	1971	1976
Regular Forces		
Army	17,600	45,000
Navy	8,000	17,000
Air Force	9,000	16,000
Constabulary	25,500	35,000
TOTAL	57,100	113,000
Irregulars and Others		
Civilian Home Defense Force (CHDF)	NA	25,000
Integrated National Police (INP)	NA	NA
Reserves	NA	45,000

Legend: NA — Not Available
 Sources: Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1971 – 1972 (London: Institute of Strategic Studies, 1971), p. 30; Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1976 – 1977 (London: Institute of Strategic Studies, 1976), p. 60; Manila Chronicle, 23 November 1987, p.7, as cited in Walden Bello, Creating the Third Force; U.S. Sponsored Low Intensity Conflict in the Philippine (San Francisco: Institute for Food and Development Policy, 1987) p 32 For 1990 figures are obtained from OJ-1 (Personnel), Armed Forces of the Philippines, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

But while the size of the military increased, the AFP experienced shortage of combat personnel which led to mass enlistment and the transfer of men from desk jobs to the field. Lacking adequate training and discipline, these contributed to deprofessionalization and demoralization, especially among the men in the field.

C.3. The Rise of the Twin Insurgencies: CPP and MNLF

The arrest of the leaders of the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP) in 1952 led to demoralization among the ranks. By 1954, the Huk rebellion had virtually collapsed. Pursuit of the armed struggle was further discouraged by the enactment of the Anti-Subversion Law in 1957 with severe penalties for membership in the PKP.

In the late 1960s, intellectual and political ferment among young students at the University of the Philippines (UP), much impressed by Marxism and such international events as the Cuban Revolution and China's Cultural Revolution, formed the Kabataang Makabayan (KM) led by Amado Guerrero (reportedly the pen name of Joma Sison). They joined the PKP through the mediation of an Indonesian postgraduate student at UP, but were expelled in 1967 due to ideological, generational, and leadership differences with the old PKP leaders. These young Marxists formed the CPP.⁷⁴

Meanwhile, a Huk faction under Commander Sumulong degenerated into a crime syndicate. Disgusted, one of his lieutenants, Commander Dante (Bemabe Buscayno), seceded with his men and joined the CPP. Thus, the "marriage between Dante's army in search for a party and Guerrero's party in search for an army gave birth to the NPA [New People's Army] on 29 March 1969."⁷⁵ The National Democratic Front (NDF) was established in April 1973 to unite all left-oriented groups fighting the Marcos regime under one umbrella.

The NPA insurgency grew substantially during the Marcos regime. Although the size of the military increased through mass enlistment, the men lacked adequate training, equipment, and support. With the breakdown of discipline, human rights violations increased, and demoralization set in as the military failed to secure mass support or to suppress the insurgency despite its size.

Furthermore, the mismanagement of the economy and rise of "crony" capitalism and graft and corruption exacerbated the poverty problem, especially in the rural areas. The government gradually lost control of the countryside, unable to implement a meaningful socio-economic approach to the problem of insurgency. Instead, NPA recruitment intensified.

On the other hand, Mindanao has been marked by tension between Muslims and Christian settlers. In 1968, a separatist Muslim (later Mindanao) Independence Movement (MIM) led by older-generation Muslim leaders, declared the independence of Mindanao from the Republic. Young Muslim recruits, the Group of 90, were trained by English and Palestinian mercenaries in the forests of Malaysia to organize an army for MIM. However, disillusionment with and lack of trust in traditional Muslim leaders led these young recruits to form the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Bangsa Moro Army (BMA) in mid-1971, henceforth, to act in behalf of the Bangsa Moro. Nur Misuari, a contemporary of many KM leaders at UP, became the MNLF's leader. However, the 1971 local elections drew its members away from the MNLF. Many of the members of the Group of 90 joined the Barracudas and Blackshirts, armed Muslim groups which fought the anti-Muslim Ilagas.⁷⁶

The declaration of martial law convinced the MNLF leadership that peaceful change for Muslims was no longer possible. The order to surrender all firearms by Marcos, and the program to create a "new society" were interpreted as repression of their aspirations for separate identity.⁷⁷ In October 1972, they launched an armed struggle against the regime which escalated to dangerous proportions with serious implications for the AFP.

The conflict invited the involvement of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), some of whose members supported the MNLF. Negotiations between the MNLF and the Marcos government mediated by the OIC led to the conclusion of the Tripoli Agreement in December 1976. Pursuant to it, two autonomous regional governments were set up in Muslim Mindanao. Development programs were undertaken to improve conditions there and Muslim rebel surrenderees were integrated into the AFP. These reflected the government's recognition that a purely military solution to insurgency, whether communist or Muslim, would not work.

D. The Lifting of Martial Law: More Form Than Substance (1981 – 1986)

Martial Law was lifted in January 1981 by virtue of Proclamation 2045 on the basis that anarchy had been successfully checked, the leftist-rightist rebellion substantially contained and the secessionist movement effectively

overcome.”⁷⁸ But it was a cosmetic act. Substantively, nothing much had changed. Civil liberties continued to be constrained and the media remained under control. Although political parties were allowed to exist, electoral laws and regulations favored the ruling party organized by Marcos, the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL). In 1984, the regular Batasang Pambansa, with only about 50 active opposition members, was convened.

The military's martial law roles and the machinery for their effective pursuit remained intact even after the lifting of Proclamation 1081. It continued to manage the Jacinto group of companies. Military tribunals continued to exercise jurisdiction over cases involving subversion. The military continued to implement presidential orders and decrees and went on with its law and order functions such as the suppression of strikes and other forms of mass actions.

The role expansion of the AFP enhanced its capacity to intervene directly in the political affairs of the country. The abolition of Congress, the muzzling of the press, and the weakening of the judiciary left Marcos as the only civilian authority in control of the military. Marcos used the military to enforce his orders and decrees, and to perpetuate himself in power.

In exchange, Marcos coddled his favorites in the military. Promotions continued to be his sole prerogative and personal loyalty became the primary criterion. Well-connected officers were able to place their people in key and juicy positions. This was noted by then Vice Chief of Staff Lt Gen Ramos in a letter to Marcos dated 19 February 1986. He wrote that the constant jockeying for key positions by some officers to obtain “midnight” appointments would not be good for the AFP, considering the grave and complex problems that the country faced.⁷⁹

The presence of extendeé generals effectively blocked the promotions of middle-grade officers. Besides Ver and the three major service commanders — MGen Josephus Ramas, Commanding General, PA, MGen Vicente Piccio, Commanding General, PAF, and RAdm Brillante Ochoco, Flag Officer in Command (FOIC), PN, the other 18 extendeés were MGen Delfin Castro, BGen Angel Kanapi, BGen Carlos V. Martel, BGen Hamilton Dimaya, BGen Cirilo Oropesa, BGen Angel Mapua, BGen Alejandro Felix, BGen Andres Ramos, BGen Arsenio Silva, BGen Mariano Miranda, BGen Madrino Munoz, BGen Sinfroso Duque, BGen Leo Santos, BGen Santiago Barangan, BGen Narciso Creus, BGen Ramon Cannu, BGen Manuel Mercado, and BGen Telesforo Tayko.⁸⁰

Consequently, some officers became retirable at a fairly young age but at fairly lower ranks. A lot of officers were bypassed. A number of officers were promoted over several other more senior and qualified candidates. A breakdown in the merit system and demoralization became inevitable.

In the field, the men in combat suffered losses not only because of inadequate training and shortage of equipment and supplies but also because of the lack of troops. The need for manpower resulted in mass enlistment and the transfer of men from desk jobs to armed combat. The concomitant result was that such troops fought against insurgents seasoned in guerrilla warfare.

In August 1983, Ver was implicated in the assassination of Ninoy Aquino. Marcos was forced to place Ver on a leave of absence while the investigation was going on. After being initially cleared by the Sandiganbayan, Ver immediately resumed his position as Chief of Staff.

The assassination unleashed massive popular opposition to the Marcos regime and the military organization that sustained it. Ninoy's martyrdom united the people and gave them courage to openly oppose the dictatorship. It became clear that the military leadership was a willing tool to perpetuate the regime at all costs.

Within the military, the assassination and the shame that attended it brought to the fore latent disaffection among some officers leading to the eventual movement for reform.

Independently of the assassination, a number of organizations began to sprout as Ver and his men continued their efforts to control the entire establishment. During the height of the Mindanao crisis in the early 1980s, the Diablo Squad was organized for mutual assistance of enlisted personnel. It was ordered disbanded by Ver but reappeared as the Guardians Brotherhood, Inc (GBI).⁸¹ Their purpose of fostering mutual understanding and cooperation among members of the AFP and the INP remained the same as Diablo's original objectives. The GBI is duly registered with

the Securities and Exchange Commission. Ex-Lt Col Gregorio Honasan's role in the GBI is not clear, but he signed the Articles of Incorporation of GBI as a witness.⁸²

But the most prominent group was the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) whose original activities are stated in their Manifesto. According to it, their efforts would be geared towards the attainment of the AFFs new thrust of uplifting the morale and welfare of every man and woman in uniform, enhancing the operational effectiveness of the military establishment, and restoring the people's faith in the armed forces. With its initial members coming from PMA classes 1971 to 1984, membership expanded to include retired alumni who voiced out publicly their sentiments while many active officers signified their support quietly. A fuller discussion of the RAM is made in Chapter IV.

E. Post-EDSA (1986 – 1989): Return to Barracks?

When the Aquino administration came to power, it sought to redefine the role of the military. The 1987 Constitution, over-whelmingly ratified by the Filipino people, embodied principles which sought to establish the proper spheres of military activity. In its Declaration of Principles and State Policies, the following articles state that

SEC. 3. Civilian authority is, at all times, supreme over the military. The Armed Forces of the Philippines is the protector of the people and the State. Its goal is to secure the sovereignty of the State and the integrity of the national territory.

SEC. 4. The prime duty of the Government is to serve and protect the people. The Government may call upon the people to defend the State, and, in the fulfillment thereof, all citizens may be required, under conditions provided by law, to render personal military or civil service.

In its General Provisions, it states the following

SEC. 4. The Armed Forces shall be composed of a citizen armed force which shall undergo military training and serve, as may be provided by law. It shall keep a regular force necessary for the security of the State.

SEC. 5. (1) All members of the armed forces shall take an oath or affirmation to uphold and defend this Constitution.

(2) The State shall strengthen the patriotic spirit and the nationalist consciousness of the military, and respect for people's rights in the performance of their duty.

(3) Professionalism in the armed forces and adequate remuneration and benefits of its members shall be a prime concern of the State. The armed forces shall be insulated from partisan politics.

No member of the military shall engage directly or indirectly in any partisan political activity, except to vote.

(4) No member of the armed forces in the active service shall, at any time, be appointed or designated in any capacity to a civilian position in the Government including government-owned or controlled corporations or any of their subsidiaries.

(5) Laws on retirement of military officers shall not allow extension of their service.

(6) The officers and men of the regular force of the armed forces shall be recruited proportionately from all provinces and cities as far as practicable.

(7) The tour of duty of the Chief of Staff of the armed forces shall not exceed three years. However, in times of war or other national emergency declared by the Congress, the President may extend such tour of duty.

SEC. 6. The State shall establish and maintain one police force, which shall be national in scope and civilian in character, to be administered and controlled by a national police commission. The authority of local executives over the police units in their jurisdiction shall be provided by law.

SEC. 7. The State shall provide immediate and adequate care, benefits, and other forms of assistance to war veterans of military campaigns, their surviving spouses and orphans. Funds shall be provided therefor and due consideration shall be given them in the disposition of agricultural lands of the public domain and, in appropriate cases, in the utilization of natural resources.

The foregoing provisions emphasize the supremacy of civilian authority over the military by changing the concept and structure of the Armed Forces. As provided in the Constitution, the Armed Forces isto be composed of a citizen armed force, while maintaining a regular force for the security of the State, unlike in the National Defense Act which provided for a Regular and Reserve force. The present Constitution also prohibits military personnel in active service to serve in civilian positions by appointment or designation, confining the military to its function of maintaining national defense.⁸³

It has likewise significantly reduced the Commander-in-Chief powers of the President by limiting the grounds and duration for the suspension of the privilege of writ of *habeas corpus* and the proclamation of martial law. Only invasion and rebellion, when the public safety requires it, can be invoked as a ground for such suspension or proclamation. It shall not exceed 60 days and may be revoked by Congress by a vote of at least a majority of all its members voting jointly in a regular or special session. The revocation cannot be set aside by the President and only Congress upon initiative of the President, can extend it. Moreover, the Supreme Court may review the sufficiency of the factual basis of the suspension or proclamation or its extension.⁸⁴ This will prevent a partnership of the executive and the military leadership similar to what evolved during martial law.

The administration also sought to address the grievances of the military. In terms of legislation, a total of 82 bills and resolutions related to the military were filed with the House of Representatives as of 30 April 1990. As of 2 May 1990, a total of 141 of such bills and resolutions were filed with the Senate. But as of these dates, only six bills have become laws or parts of laws.⁸⁵

Within the military, the main thrusts of internal reforms were to resurrect the AFP. After the first 100 days of the New Armed Forces of the Philippines (NAFP), Chief of Staff Lt Gen Ramos identified two objectives to be accomplished

1. The implementation of wide ranging internal reforms aimed at restoring and reinforcing the credibility of a “reconstituted” and “reinvigorated” AFP; improving the discipline, morale and welfare of its personnel; and increasing its operational effectiveness in the continuing battle against insurgency; and
2. The implementation of strategic campaign plan code-named Mamamayan based on the three pillars of national reconciliation, security and development.⁸⁶

Strategic/operational plan (Oplan) Mamamayan was the military’s comprehensive approach to the insurgency problem. It was a three-pronged approach which included not only security and development but national reconciliation as well. It sought to involve the whole military in a coordinated effort against the insurgents. The plan also included the regionalization of troops in the sense that soldiers were assigned to their ethno-linguistic regions.

The military also adopted several measures aimed at improving discipline, training, value formation, and morale among the troops. The value formation program included moral and spiritual development, socio-cultural affairs, and troop information and education (TI & E). Many of the soldiers’ grievances were also taken into consideration. Overstaying generals were retired. Military pay scales were upgraded and an even policy of investigating human rights violations committed by both the military and the insurgents was developed.

Structurally, internal reforms also aimed to bring the establishment back on track after years of disorientation. Key AFP commands were reorganized to ensure centralized planning and direction at the GHQ and to have decentralized

operations and decision-making in the field. In 1987, the RUCs were abolished. In its place, the Area Unified Command (AUC) was established. Along this line, the Northern Luzon Command (NOLCOM) covering Regions I, II, and III, Southern Luzon Command (SOLCOM) covering Regions IV and V, SOUTHCOM for Regions IX, X, XI, and XII, and the National Capital Region Defense Command (NCRDC) were activated. The operational control over SOLCOM was transferred from GHQ to Headquarters, Philippine Army (HPA), effective 16 October 1987. However, GHQ retained administrative control over SOLCOM. The naval forces were also reorganized into naval districts to coincide with the AUC set-up.⁸⁷ In 1988, the Visayas Command (VISCOM) was activated to cover Regions VI, VII, and VIII.⁸⁸

A number of formations and units were also either deactivated, reorganized or redesignated. The PSC has been downgraded to a NAFP – Wide Support and Separate Unit (NAFPWSSU) and is now called the Presidential Security Group (PSG). The Aviation Security Command (AVSECOM) which was responsible for the security of Ninoy Aquino when he arrived at the airport, has been renamed Philippine Air Force Security Command (PAFSECOM). The METROCOM has been renamed Capital Regional Command (CAPCOM).⁸⁹

The NAFP also announced a campaign to purge its ranks of undesirable personnel at the higher levels of command and in the provinces as part of its reform program. However, no formal evaluation of its effectiveness and comprehensiveness was made public. Instead, the NAFP remained faction-ridden. Despite a previous order to disband groups within the military, new ones were organized like the Guardian Centre Foundation, Inc. (GCFI) which was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) on 18 April 1986⁹⁰ and the Young Officers' Union (YOU). Honasan is one of the incorporators of the GCFI. Five of its other incorporators (Nicanor Cagurangan, Leonides Montehermoso, Oscar Arevalo, Rogelio Attunaga, and Agustin Tuncol) were also GBI incorporators.⁹¹ The persistence of factions and other developments within the AFP leading to the staging of six coup attempts against the Aquino government will be discussed in Chapter IV.

The foregoing discussion shows that political change and military transformation from 1966 to 1989 saw the expansion of the role of the military amid the weakening of political institutions brought by martial law and its aftermath. The popular opposition engendered by the assassination of Ninoy Aquino led to political change to rebuild democratic institutions and to redefine the role of the military. The next chapter deals with the multi-dimensional environment of the AFP.

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The Final Report of the Fact-Finding Commission: IV: Military Intervention in the Philippines: 1986 – 1987

IV

MILITARY INTERVENTION IN THE PHILIPPINES: 1986 – 1987

The most significant development arising from the series of military interventions from 1986 to the present is the emergence of the AFP as a potentially decisive political force in our society. There had been seven attempts at military intervention from the period of 1986 until just before the latest one in December 1989. These are (1) the February 1986 coup attempt, (2) the July 1986 Manila Hotel incident, (3) the November 1986 “God Save The Queen” plot, (4) the January 1987 GMA-7 incident, (5) the April 1987 “Black Saturday” incident, (6) the July 1987 takeover plot of the Manila International Airport (MIA), and (7) the August 1987 coup attempt.

All the coup attempts are irretrievably linked and cannot be analyzed in isolation of each other. Thus, the December 1989 attempt can only be fully understood if viewed in the light of the previous ones. This chapter will analyze the 1986 – 1987 attempts, while the succeeding chapter will deal with the December 1989 incident. On the basis of the testimonies and separate accounts of events, the “God Save The Queen” plot was the most dangerous threat to the Aquino government, if it had been executed as planned — a chain-of-command takeover. Fortunately, top military officers led by then Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (CSAFP) Gen Fidel V. Ramos refused to go along with it and effectively contained it. That very little is publicly known about it, since there was no actual fighting, does not detract from this conclusion.

A. February 1986 Coup Attempt

Much has already been written about the bloodless EDSA People Power Revolt (EDSA Revolt) that occurred from 22-25 February 1986, when Filipinos massed in the streets of Metro Manila, mostly around Camps Crame and Aguinaldo, to openly defy the authoritarian rule of Ferdinand Marcos and to show support for a group led by then Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Vice Chief of Staff Lt Gen Ramos, who had declared their withdrawal of support for the Marcos government. However, not enough has been written about the original plan to stage a coup d’etat by a group of middle-ranking officers referred to as the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM), but which was eventually overtaken by the now historic People Power Revolt. A review of the event from different perspectives raises questions on the motives of the principal actors and the historical accuracy of their version of the event. The narration of events in this chapter is largely drawn from published materials, unless stated otherwise.

There is no exact date when RAM was founded, but those close to the officers identified with it place the year as 1982.¹ It is clear, however, that the RAM was controlled by military officers closely linked with then Defense Minister, and now Senator Enrile. The emergence of RAM was principally a reaction of young officers against such issues as the widespread corruption in the military, the lack of professionalism, promotions based on favoritism, and “overstaying” generals who blocked the younger generation’s career advancement. What is less evident is that RAM also served Enrile’s political agenda and provided him personal security, as he perceived increasing threats from Mrs Imelda R. Marcos, and Gen Fabian Ver, who was appointed Chief of Staff by President Marcos in 1981. Enrile himself revealed at the 1986 press conference that announced his break with Marcos that, “As far back as 1982, we have been getting persistent reports that there were efforts to eliminate us . . . and it was [at] that point that we decided to organize a group to protect ourselves . . . now known as the AFP Reform Movement.”²

According to Cecilio Arillo, a journalist closely identified with Enrile and the RAM, matters became untenable for Enrile when defense intelligence reports disclosed that barely a few weeks after Ver’s appointment to General Headquarters (GHQ), a “hit” team was allegedly formed in Mindanao to liquidate the defense minister.³ To counter this, Enrile’s security group at the Ministry of National Defense (MND), mostly PMA graduates led by Lt Col Gregorio Honasan (PMA ’71), underwent rigid training in counter-terrorism in Quezon province. Some 300 men were trained by two retired British instructors of the elite Special Air Service Regiment. Moreover, they were armed with specialized weapons, mainly Uzis and Galils, imported from Israel and allegedly brought in through connections in the Bureau of Customs, where Enrile was once commissioner.⁴

In 1982, to avoid detection, the training of these men was moved from Quezon to the Sierra Madre mountains in northern Luzon. However, this did not escape Ver's attention and it was reported to Marcos, who became furious about it, fanning his suspicions about the defense minister's political ambitions. When the President confronted him with the report, Enrile completely denied it and blamed it on political or personal intrigues.⁵ By July 1983, Enrile's men had resumed their training in Quezon province.

At this time, while the hostility between Enrile and Ver intensified, a parallel conflict on the personal level seemed to have been developing between Honasan and Col Irwin Ver, Gen Ver's son who was a year ahead of Honasan at the PMA.⁶ As a sign of further consolidation of his power, Gen Ver acquired operational control of the Integrated National Police (INP), a responsibility that normally should have been vested on Ramos as then Chief of Philippine Constabulary (PC), but was transferred by Marcos to his Chief of Staff on 1 August 1983. By then, too, rumors were rife about Marcos's illness and the problem of his successor. As the names of Mrs Marcos and Gen Ver circulated as leading contenders, Enrile's own chances seemed to diminish.

By 21 August 1983, RAM had formed an 11-man Ad Hoc Steering Committee to give direction to the organization and analyze current events, including the implications of the Aquino assassination.⁷ According to a member of this Committee, the 11 members are (ranks shown as of 1985 – 1986): the late Col Eugene Ocampo PC (PMA '58), Capt Rex Robles PN (PMA '65), Lt Col Hector Tarrazona PAF (PMA '68), Lt Col Gregorio Honasan PA (PMA '71), Lt Col Victor Batac PC (PMA '71), Maj Alejandro Flores PC (PMA '72), Maj Napoleon de los Santos PC (PMA '75), Capt Charlemagne Alejandrino PC (PMA '75), Lt Jose Renato Abella PA (PMA '79), Lt Gregorio Catapang, Jr PA (PMA '81), and Lt Rafael Tadeo, Jr PC (PMA '81).⁸ Except for this Committee, RAM does not appear to have a roster of members. It was an unstructured organization whose meetings were said to be open to any officer or soldier interested in reforming the AFP. The objectives articulated by the members were (1) to fight graft and corruption in the AFP; (2) to ask for promotions based on performance, merit, seniority, and fairness; (3) to work for better medical attention and services; (4) to eliminate the *bata-bata* system; and (5) to improve logistical support for the officers and men fighting insurgency in the field.⁹ However, it appears that while the RAM leadership was publicly known through the Steering Committee, there was a hidden "inner circle" composed of Honasan Lt Col Eduardo Kapunan (PMA '71), Col Tirso Gador (PMA '66), possibly Navy Capt Felix Turingan ("Baron" of PMA '65), and one other officer, who plotted the February 1986 coup.¹⁰

The RAM steadily grew as Honasan contacted former PMA classmates and alumni, as well as comrades from his Mindanao days (he had been posted there, but was transferred to the MND in 1975 when he was wounded in the leg). Subsequently, even senior officers who were retired from active service, but were supportive of reforms in the AFP, were organized into Senior Cavaliers of RAM (SCRAM) led by, among others, Gen Jesus Vargas (PMA '29), former CSAFP, and Navy Capt Antonio Tansingco (PMA '55). Retired BGen Jose Almonte (PMA '56), then still a colonel, revealed in his testimony before the Fact-Finding Commission on 4 January 1990 that discussions among the RAM in 1986 considered having a political arm which would be the RAM; and an armed group, the Soldiers of the Filipino People (SFP).

Among Constabulary men, Batac, a classmate close to Honasan, became the main RAM organizer in the PC.¹¹ On 6 February 1985, six officers met, mostly from the intelligence think tank of the PC Headquarters. Three days later, another meeting of four officers followed. On 15 February, 23 PC officers met. The next day, they drafted RAM's Declaration of Principles, which was distributed to officers as the "Preliminary Statements of Aspirations" during the PMA Alumni Association convention on 17 February.

The RAM appears to have escalated its organizing activities in 1985, which could account for the general impression that it was founded in that year. On 15 March, the RAM formulated its nine-point "Statement of Common Aspirations," and on 21 March, it came out with a position paper entitled "We Belong . . .," short for "We Belong to the Reform the Armed Forces Movement." All three statements were printed in a pamphlet called "Crossroads to Reform." During the traditional PMA Alumni Parade at graduation time on 21 March, some 300 young officers, mostly from Classes 1971 to 1984, broke away from the long line at the parade ground to display a banner marked "Unity Through Reforms." They wore T-shirts that said "We Belong." It was the day before the customary Commander-in-Chief's address to the graduating class, thus marking the first public protest of the military during the Marcos regime.¹²

On 2 April 1985, the official name of RAM was coined from another acronym, “R.E.F.O.R.M. the AFP Movement” during a meeting at the MND Social Hall. “R.E.F.O.R.M.” cryptically stood for Restore Ethics, Fair-Mindedness, Order, Righteousness and Morale. Two weeks later, presumably under orders from Malacañang, Ramos, who was then acting Chief of Staff while Ver was on leave to face trial in the Aquino-Galman case, met with RAM officers for seven hours to find out more about the organization. The proceedings of the meeting were taped and must have been relayed to Marcos. At the end of May, the President called RAM officers to Malacañang for another meeting, which mostly consisted of Marcos’s monologue for 40 minutes, berating them. Later, Honasan obtained a copy of a supposedly Malacañang-prepared order of battle with the names of Honasan, Batac, Tarrazona,¹³ Kapunan, and some ten other RAM officers on it.¹⁴ The “war” was on.

Meanwhile, the Enrile forces in Cagayan and at the MND had mapped out contingency plans which went beyond securing Enrile’s personal safety, to preventing Mrs Marcos and Gen Ver from taking over in case Marcos died, to directly maneuvering against Marcos. The RAM was a perfect political vehicle. Even as it publicly advocated reforms in the AFP, its inner circle continued to plan for a coup d’etat. By September 1985, the plans for a coup were well advanced.¹⁵

To the RAM, the situation after the 1983 assassination of Ninoy Aquino provided the necessary political and economic preconditions that could ensure a successful move to oust Marcos from power. Furthermore, Tarrazona, a member of the 11-man Ad Hoc Steering Committee of RAM, wrote in 1989 that

the signal and encouragement from the different sectors of society to unite and move against the dictatorship of Mr. Marcos were too loud and strong to be ignored. Eventually, we were subtly encouraged, if not practically pushed, by the Opposition groups . . . to either stage a coup or start a revolution.¹⁶

On 10 July 1985, RAM officers met with concerned businessmen at the AFP Commissioned Officers Club in Camp Aguinaldo. On 1 August, another group of businessmen and media people met with the RAM at the Association of General and Flag Officers Building in Camp Aguinaldo. Later, a bigger meeting was held between RAM and Manindigan at the Center for Research and Communication in Pasig. Other meetings followed with the group of Corazon C. Aquino (Cory), widow of Ninoy Aquino, Jaime Cardinal Sin, the Manila Public School Teachers Association Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas, the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, the American Study Mission, members of the press, and many more.¹⁷

The expose by the San Jose Mercury News on Marcos’s ill-gotten wealth became the basis for an impeachment move by opposition members of Parliament, although it was dismissed in less than 24 hours. US President Ronald Reagan had sent Senator Paul Laxalt to Manila for secret dialogues with Marcos, and shortly after that, on 3 November 1985, Marcos announced in a satellite interview on American TV that he had decided to call for a new presidential election, subsequently set for 7 February 1986. Robles revealed three years after the EDSA Revolt that the RAM had planned to launch the coup against Marcos in December 1985, but deferred it after a “snap election” was called. Robles acknowledged, “So we decided to postpone [it] until sometime after elections around April or May in the summer.”¹⁸ However, the coup plotters again changed their plans, prompted by the public outrage against the massive election fraud.

The RAM’s own direct participation in the electoral process through its *Kamalayan 1986* project must have given its members a clear idea of the strong anti-dictator public sentiment. Tarrazona relates that for the first time in the history of the Philippine military, a group of officers openly got involved in an election.¹⁹ The project headed by Turingan promoted free, fair, and clean elections by holding rallies in military camps to urge AFP officers and enlisted men to remain “neutral” and to protect the sanctity of the ballot. This was intended to remove the public perception that the AFP was solidly behind Marcos. The *Kamalayan* project was secretly funded by a group of businessmen opposed to Marcos. The transfer of funds was arranged through Tansingco who collected the contributions from supporters, consigned them to SCRAM members in the name of retired BGen Manuel Flores (PMA ’34), before finally handing them over to Lt Col Victor Erfe (PMA ’69), designated custodian of RAM funds.²⁰

Other *Kamalayan 1986* activities included radio and personal campaigns, as well as requests to PMA alumni and ordinary citizens to write as many letters as they could to the seven top ranking AFP generals and their wives, asking for honest polls, and for peace and order. On 12 January 1986, Tarrazona and Catapang convinced some 800 PMA cadets to sign about 8,000 pre-printed letters appealing for fair and clean elections. Since the PMA Superintendent, BGen Jose Ma Zumel (PMA '59), and the Commandant of Cadets, Col Nicasio Rodriguez (PMA '61), both happened to be absent that day, by coincidence or by design, Tarrazona and Catapang easily obtained permission to engage in this activity from the Assistant Commandant, Lt Col Nelson Eslao (PMA '71).²¹

The “snap election” provided an opportunity for various opposition groups to unite behind the candidacies of Cory Aquino for President and Salvador H. Laurel for Vice President. A citizen’s watchdog organization called National Citizens’ Movement For Free Elections (NAMFREL) drew thousands of volunteers in a desire to have clean and honest polls. Election violence directed at Cory supporters as well as NAMFREL volunteers intensified the anger against Marcos. A popular young ex-Governor, Evelio Javier, was brutally murdered in Antique while he was working for the Aquino-Laurel campaign.

Initial results from the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) showed Marcos leading, but the quick count of NAMFREL favored Aquino. The public suspected that Marcos was going to try to cheat Aquino. A dramatic walkout of a group of COMELEC computer programmers led by Linda Kapunan, wife of Lt Col Kapunan, Enrile’s intelligence chief and RAM inner circle member, reinforced this perception. Their action emphasized in the public mind the rampant cheating that was being done by Marcos’s side. The fugitive computer workers were protected by RAM officers led by Kapunan, with the aid of P20,000 from Enrile.²² On 14 February, the influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) issued a strong statement condemning the election fraud as being unparalleled in Philippine electoral history. Two days later, Mrs Aquino called for a nationwide boycott of “crony establishments” in a rally at Rizal Park which was attended by a huge crowd. Thus was launched the civil disobedience campaign that would take her to Cebu on 22 February.

The “snap election” and its widely perceived fraudulent results gave the RAM the signal to mobilize for action all the elements they had painstakingly put together for many months. The arrangements were so clandestine that for a long time no definite date was set for its launching. The cue to start depended on the favorable political and internal military conditions that would enhance the coup’s success.

President Aquino herself revealed in a retrospective interview last February 1990 that her brother, Peping, had been approached by representatives of the RAM in “either December [1985] or early January [1986]” with the message that, “Your sister will never win. She may be popular but the votes will be manipulated and she will not win. There is an alternative. We are planning something and if she will join us or be with us . . .” They were offering her a seat in a seven-person civilian-military junta to be called Council for National Reconciliation. President Aquino said that her immediate reaction then was to reject the offer because, as she recounted, “I’m not interested in being president for the sake of being president. I want to find out first of all if I do have the support of the people, so I want to go through with the election because they were telling me that since I would have no chance anyway, I might as well bow out of the race and join them in whatever they were planning to do.”²³ President Aquino also recalled that she first met RAM officers Robles, Honasan, Kapunan, and Batac at an hour-long meeting on 12 December 1985 at the house of Mila Albert, her late husband’s half-sister. She had just come back from her first day of campaigning and they offered her security for the duration of the campaign.

American author Raymond Bonner relates in his book, *Waltzing With A Dictator*, that the Aquino camp had been sought out by the RAM on 20 February with a proposal for a coup and subsequent junta, which Mrs Aquino flatly turned down.²⁴ It was apparently the same message as the one previously received by President Aquino. In any case, the junta would have been composed of Enrile, Ramos, Cardinal Sin, Mrs Aquino, businessman Jaime Ongpin, Alejandro Melchor (a former Executive Secretary under Marcos), and Laurel. The Council was supposed to be transitional and tasked to convene a Constitutional Convention within six months, which would then decide on the form of government. There was also supposed to be a committee to coordinate military operations in what was foreseen as a post-Marcos scenario. This committee was to be chaired by Ramos.²⁵ However, as contended by other people who closely followed what was going on, the Council would have only served as a facade for a military junta consisting of Enrile and his colonels. According to Professor Alfred McCoy, this was the real game plan designed by the coup’s political committee composed of Enrile, his civilian aide Silvestre Afable, Robles, and Turingan.²⁶

According to Arillo, the RAM's military operations plan, on the other hand, consisted of several scenarios, each designed to adapt to particular conditions. One scenario was for Enrile to make a stand in Cagayan, his home province, where he knew the terrain as a young guerrilla during the Japanese occupation, while guerrilla righting is waged simultaneously in Manila and other places in Bicol, Visayas, and Mindanao. Another scenario was for a commando squad led by Honasan to cross the Pasig river and land on Malacañang grounds just after midnight. Guided by PSC men recruited for the purpose, Honasan's team would enter Malacañang and capture President and Mrs Marcos as hostages to prevent an all-out attack on the rebels by troops loyal to Marcos.²⁷

In his testimony before the Commission, retired MGen Rodolfo Canieso (PMA '56), former Commanding General of the Philippine Army (CGPA) and Director of the NICA, said that the strike force that was supposed to attack Malacañang in February 1986 was to have been led by Kapunan, Lt Col Marcelino Malajacan (PMA '71), Maj Ricardo Brillantes (PMA '72), and Maj Saulito Aromin (PMA 74). Arillo, however, denied that there was such a plan for a commando raid. He asserted that such a plan was only contingent on the possible arrest of Enrile and Ramos.²⁸ In an interview with McCoy on 25 July 1986, Honasan claimed that they had "planned for every possible eventuality." By 7 February 1986, the RAM coup plotters had reportedly recruited 2,500 soldiers, and organized numerous cells in many vital military units around Metro Manila, although lower numbers have been mentioned by other sources.²⁹

A variation of their plan, as later revealed by Almonte, was to ambush and kill BGen Rolando Pattugalan (PMA '57), former AFP intelligence chief then commander of the 2nd Infantry Division (2 ID) in Tanay, Rizal, and a known Marcos man.³⁰ Pattugalan was generally considered as the candidate to replace MGen Josephus Ramas as Army Chief; thus an attempt on the former would, by logic, be blamed on Ramas, thereby sowing dissension within the Army.

It is generally believed that the coup was scheduled to be launched on 22 February 1986. However, according to Robles, reputedly RAM's chief political strategist, they had leaked a series of possible dates to create confusion in the Marcos camp and to compel them to maintain a series of taxing security-alert situations. Furthermore, on 16 February, RAM leaked details of the supposed plot to kidnap the President and Mrs Marcos just to test the reaction of their bodyguards.³¹ The mounting pressure of outright civil disobedience was added to the national outrage at the rampant electoral cheating. Rumors were everywhere that Marcos was on the brink of declaring martial law again and that massive arrests of opposition leaders and their followers would be carried out.

At Enrile's camp, it was estimated that Marcos would probably reimpose martial law two or three days before he took his oath of office scheduled for 25 February. If he did that, Enrile would most likely be one of the first persons arrested because of the enormous political threat he represented to Marcos. It was, thus, concluded by Enrile's side that a preemptive move had to be carried out. Gador, then Cagayan's Constabulary provincial commander and an Enrile loyalist, calculated that the 72 hours before the Marcos inauguration fell exactly on Saturday, 22 February.³²

In the evening of 19 February, forces under Gador, known as the "Cagayan 100", began to deploy in Manila in three waves via a complicated route to avoid detection. Their deployment was completed by the afternoon of 22 February. Their mission was to neutralize the Military Police Brigade in Camp Aguinaldo and to secure the perimeter of the MND building. Other preparations were made by RAM officers to carry out their plan of a Malacañang assault on the early morning of 23 February. A few days before, RAM officers were said to have withdrawn all their money from the bank and left them to their families. Maj Noe Wong (PMA '75), RAM member and Enrile's senior aide, left his three children in the care of an aunt before going to his staging point. Tarrazona sent his wife and three children to Cavite City to stay with relatives there, although he had made arrangements with two friends as early as December 1985 to take care of them in case anything happened to him. Almonte's quarters in Fort Bonifacio were supposed to be the main staging point from where the coup participants would move on to Villamor Air Base (VAB). Some RAM officers were also scheduled to meet at Tarrazona's house in the air base where they would constitute the advance force. Other officers and enlisted men were supposed to reinforce them later to consolidate their forces at VAB, which had been chosen as Command Post or main operations center due to its sophisticated communication equipment.³³ They were later contacted to join the group at Camp Aguinaldo because of a change in plans.

It appears that the only time the coup plotters realized something had gone wrong with their plans was on Saturday morning, 22 February. Enrile had gone to have breakfast at the Atrium in Makati with a group of politicians, businessmen, and journalists, when he was called to the phone by then Trade and Industry Minister Roberto Ongpin. Ongpin told him that 19 of his security men had been arrested by Marines at Fort Bonifacio while on “night training exercises”. This allegedly worried Enrile as three of those men were military personnel from the Defense Ministry “on loan” to Ongpin to train his security unit, and unusual movements like those could call attention to his whole force and their plan for a coup.

At about the same time (10:00 a.m.), Honasan was at his office behind the MND building in Camp Aguinaldo, checking reports of troop and armor movements in Malacañang and other parts of Metro Manila, when he noticed two brief but vital reports. One was the move of the 5th Marine Battalion Landing Team (MBLT) from Fort Bonifacio to Pandacan, I just off the Otis entrance of Malacañang Park at 4:00 a.m., and another was the deployment of the 14th Infantry Battalion (14 IB) from Nueva Ecija to North Harbor at 3:00 a.m. that same day. This meant an unusually high concentration of troops in Manila, in addition to those that they had previously monitored. Honasan called Kapunan to his office at once, where they tried but failed to reach Enrile by phone, so they hurriedly drove to his house instead.

After a discussion among Enrile, Honasan, Kapunan, and Wong, Honasan supposedly signalled all the MND security force, RAM, and 300 civilians to be on combat readiness. Enrile then made that famous telephone call to Ramos. At 6:30 p.m., Enrile and Ramos declared their withdrawal of support for Marcos at a hastily called press conference in Camp Aguinaldo, which angered Marcos all the more.

At 10:30 p.m., Marcos announced at his own press conference that a plot to assassinate him and Mrs Marcos had allegedly been discovered by his son, Bongbong, and the Presidential Security Command (PSC) Chief of Staff, Col Irwin Ver. He said that it was aborted with the arrest of some officers. He accused Enrile and Ramos with having taken part in the plot, thus, their preemptive stand at Camp Aguinaldo to cover their participation.

Marcos then presented Capt Ricardo Morales (PMA 77), chief security escort officer of Mrs Marcos, as the one who allegedly squealed to Col Ver on the rebels’ plan. Morales read a prepared statement. He said that the plan was to enter Malacañang and capture President and Mrs Marcos at 12:30 a.m. on 23 February. The attack would be staged from four points. Five commando teams would break through the Palace perimeter from the Pasig river. Malajacan, Commanding Officer of the 16th Infantry Battalion (CO 16 IB), would lead two of his companies and an armor company to create a diversionary action at Malacañang Park. A Ranger Force from the 49 IB would then enter Malacañang’s gate on J P Laurel Street in a convoy of 6 x 6 trucks and a platoon of armor under the cover that they were reinforcements from Fort Bonifacio. This would be led by Aromin, CO 49 IB, with his unit from Quezon. The strategy supposedly would be credible since the Rangers were believed to be loyal to Ver. Kapunan would lead another unit that would force its way behind the Palace gym to cover the commandos coming in from the river. Some three battalions were supposed to be involved in the operation, all led by RAM officers.

Of the officers arrested, four were presented at another TV press conference on the morning of 23 February. These were Morales again, Malajacan, Aromin, and Brillantes. Aside from Enrile and Ramos, Morales had also allegedly implicated Gador, Honasan, Kapunan, Wong, and Maj Arsenio Santos, Jr (PMA 72), Enrile’s aide. Aromin, on the other hand, was supposed to have confessed that he was part of five combat teams that were to have crossed the Pasig river to attack Malacañang and kill the Marcoses. He allegedly also implicated Honasan, Kapunan, Malajacan, and Santos.³⁴

The battle plan revealed by Morales resembles closely the commando raid earlier mentioned as one of RAM’s options. He was obviously in a tight spot of some kind when he wrote a “farewell letter” to his parents in Davao dated 17 February, Monday.³⁵ Still, the general public reaction at the time was to initially dismiss the coup plot as just one of Marcos’s prevaricated justifications to declare martial law, as he did in September 1972.

Notwithstanding the meticulous planning and attention to detail that the conspirators gave their coup plot, there were still apparent breaches in security. According to McCoy, for example, the planning sessions in January 1986 were conducted by Honasan and Kapunan almost like open seminars, with as many as 15 officers in attendance at a time.

This seeming lack of concern for secrecy allegedly infuriated senior RAM officers Robles and Turingan that they demanded the compartmentalization of information on a need-to-know basis.³⁶

It also later surfaced that PC Lt Col Rodolfo Aguinaldo (PMA 72), a RAM member, disclosed the names of 14 key RAM officers to his Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) contact at the US Embassy in an unauthorized meeting. Thus, those who knew of the coup plans at least a week before it happened included the CIA station chief and, therefore, others in the US Embassy, as well as the Australian Embassy.³⁷ The information might well have reached Marcos and Ver, which could explain the unusually high rate of troop movements in Metro Manila at the time. On the other hand, the increased troop movements could have been the prelude to a declaration of martial law and the repression of the expected mass resistance to it.

Another possible source of the security leak was Maj Edgardo Doromal (PMA 74), Malacañang's perimeter security officer, who was supposedly pressured by Honasan to join the coup plot despite his apparent misgivings and reluctance. Eventually, Doromal allegedly confessed to Irwin Ver. However, the subsequent interview by McCoy on 25 July 1986 revealed that Honasan was convinced the breach in security resulted from Aguinaldo's CIA contact, who in turn passed on the information to Ver.³⁸ As Robles noted of the Americans: They're shrewd when they play the game. They would bet on both sides, and they would win regardless."³⁹

In his testimony before the Commission on 15 June 1990, BGen Memio Tadiar, Jr (PMA '59) recalled that on 19 February 1986, Wednesday, he was unexpectedly summoned by Malacañang from Zamboanga where he was inspecting troops as Commandant of the Philippine Marines. The following afternoon, in a meeting at the Naval Intelligence Security Force headquarters in Fort Bonifacio, Ver told Tadiar about the plan of Honasan and his men to grab power by launching a commando raid on Malacañang, holding Marcos and his family as hostages and putting up their own government. Tadiar said Ver knew the details of the plot at least four days before the planned date of Honasan's initial attack.

Tadiar also said that Ver had received information that the Honasan group was allegedly planning to kill Tadiar on 21 February, Friday. Thus, on Friday night, some military men in full combat gear were arrested by Marines in a restricted area in Fort Bonifacio on suspicion of coming to kill Tadiar. According to Tadiar, the arrested men, 17 enlisted personnel and one officer, turned out to be the security men of Minister Ongpin, led by Navy LtSG Michael Angelo Asperin (PMA'81). Tadiar then reported this to Ver and supposedly urged him to arrest Honasan and company, but Ver refused.

The following morning, 22 February, Enrile's office began calling Tadiar to inquire on the whereabouts of the arrested men. Tadiar told them that he had turned them over to BGen Pedro Balbanero (PMA'57), commander of the Military Police. It appeared that with their coup plot discovered and the prospect of certain arrest by Ver's men, the RAM officers decided to abort the coup and make a stand at Camps Crame and Aguinaldo. Once the decision was made, the coup plotters realized that they had no plan of retreat and most of their orders calling off the action went astray, thus leading to the capture of several RAM members. As Honasan himself admitted after the event, the plotters had violated basic military tactical principles by failing to provide for a retreat contingency.⁴⁰

For the duration of the four-day revolt, the position of the Enrile-Ramos group would gradually be strengthened by the mobilization of the numerous RAM members and contacts in the different units of the four major service commands, as well as the progressively increasing defections of military officers and men to the rebels' side. In the Navy, Cmdr Proceso Maligalig (PMA '69), then Naval Operations Assistant Chief, and Capt Carlito Cunanan, Naval Operating Forces Deputy Chief, who is the elder brother of Col Thelmo Cunanan, (PMA '61), Enrile's intelligence officer, activated upon signal "Operation Twiggy," the contingency plan for the RAM in the Navy. Commo Tagumpay Jardiniano (PMA'57) had defected early to the Enrile-Ramos camp but, like many ranking officers, had asked that the information be kept secret for the time being for security reasons. RAdm Brillante Ochoco (PMA '55), Navy Flag Officer in Command, did not know what was happening at the PN Headquarters (HQ) as he was in Malacañang most of the time. It was only after midnight of 23 February that he found out 85 percent of his command had shifted to the Enrile-Ramos side.⁴¹

In the Air Force, defections began early. At 7:00 p.m. on 22 February; even while Enrile and Ramos were holding their press conference, Tarrazona, among others, was busy contacting PAF officers to appeal for their support. Priority was given to commanders of flying units. Col Antonio Sotelo, CO of the 15th Strike Wing (15 SW), immediately declared support for Enrile and Ramos. In fact, as early as December 1985, PAF Lt Col Oscar Legaspi (PMA '71) had contacted majority of the Air Force line pilots, including Maj Charles Hotchkiss, then commander of the 20th Air Commando Squadron under Sotelo.⁴² It must be recalled that it was the 15 SW which later sent its helicopters to Camp Crame in a dramatic defection scene, and was responsible for the firing of rockets over Malacañang.

Legaspi had also recruited Maj Francisco Baula, Jr (PMA '73), Squadron Commander of the 5th Fighter Wing (5 FW) based at Basa Air Base. It was he, along with two of his pilots, Lts Noe P. Linsangan (PMA '81) and Nestor A. Genuino, Jr (PMA '81), who flew over Camps Aguinaldo and Crame during the tense days of February, causing much apprehension and fear among the crowd below who did not know whose side they were on. The fighter pilots later flew to Clark Air Base, where their planes were "grounded" on the pretext of lack of fuel so they would not be used by Ver.

Still uncertain of the pilots' loyalty and aware of the crucial importance of control of air power, the contingency plans for the capture of VAB and Basa Air Base were said to have been activated. The plans involved the capture of the two bases by the PC Special Action Force (SAF) under Kapunan and Lt Col Reynaldo Velasco (PMA '71), and the elements from the PC Training Command (PC TRACOM) led by Col Bayani Fabic (PMA '58). Meanwhile, Maj Arsenio Santos, Jr and Lt Andy Gauran (PMA '82) would launch diversionary operations nearby. To prevent the confusion that could arise from not knowing who were "friendly" forces and who were not, Kapunan came up with the idea of a Philippine flag patch as a countersign, changing its position clockwise everyday, starting with the sun on the top and the red portion on the left. It was, of course, assumed that the coup would not last much longer than 72 hours.

News of other defections and support continued to pour in at Camps Crame and Aguinaldo on the second and third days of the revolt. MGen Prospero A. Olivas (PMA '53), head of the Metropolitan Command (METROCOM) and Metropolitan Police Force, was an early convert but declined to be announced just yet. Retired BGen Francisco Gatmaitan (PMA '52), then Manila Electric Company (MERALCO) Executive Vice President, pledged continuous electric power to the camps despite pressures from Malacañang to cut off electricity. BGen Brigido Paredes (PMA '60), a RAM member, recalled that he had been removed by Tadiar as deputy commander of the Naval Training Command on 13 February 1986 because of his suspected RAM activities. He declared before the Commission that his assignment during the EDSA Revolt was to neutralize the Marines, to prevent them from moving against the RAM. The Intelligence Service of the AFP (ISAFP) was likewise "neutralized" by RAM officers Col Antonio Samonte (PMA '57) and Navy Capt Warlino Sadiarin (PMA '67), both holding key positions in the intelligence service.

Aguinaldo was reported to have led the assault on Broadcast City by Task Force Delta. They also reportedly neutralized the loyalist snipers at Channel 4 and went on to provide security for Channel 7, in case Ver's men decided to forcibly remove the human barricades there. Task Force Delta was a RAM initiative to control the media stations on 22 February, composed of elements of the Constabulary Security Group led by Lt Col Eduardo S. Matillano (PMA '71); a contingent of the Constabulary Highway Patrol Group under Lt Col Francisco Zubia, Jr (PMA '71); and a Narcotics Command contingent under Lt Col Teodorico Viduya (PMA '71).

On hindsight, there are at least two noteworthy non-military-related factors that merit special mention in having shaped the direction of events and paved the way for the successful removal of Marcos in February 1986. First is the massive mobilization of people, now aptly referred to as "people power," and second is the effective media management.

History has shown that the massing of people although unarmed could, by sheer force of numbers, radically influence the outcome of events. There are several historical examples within the Gandhian tradition and the US civil rights movement. But in the Philippines, the February 1986 experience is an unprecedented occurrence of the same phenomenon.

It may be recalled that within four or five hours of Enrile's and Ramos's announced defection from the Marcos camp, there were already some 50,000 people surrounding Camps Crame and Aguinaldo, creating a formidable human barricade against any attack by Marcos troops against the splinter military group. In response to the continuous appeals aired over Radio Veritas, then later over the clandestine Radyo Bandido, by Cardinal Sin, and other influential civic and political leaders, the crowds continued to increase around the camps' perimeters, converting the streets and sidewalks of the areas they occupied as their "home" for the duration of the uprising. It was estimated that more than two million people gathered together. They could not be dispersed, despite attempts by Marcos and Ver because the military units ordered to disperse them were clearly reluctant to shoot at unarmed civilians.

What many considered incredible is the fact that, despite the extremely tense atmosphere and the presence of armed soldiers from both sides, no provocation or untoward incident happened to trigger a bloody encounter, which would have surely killed thousands of civilians in the crossfire. Tarrazona recalled that a few weeks before the February Revolt, RAM's junior officers, among them Lts Alexander Pama (PMA '79), George Washington Javier (PMA '80), Tadeo, Catapang, Diosdado Valeroso (PMA '82), and others, had coordinated with some civilian groups, giving them advice on how to exercise maximum tolerance and restraint, especially towards soldiers in crowd situations.⁴⁴ More importantly, the experience of NAMFREL, cause-oriented groups, and other volunteers in the non-violent defense of the ballot; the presence of nuns, seminarians and women at the front lines; and the many "conscientization" sessions by anti-Marcos forces over the years after 21 August 1983 turned out to be perfect preparation for the event. Thus, no one taunted the tank operators or battle-tested Marines. Instead, the soldiers sent by Marcos's generals were offered prayers, cigarettes, food, drinks, and even flowers.

Arillo's version is that the RAM had considered using human barricades as part of their numerous contingency plans, and that during the critical periods in the uprising, Enrile, Ramos, and the RAM officers were reluctant to mention the role of the people in the streets as they did not wish to expose to Malacañang any part of the defense plans for the two camps.⁴⁵ At Camp Crame, during the four-day uprising, Ramos's guidelines for then Col Alexander Aguirre (PMA '61), PC Chief of Operations, for the camp's defense plan included (1) to galvanize and make maximum use of people power and (2) to undertake no provocative military action against the opposing side.⁴⁶ Since the Ramos guidelines were issued at the time that people were already massing at EDSA, what is undeniable is that the aborted RAM coup attempt at military intervention had been saved by people power.

In his testimony before the Commission, retired BGen Jose M. Crisol (PMA'42), former Defense Under secretary under Presidents Magsaysay, Garcia, and Marcos, opined that the military did not put Mrs Aquino in Malacañang. It was the people. He believed that Marcos's mistake was in attempting to bargain with the mutineers in the early hours of 23 February, giving time for people to organize and flock to EDSA.⁴⁷

The second notable factor that helped bring about the successful February 1986 EDSA Revolt is the effective and exceptional use of the media to mobilize popular support for the Enrile-Ramos group. The direct link of Enrile and Ramos with the masses was Radio Veritas. Then, it became Radyo Bandido when the Veritas radio tower was bombed on Ver's orders. That the public was constantly informed of what was happening in the camps and at EDSA for the duration of the entire event was half the battle won.

From the beginning, the RAM depended heavily on radio, television, and newspapers to articulate their grievances and arouse the people to action, despite the usual constraints of censorship and political intimidation predominant under a dictatorship. Notwithstanding the existence of 26 television stations, 286 radio stations, and 244 newspapers throughout the country, there was no freedom of speech nor of the press. However, this did not stop the anti-Marcos opposition from coming up with an efficient "alternative press" and other forms of expressing discontent and protest, including the ingenious use of humor.

Through the competent management of media (i.e., continuous coverage of events, regular press conferences, interviews, exposes, deliberate information leaks, and other tactical and preemptive uses of media), the RAM had the edge in the propaganda war. But then, winning the hearts and minds of the public in those days was not a very difficult task. More importantly, during those critical four days in February, military units throughout the country were informed of what was happening at EDSA through the media, and RAM members in the regional and

provincial commands were provided with up-to-date information needed to perform activities called for by the situation.

The February 1986 attempt may, therefore, be considered as the first attempt at military intervention in the Philippines. It was nevertheless aborted by the security forces of President Marcos and subsequently overtaken by the massive outpouring of people at EDSA. Although it failed, the February 1986 coup attempt opened the possibility of military intervention in our political life.

B. July 1986 Manila Hotel Incident

Barely five months after the assumption into office of President Aquino, a group of armed military men and supporters of former President Marcos occupied the Manila Hotel for 37 hours ostensibly demanding constitutional reform and stronger anti-communist measures, on one hand, while declaring their own government, on the other. There were at least 490 fully-armed soldiers and some 5,000 Marcos loyalists who witnessed former Senator, Foreign Minister, and Marcos's Vice-Presidential running mate Arturo Tolentino take his "oath of office" as "acting President" of the Philippines on behalf of Marcos, who was then exiled in Hawaii. The hotel was declared as the temporary "seat of government".

Tolentino said in his speech that Marcos had written him a letter saying that since he (Marcos) could not immediately return to the country, he was permitting Tolentino to take over temporarily. After taking his oath at the driveway of the hotel, Tolentino appointed the following to his "Cabinet": Rafael Recto as Justice Minister, Manuel Collantes as Foreign Affairs Minister, Manuel Alba as Budget Minister, and Isidro Rodriguez, Jr as Local Government Minister. Tolentino added that he was retaining Enrile as National Defense Minister, as well as assigning him to the position of Prime Minister so that he could continue the fight against the communists without any interruption.⁴⁸ Tolentino also instructed former Speaker Nicanor Yniguez to convene the abolished Batasang Pambansa so it could immediately call for local elections before the end of the year.

From newspaper accounts, the people who were reportedly present at Manila Hotel for the takeover were a curious mix of military men and civilians, whose outstanding common trait was their loyalty to Marcos. Among the military men who were there were: Ochoco; Olivas; Zumel; Aguinaldo; BGen Antonio Palafox, former Commander, 5 ID based in Tarlac; BGen Jaime Echeverria (PMA '57), former Regional Unified Command (RUC) 12 chief; Col Rolando Abadilla (PMA '65), former METROCOM Intelligence and Security Group head; Maj Reynaldo Cabauatan, former Zambales Provincial Commander; Col Jose Mendoza; Col Rolando de Guzman (PMA '61); Col Dictador Alqueza (not Arquiza as reported in the newspapers), of Jabidah fame and later Samar Commander; BGen Tomas Dumpit (PMA '57), former RUC 1 Commander; Navy Cmdr Bernardo Patino, Jr (PMA '67); Lt Pablo Cardenas; and a certain Capt Cardenas.

Aside from Tolentino and Yniguez, among the other civilian personalities there were: ex-Members of Parliament Gerry Espina, Salvador Britanico, Manuel Collantes, and Manuel Alba; former Commissioner of Immigration and Deportation Edmundo Reyes; ex-Gov of Rizal Isidro Rodriguez, Jr, ex-Gov of Zambales Vicente Magsaysay; ex-Mayor of Quezon City Adelina Rodriguez; ex-Mayor of San Juan and now Senator Joseph Estrada; ex-Central Bank Governor Gregorio Licaros; ex-Manila Vice Mayor Felicisimo Cabigao; former MIA manager Luis Tabuena; ex-Mayor of Kalookan Macario Asistio (subsequently elected Mayor); Batangas Fiscal Felizardo Lota; lawyers Rafael Recto and Oliver Lozano; Gerry Sto Domingo; entertainment personalities Alona Alegre, Elizabeth Oropeza, Annie Ferrer, Amalia Fuentes, Mohamad Faizal, and Weng Weng; Chito Lucero; Sonia Valenzuela; Edilberto del Valle; Carlos Salazar; Rio Diaz; Rick Soriano; Pol Genatin; and many more.

The coup plotters had evidently timed their actions. The Manila Hotel takeover came in the wake of massive student unrest in the colleges and universities of Metro Manila, as the Education Ministry had reportedly failed to respond to the students' call for a moratorium on mass protest actions. The peasants were restive, despite the announcement of the government's proposed agrarian reform package for Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army (CPP/NPA) rebel-returnees the day before the Manila Hotel incident. The AFP was very critical of President Aquino's ceasefire efforts with the CPP/NPA. There were increasingly strong pressures against so-called "leftists" in the Cabinet. The Constitutional Commission was still in the process of formulating the new Constitution, which

would replace the Freedom Constitution in effect since March 1986. The President was preparing for her state visit to the US, and the important issues of the day were national recovery and the adoption of a new constitution.

The occupation of the hotel was premeditated and intentional. A day or two before the incident, Tolentino reportedly checked into four adjoining rooms on the 14th floor of the hotel, all registered under a woman's name. Other Marcos supporters also checked into different rooms under assumed names. Codes were used in communicating with each other. They planned to use the MacArthur Suite as their command post.⁴⁹ Plastic bags of rice and even water were later found in the rooms, showing that the rebels were prepared to hold out at the hotel.

It is likewise clear that the takeover plan was known to some high-ranking officers in the military establishment even before it was actually carried out. In his testimony before the Commission on 15 June 1990, Tadiar revealed that he knew about the plot in advance because Zumel had tried to enlist his and BGen Luther Custodio's participation in it. He said he had refused and had remained in his quarters instead, although his name was later announced on the radio as being at Manila Hotel. Kapunan, Enrile's intelligence chief, also knew about the plan at least several hours before the incident happened. American writer McCoy disclosed that he was waiting in the house of Kapunan for an interview on the morning of 6 July. Kapunan arrived in combat uniform, apologizing for being late "because the Marcos loyalists are going to seize Manila Hotel in a coup. . . ."⁵⁰ Six hours later, the Marcos supporters did in fact takeover the hotel, taking the government, at least the civilian branches, by surprise.

In the morning of Sunday, 6 July 1986, Recto, Yniguez, Espina, and other Marcos followers were seen conferring at the 365 Club of Manila Intercontinental Hotel. Their meeting was interrupted by the arrival of Jack Anderson, a visiting Washington journalist. The loyalists invited him to attend their rally that afternoon, where they promised him a "scoop."⁵¹ Just after 4:00 p.m. that day, while the loyalists were holding their rally at the Quirino Grandstand, some 100 fully-armed soldiers in fatigue uniforms accompanied by dozens of civilians suddenly barged through the doors of the Manila Hotel and commandeered the lobby. Zumel approached Mike Wilson, the hotel's Food and Beverage Manager, and told him that they were taking over the hotel. In a short time, the group had swelled to about 300.

By around 5:00 p.m., Tolentino arrived at the lobby (presumably from his room upstairs). After a table and microphone system were set up, Tolentino took his "oath of office". Tolentino later claimed that he had no personal stake in what they had done, and was only after the unity and progress of the people under constitutionalism, democracy and the rule of law."⁵² The rest of the evening was spent on fiery speeches in the lobby where Marcos-Tolentino banners were hung on the walls. A little after 9:00 p.m., the hotel management began moving out guests gradually on the pretext of transporting them to the airport to catch their flights. At the time, there were about 250 foreign guests billeted at the hotel and around 150 hotel staff members. The evacuation was completed by 8:00 a.m. of 7 July, except for 15 journalists who chose to stay to cover the event and about 20 hotel engineers and security personnel. It was later learned that Marcos had spoken twice with Tolentino at the Manila Hotel via long distance from Hawaii. First, before his oath taking, and then after it, to congratulate him. A hotel executive was able to intercept and tape the calls. Both tapes were subsequently turned over to the military.⁵³

By late Sunday, 6 July, the loyalists had managed to commandeer several buses and to barricade Roxas Boulevard, P Burgos Street, Bonifacio Drive, and T M Kalaw Street. Inside the hotel, Gerry Sto Domingo, former Assistant Executive Manager of Manila Hotel and nephew of Edmundo Reyes, declared that he was taking over hotel management, while Capt Cardenas, Detachment Commander of Fairways Security Agency which was owned by Ver, announced he was going to handle the hotel's security.

There were vague, conflicting versions about the identity of the rebel troops that occupied Manila Hotel. A number of newspaper accounts mention that there were two companies of soldiers inside the hotel, and some hotel employees said they kept hearing the name of the 225th PC Company. Others said the troops were mostly displaced members of the PSC under Ver, or a motley combination of security guards of Marcos loyalists and ex-cronies. The ones in full battle gear, with insignias of the Special Forces and black headbands, were said to be Guardian members. They had red, white, and blue ribbons tied around the muzzles of their rifles. There were also rebel troops that reportedly took positions behind the grandstand, wearing red and black patches bearing campaign portraits of Marcos and Tolentino. Several reports added that soldiers and policemen from RUC 3 in Camp Olivas, Pampanga trooped to Manila on Sunday evening upon being told that they "were to participate in a revolt against the Aquino

government sanctioned by Minister Enrile and Chief of Staff Ramos.”⁵⁴ They had evidently been fooled. When they heard over the radio that Enrile and Ramos were on the President’s side and organizing the military response to them, they surrendered at once to Capital Regional Command (CAPCOM) Commander BGen Ramon Montano. Furthermore, the rebels were also reported to have had different types of firearms, ranging from M16 assault rifles and M79 grenade launchers, to three .30 cal machine guns mounted at the lobby.

It is obvious that Malacañang had no inkling of the coup plot. President Aquino was in Cagayan de Oro with Ramos and PC Chief MGen Renato de Villa (PMA ’57) when it happened. When Executive Secretary Joker Arroyo found out about it through his own sources, he immediately tried to contact Enrile who was out. He left an urgent message. Then, he called GHQ and spoke with Vice Chief of Staff Lt Gen Salvador Mison (PMA’55), who said they were aware of the situation and were assessing it. Meanwhile, Enrile got back to Arroyo who apprised him of the situation. Enrile denied knowing anything about it, but said he would attend to it right away. After several more calls to verify information, Arroyo contacted President Aquino in Cagayan de Oro, who said Ramos had told her about it, from Mison’s report to him. It was then decided that Ramos would rush back to Manila, while President Aquino continued with her original schedule of visiting military camps, as well as receiving 20 rebel returnees in Cagayan de Oro, before flying back to Manila on 7 July.

Enrile summoned the General Staff for a Command Conference at GHQ at 7:00 p.m. to map out tactics to deal with the situation. After the conference, he met with the press. Enrile and the military top brass sought to make light of the event, and even presented Tadiar and Pattugalan to dispel rumors that they had joined the rebels. Enrile added that Custodio was at home, and not at Manila Hotel as had been rumored.

In the meantime, government troops (Marines) had setup checkpoints and blocking forces on all the roads leading to Manila Hotel, and had supposedly cordoned off all routes within a one-kilometer radius. However, journalist Belinda Cunanan claimed that the Marine blockades were not really effective in preventing food and human traffic to the hotel. She managed to visit the premises at about noon on 7 July.⁵⁵ By that time, however, water and electrical power had been cut off in the hotel. Employees left inside had earlier refused to connect telephone calls and deliberately dismantled the hotel’s public address system.

Elsewhere, Quezon City Officer-in-Charge (OIC) Brigido Simon, Jr reported that loyalists were allegedly recruiting residents in the Commonwealth Avenue, Holy Spirit, and Batasan Hills areas to support those holed up in Manila Hotel.⁵⁶ The National Telecommunications Commission temporarily closed down radio stations DZME, DZEC, DZXL, and DWAD for irresponsible reporting of the incident and for “being conduits of loyalists’ messages to their followers”. This act received some public and media flak for its perceived encroachment on the freedom of speech. For its part, the Armed Forces leadership relieved Cabauatan as Home Defense Chief of the Central Luzon Regional Command on 7 July, for abandoning his post.

At 2:00 p.m. on 7 July, President Aquino issued a public statement on the Marcos loyalists’ failed “propaganda gimmick”. She assured the People that the situation was under control. She gave the public a quick update on the incident and an ultimatum to the loyalists, allowing them 24hours (until 2:00 p.m., 8 July) to give themselves up. President Aquino also issued strong warnings that “the law will not be flouted with impunity,” and that “an incident like this will not be allowed to happen again.” She further announced that there would be “closer monitoring “loyalists and other similarly subversive activities from here on”.⁵⁷

In a closed-door meeting with the joint staff, major service commanders and Metro Manila police superintendents on the afternoon of 7 July at the Navy Headquarters, two strategies were discussed to end the Manila Hotel fiasco. One called for a lightning attack on that day, before the 24-hour grace period to surrender expired. The other, which was already partially in effect, was to completely isolate the loyalists in the hotel from their outside supporters by severing the electricity and communications system and by blocking all the roads leading to the hotel to prevent supplies of food, water, medicine, etc, from getting to the loyalists.

That the whole exercise was a lost cause must have dawned on the loyalist leadership early on. Just a day after he took his “oath” as “acting President”, Tolentino shunned responsibility, claiming he “had no role in planning this.” He contended he was pressured by supporters of Marcos to take his oath. At a press conference in the hotel,

Tolentino seemed to adopt a conciliatory stance when he urged President Aquino to call for early elections, saying many were “restless”. He further added, “We do not want the restoration of a constitutional government by violence or by force. That is farthest from our thoughts.”⁵⁸

A few hours after the President issued her ultimatum, Tolentino and some others began negotiating with government representatives at the 11 Army and Navy Club. The loyalist leaders among the military, Zumel, f Echeverria and Palafox, and among the civilians, Tolentino, Yniguez, Recto, and Britanico, either did not bother to return to Manila Hotel from the talks, or left the hotel shortly after.⁵⁹ Among the leaders who were left behind, Abadilla and Alqueza at first wanted to hold out until the 2:00 p.m. deadline on 8 July, despite the previous consensus among senior loyalist leaders to surrender earlier. The second set of negotiations were held at the police detachment behind the Quirino Grandstand and were attended by President Aquino’s son, Noynoy, Honasan, and Montano’s deputies, Col Emiliano Templo (PMA ’52) and Col Cesar Nazareno (PMA ’61), for the government side.

As it turned out, Abadilla, Alqueza, and Cabauatan left Manila Hotel at 4:30 a.m. on 8 July, about an hour ahead of the evacuation schedule, fetched by Enrile’s security men, Honasan and Kapunan.⁶⁰ At 5:00 a.m., Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) security personnel and CAPCOM men arrived at the hotel to supervise the evacuation of the loyalists. Ten Metro Manila Transit buses fetched 180 soldiers from the rear entrance, while more or less 300 civilians were quietly advised to disperse. Tolentino himself never came back to witness the evacuation at 5:45 a.m. on 8 July, some eight hours before the deadline.

From the start, despite the strong presidential statement, the government attitude towards the rebels at Manila Hotel seemed to be of maximum tolerance. They were promised that no criminal or military charges would be filed against them if they surrendered within the 24-hour limit set by the President. Enrile disclosed that he had been contacted at his office on 7 July by some leaders of the troops occupying Manila Hotel, signifying their intention to break from Tolentino’s group. He therefore arranged for some sort of processing center to be set up at the grandstand where these men could be received. He assigned Honasan to escort the loyalist officers and men out of the hotel towards the receiving area. Claiming he had clearance from the President, Enrile assured the “returning” soldiers that the government would exercise “maximum leniency without any embarrassment, humiliation against any of them, and they would be taken back into our organization without prejudice to their status as military personnel.”⁶¹

At the formal acceptance of surrender of the Marcos loyalist troops at Fort Bonifacio gymnasium on 8 July, Ramos welcomed the surrenderees (including four generals and 69 troopers) back to the fold of the AFP. He declared them free from liability of any crime against the Republic and the Armed Forces. He then ordered them to do 30 push-ups. However, based on testimony received in Executive Session, the push-ups were done to relieve the tension. Enrile, on the other hand, reiterated his promise of virtual exoneration by saying, “No punishment will come your way. I stand on this even to the point of gambling my position to see to it that what we have promised you will be fulfilled.” He added further, “There will be no retaliation against you. We shall consider this as past. Let us forget as though nothing had happened.”⁶²

On 9 July, upon the Cabinet’s recommendation, President Aquino announced her offer of clemency (i.e., non-filing of criminal charges) to the Marcos supporters who took over Manila Hotel, on condition that “they take the oath of loyalty to the Freedom Constitution.” There were those who thought the pardon was premature before a full-dress inquiry could be carried out. In other words, it was felt that the loyalists were let off too easily. This was in stark contrast to the treatment given a group of unarmed civilians who demonstrated in front of the US Embassy just a week before, on 4 July. The demonstrators were violently dispersed by truncheons, tear gas, and guns because, as P/BGen Alfredo Lim later reasoned out, they were blocking both lanes of Roxas Boulevard.⁶³

On the other hand, there were people who thought that punishing the loyalists would hamper the government’s campaign for national reconciliation and would only give loyalist leaders a chance to be “martyrs”. Expressing the prevailing sentiment in the Cabinet, then Political Affairs Minister Antonio Cuenco said that resorting to court trials at that time would have been highly divisive and would only have allowed the loyalists the exposure in court and in the media they wanted.⁶⁴

Two of the arguments used for adopting a policy of maximum leniency towards the loyalists was that no shot was fired and that no casualties resulted from the incident. A damage assessment after the incident, however, showed that the Manila Hotel suffered an estimated loss of P10 million, including the physical and material damage to the facilities, the looting of supplies, and loss of revenue from cancelled bookings. There were also losses resulting from the vandalized buses the rebels commandeered to barricade the streets around the hotel on the first night of their coup. Loyalists were, likewise, reported to have attacked a news patrol jeep outside the hotel early on 7 July, resulting in injury to two people. Furthermore, the Ministry of Tourism said at least 670 reservations made by prospective foreign visitors with various big hotels in Metro Manila had been cancelled following the incident.⁶⁵

Although there was no deadline set for the swearing of allegiance to the Freedom Constitution, mass oath-taking ceremonies were held on 27 July. This was attended by many of those in the military who were implicated in the Manila Hotel incident,⁶⁶ and who were eventually retired from the service. On the same day, the police filed formal charges of rebellion against Tolentino, 25 other civilians and 15 soldiers. The charges were based on the recommendations of Western Police District Superintendent Lim, who supposedly conducted an investigation of the incident. Even then, negotiations were going on between the accused and the government. Justice Minister Neptali Gonzales drew up the following conditions for dropping the charges against the loyalists: (1) pledge of allegiance to the Republic of the Philippines and maintenance of fidelity; (2) recognition of the existence of the present government under the Freedom Constitution; (3) renunciation of the use of force and violence for the overthrow of the government; and (4) not to allow one's name or one's self to be used directly or indirectly for such purposes. The accused must have accepted the terms because eventually all the charges were dropped against them.

On 17 July 1986, President Aquino created an ad hoc Presidential Fact-Finding Committee to investigate the Manila Hotel incident, funded from the Special Activities Fund. The Committee was composed of Alfredo Bengzon as chairman, with Rafael Ilete, Jesus Ayala, Emanuel Soriano, and Fulgencio Factoran, Jr as members. This group worked for three months, interviewing numerous people and meeting almost daily at the Manila Hotel. The Committee submitted a three-page First Report within a week and a four-page Second Report three weeks later, but instead of a final report, the Committee gave the President an oral report based on a discussion outline.⁶⁷ The major findings in the First Report included the following: (1) even as early as in May or June 1986, some members of the press had already been told or had heard of the plan of the pro-Marcos group to execute the Manila Hotel affair in exactly the manner that it actually happened; (2) the intelligence agencies in the military establishment failed to effectively monitor the movements from San Fernando, Pampanga of the military contingent that participated in the incident; and (3) none of the existing intelligence agencies, either civilian or military, had evaluated the activities previous to the attempt, specifically the Sunday rallies of the pro-Marcos groups and opposition politicians in relation to what could happen. The recommendation in the First Report was, therefore, the immediate establishment of an independent intelligence agency under the President's personal, direct, and exclusive direction and control.

The Second Report had a more extensive assessment of the event. The findings included the following:

1. The Manila Hotel incident was a pre-planned or pre-meditated conspiracy. [For example, at least three days before 6 July 1986, Honasan already knew about the loyalist plan.]⁶⁸

2. The conspirators fell into two groups or categories:

- a. those who openly identified themselves and admitted participation (open conspirators); and
- b. those who even after the incident took every measure to conceal their identities and involvement (hidden conspirators).

3. There was a breakdown in the capabilities of the intelligence agencies. They were unable to forecast the event. [Up to the time of the Second Report (14 August 1986), they apparently had not been able to identify the hidden conspirators.]

4. The main objective of the Manila Hotel incident was propaganda-related, specifically intended to embarrass the Aquino administration. However, the event was so planned and structured that, depending on the response of the military, it could have readily been transposed to an actual takeover or coup d'etat operation.

5. As of the time of the report, the main thrust and principal philosophy of the incident's exercise still existed (i.e., a propaganda event with a built-in mechanism for ready transition to a takeover operation).

6. The military as an institution was not involved in the incident. The military establishment, however, is presently fragmented by four major factional groups which, if not hostile to each other, are in the least seriously undermining the morale of the entire organization. The four groups are the RAM, the Guardians, the BROTHERS (Brotherhood of Officers Towards Harmony, Equality and Reform in the Service), and IROG (Integree and Reserve Officers Group). The existence of factions in the military, in itself, poses serious political and security problems for the government because they operate outside the traditional and formal chain of command.

7. The impending visits then of President Aquino to the ASEAN countries and the US raised high risks of another, if not more serious, Manila-Hotel-incident type of occurrence.

8. The handling of the incident by the government, particularly the seemingly contradictory and independent pronouncements made by civilian and military officials, notably Enrile and Ramos, on one hand, and those from the Justice Ministry, on the other, was perceived by the general public as reflections of the Administration's indecisiveness and weakness. On the whole, such handling of the incident substantially eroded public confidence in the stability of the government. This is especially true with respect to the perceived lax treatment of the high-ranking military officers who openly participated in the attempt.

9. As of the time of the Second Report, the following remained unknown:

- a. the hidden conspirators
- b. the extent and sophistication of the command structure of the hidden conspirators' organization
- c. the nature and system of linkage with Ferdinand Marcos
- d. funding source, and logistical system and distribution
- e. the manner and nature of the possible future Manila-Hotel-incident type events
- f. the "JPE" [Juan Ponce Enrile] factor

The recommendations of the Committee in the Second Report were the following:

1. As previously recommended, establish an intelligence capability with the President's full confidence, directly taking instructions from and reporting to President Aquino.
2. An in-depth review of all existing intelligence agencies to be conducted immediately with particular emphasis on their personnel.
3. Use the National Security Council (NSC) as was constituted at the time, as the cover for the President's Command Structure in case of emergency during her absence in August and September 1986.
4. Order the immediate dismantlement of the organized factions in the military.
5. Direct the Ministry of Justice to review the present disposition of the known or open participants in the Manila Hotel incident.
6. Direct the immediate and effective actions to be taken against the notorious open participants in a manner that will serve exemplary and deterrent purposes.
7. That the Presidential Fact-Finding Committee, in coordination with the proposed President's intelligence unit, investigate more fully the unknowns mentioned in the findings of the Second Report.

A list of names of civilians and military men was submitted for all intelligence agencies concerned to closely monitor their activities.

According to Soriano in his testimony before the Commission in July 0, of the seven recommendations mentioned above, only number 2 was substantially implemented, number 3 was partially fulfilled by Cabinet Cluster E, while numbers 5 and 6 became moot when the dent granted clemency and all the charges against the accused loyalists were dropped. Despite the order from the AFP leadership prohibiting unauthorized organizations in the military and disbanding the existing ones, there continue to be clandestine organized groups within the Armed Forces, as evidenced by the appearance of new ones like the Young Officers Union (YOU). Thus, number 4 has not been effectively implemented. As for numbers 1 and 7, there has been no new intelligence unit created under the President. It was decided instead to use the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) for this purpose.

The reactions from different countries within the region, judging from various editorials and articles in foreign newspapers, clearly stressed the need to be benevolent but firm in handling the rebels. The idea that the leaders of the attempt must answer for their deeds lest they be tempted to try again,” was a common opinion in the editorials. The US praised President Aquino’s “deft handling” of the aborted coup and reaffirmed their full support for her administration. However, despite its declared policy of non-interference, US embassy spokesman Allan Croghan confirmed that a US vice consul (Ambassador Stephen Bosworth was on leave at the time) had privately conferred with Tolentmo during the loyalists’ occupation of Manila Hotel. But Croghan reasoned, “We do it every time [something like this develops] to get an appraisal of the situation.”⁶⁹

Perhaps, the most significant indication of the public sentiment towards the Manila Hotel incident was the fact that people generally went about their own business, unaffected by the loyalists’ call for support. The loyalists were apparently trying to re-enact the February 1986 EDSA Revolt, even claiming that thousands of Marcos followers were on their way to support them, and that units of the AFP would be detecting But they were utterly disappointed. The majority of Filipinos were still caught up in the optimism of EDSA, and the Presidents popularity continued to be high. People believed her when, a week after the attempt, she assured them that, “Definitely, no repetition of Sunday (incident) will be allowed to take place. And this is something I am committing myself to in collaboration with the entire government and the support of the Filipino people.”⁷⁰ It was the first major test on the stability of the Aquino administration, and although it passed the ordeal, some say it may have revealed a sign of weakness and indecision in the complete exoneration of the rebels.

C November 1986 “God Save The Queen Plot”

Many of its members believed that the RAM should have disbanded after EDSA Revolt in February 1986 because its principal goal of ousting Marcos had already been achieved. However, some of its officers resisted this move and, instead, actively continued to plot a coup d’etat.⁷¹ This splinter group shall be referred to as the RAM-Honasan Faction (RAM-HF).

The Philippine political climate was turbulent in the months prior to the discovery of the coup plot codenamed “God Save The Queen” in November 1986. Just four months earlier, the government had quelled the loyalist attempt at Manila Hotel. The ratification of the Constitution, scheduled for February 1987, continued to be a principal preoccupation of the administration, which was fully aware that a new Charter endorsed by the majority of the voters would enhance the government’s legitimacy and, therefore, stability. At this point, too, there appeared to be constant infighting among Cabinet members, a fact which the energetic press constantly highlighted. Defense Minister Enrile, the Administration’s most outspoken critic, was also denouncing everything from President Aquino’s “soft approach” toward the insurgency problem, to the provisions of the Constitution.

The visit to Manila of US Congressman Stephen Solarz on the first week of November may have exacerbated the growing schism between the President and Enrile. Commenting on the Cabinet imbroglio, the press quoted Solarz as having said that it would be better for the President to sack Enrile as soon as possible. This unsolicited advice drew negative reactions not only from the Enrile camp but also from other sectors, which viewed the congressman’s comment as American interference in Philippine internal affairs.

Meanwhile, Marcos loyalists continued their public demonstrations for the return of Marcos and his family. There was a rash of bombings in different parts of Metro Manila, adding to the people’s anxiety. Also at this time, peace negotiations between the government and the CPP/NPA were ongoing.

On the economic side, negotiations between the Philippine government and foreign banks for the restructuring of about \$12 billion in loans had bogged down. Reports indicated that foreign bankers were apprehensive over the political situation and bickerings in the Aquino Cabinet and laid down stiff preconditions for postponing payments on maturing loans, prompting then Finance Minister Jaime Ongpin to recess the negotiations. The Philippine panel was asking for a reduction in interests, extension of repayment from ten to 20 years, and a multi-year structuring for some \$6 billion in debts falling due between 1987 and 1990.⁷²

Foreign businessmen and potential investors expressed their anxieties over the country's political situation. Coup and counter-coup rumors dominated the headlines as well as coffee shop discussions, heightening the general political and economic instability. President Aquino faced a dilemma of postponing or pushing through with her four-day state visit to Japan scheduled for the second week of November.

Because of the continuous flow of intelligence information and disinformation on coup plots, Chief of Staff Ramos called periodic meetings among the major service commanders to assess the situation and receive intelligence service briefings from the different sectors of the military. The same names seemed to be cropping up as coup plotters: Honasan, Kapunan, Turingan, Batac, Robles, et al. Although Enrile's name never appeared in any of the reports, most of the military officers mentioned were closely identified with him.⁷³ It was reported that the plotters made a special effort to recruit officers who directly commanded combat units.

The Commanding General of a major service (CG-witness) testified before the Commission that he first heard about the coup plot from Enrile himself (although he claims it was not yet known as "God Save The Queen"). Around the middle of October 1986, Enrile, who had arrived from Cebu, told CG-witness that he wanted to see him. A week later, Legaspi was sent to fetch CG-witness to bring him to the MND reception hall, where he and Enrile met for around ten minutes. Enrile supposedly told CG-witness that his (Enrile's) position was becoming more untenable in government. Enrile allegedly said that the government was in bad shape and "it's about time that we take back the authority we gave them."⁷⁴ CG-witness claims he informed Gen Ramos about the visit on the following day, although he was sure Ramos had received intelligence reports about the coup by then.

On 4 November, a week before the President was to leave for Japan, Legaspi fetched CG-witness to attend a gathering at Paredes's house in Fort Bonifacio. The gathering has been described as an "invitation to a briefing" as well as a celebration of Paredes's promotion to star rank which had been announced a day or two before, although he had been Marine Commandant since the EDSA Revolt. Among the other people at the party were MGen Canieso, CG PA; MGen Antonio Sotelo, CG PAF; Turingan; Honasan; Robles; and some others. After a while, Enrile arrived to join them. Because of the passage of time the sworn testimonies do not purport to quote *verbatim* the discussions that night, but they establish references to the coup plot now referred to as "God Save The Queen". Enrile was reportedly the one who confirmed the launching time and date as 12:00 midnight of 11 November, several hours after President Aquino was to have left for her state visit to Japan.⁷⁵ It was said that their individual roles in the coup were not discussed that evening although a tacit message to the key holders of power (i.e., the commanding generals) was that if they were not willing to support the coup, they should remain "neutral" and not prevent their men from joining it. There is testimony alleging that the plotters had previously distributed radios and money (P50,000 each) to four sector commanders who were supposed to impose curfew while conducting "surgical" operations against leftists.⁷⁶

The coup plot appeared to be a rehash of the original plan against Marcos in February 1986, using a commando team to raid Malacañang, capture President Aquino, and pressure her to yield the powers of the presidency while nominally retaining the title and ceremonial role. Two units were supposed to be involved in the operation — the Marines and the Army's 1st Light Armor Brigade (1 LABde). It is not known where the codename "God Save The Queen" came from, but it could be conjectured that it is an updated version of the earlier plan known as "God Save The King" (referring to Marcos).

Through at least two sources other than the military intelligence community (which gave no early-warning report to its Commander-in-Chief), Malacañang found out about the coup plot so the PSG was immediately placed and remained on red alert throughout those critical weeks of November. President Aquino had summoned Marine Commandant Paredes and the commander of the 1 LABde to ask them if she could count on them. Both had allegedly replied in the affirmative. Sotelo, Canieso, and Jardiniano were also called to Malacañang for

consultations with the President and Arroyo, presumably to ascertain their loyalties. News of the coup plot broke into the headlines of the Philippine Daily Inquirer on 9 November. It was a deliberate leak to convey a message to the coup plotters that their plan was known.⁷⁷

Ramos called Deputy Chief of Staff MGen Eduardo Ermita (PMA '57), as well as Mison, de Villa, Jardiniano, Sotelo, and Canieso, to a meeting at GHQ, after which they went to see Enrile, with whom they supposedly talked about the perception that some Cabinet members were anti-military. Enrile was said to have shown impatience with the government's handling of national affairs and the insurgency problem. They ended up by signing a resolution urging President Aquino to consider seriously the replacement of those Cabinet members". One testimony claimed that the top echelon of the military went to see Enrile two or three times, allegedly to dissuade him and his "boys" from carrying out their plan. Another testimony pointed out that military officers do not engage in direct confrontations, but use subtle and indirect remarks.⁷⁸ In one of these "persuasion visits", they supposedly used the tack "we'll do it together," but that the time was not yet right for it. To buy more time, Ramos was reported to have even suggested doing it after the Christmas season when everyone would be tired of merrymaking.⁷⁹ Enrile was apparently dissuaded.

However, Enrile was reportedly angered by what President Aquino said during a Dental Association conference which she addressed on the morning of her trip to Japan. He was said to have walked out of the conference and ordered the hoisting of flags at the MND, which was presumably a signal to launch the coup that night.⁸⁰

Despite the advice of both Ramos and Canieso not to leave for Japan because "something was going to happen," President Aquino nevertheless left for her state visit as scheduled. Immediately after her departure, Ramos and the four major service commanders met at the VIP Lounge at the airport. They discussed the intelligence (J-2) report about the coup plot and agreed on the preparations for their respective commands.

According to CG-witness, it was only at 12:00 midnight of 11 November that Ramos felt assured that the service commanders were with him. He believed that Ramos was not really certain of how the other generals would act. At the last minute, Enrile was supposed to have called off the coup, since none of the commanding generals were on his side. Thus, there was no overt movement of forces on 11 November, although preparations were allegedly made at Camp Aguinaldo. Honasan was said to have mobilized about ten V-150s and as many as 800 men (security forces of the MND), without counting possible outside support.⁸¹

The day before President Aquino's arrival from Japan, Ramos again called for an emergency command conference at 4:00 a.m. with the four service commanders. They received a briefing from J-2 about reports that the MND Security Group and other units they had recruited were again ready to take action early the next morning. During the meeting, Ramos made several calls to Honasan, Turingan and some others. At 10:00 a.m., Ramos went to see Enrile to prevail upon him to stop his "boys".

During that period, the Command Center (Joint Operations Center or JOC) was receiving reports of troop movements, despite orders to stop. At 1:00 p.m., Ramos and then Deputy Minister Ileto went to see Enrile but apparently to no avail. Ileto had supposedly also tried, but was unsuccessful, to dissuade Honasan from carrying out their plan, using their personal links (Honasan's father and Ileto were classmates, and their families have always been close).⁸²

As a last resort, Ramos and the four service commanders went to see Enrile at 4:30 p.m. and reviewed the situation with him. Enrile was supposed to have asked what he should do, and as everyone was silent, Ramos allegedly signaled Canieso, being the most senior of the CGs, to give the collective opinion. Canieso supposedly told Enrile that whatever happened, the whole AFP would take measures in favor of the government as this was their duty. After a brief silence, Enrile reportedly excused himself and went into the other room. Shortly after, he returned and allegedly capitulated, saying nothing will happen. The five generals then left and returned to the JOC. They were said to have reviewed their plans and then went back to their respective headquarters.⁸³

Upon the return of President Aquino from Japan, another crisis awaited her. Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) Chairman Rolando Olalia was abducted by unidentified men and his tortured and bullet-ridden body was found in a vacant lot

in Antipolo, while that of his driver, Leonor Alay-ay, was discovered three kilometers away. The brutal killing on the eve of the President's return led to a nationwide protest, where labor and other cause-oriented groups denounced the military as the perpetrators of the crime. Accusations varied from the alleged desire of the military to break up the ongoing negotiations for a ceasefire with the communists, to the military's intention to inflame the people's anger towards the government so that the climate would be favorable for a coup d'etat.

President Aquino formed Task Force Olalia to investigate the case. This was headed by National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Director Antonio Carpio, in the absence of Justice Minister Gonzales. The NBI found proof of military involvement in the stake out and surveillance of Olalia's residence before his disappearance. They allegedly found evidence, to link some RAM-HF officers to the killing.⁸⁴ The argument was made that the timing and brutality of the murders were meant to create an unstable situation favorable for a coup. Perhaps, it was the realization that their actions could be exploited by the ultra-right that radical labor unions and organizations desisted from prolonged massive demonstrations at the time.

Barely a week and a half after the preempted 11 November plan, military intelligence operatives discovered another coup plot, this time set for 23 November and allegedly involving a RAM-Marcos loyalist Nuance with the intention of simultaneously massing soldiers in Manila to coincide with the convening of the old Batasang Pambansa. The plans were supposedly finalized at a meeting in the house of former Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL) Assemblyman Antonio Carag, a known Marcos loyalist and Enrile ally, on early Saturday morning, 22 November in Wack-Wack Subdivision, Mandaluyong. The meeting was reportedly attended by Enrile, Honasan, Turingan, as well as Marcos supporters. Turingan was supposed to have called Ramos at his GHQ office to try to convince him to join them but Ramos refused. Turingan allegedly replied, "We will go it alone then."⁸⁵

The plan called for seizing the Batasang Pambansa building in Quezon City, where former KBL assemblymen would convene the parliament that was abolished in March 1986 after the EDSA Revolt. They would then elect former Speaker Yniguez as acting President, nullify the 7 February "snap" presidential election, demand that President Aquino step down from office, and call for a new election, all in one sweep.

In the initial rebel moves, it was said that Lt Col Aguinaldo and Col Hernani Figueroa (PMA'66) moved their forces southward from Cagayan intending to link up with the other rebel troops in Manila. At Camp Aguinaldo, where a Board of Generals meeting was being held at noon on 22 November, CAPCOM Commander Montano reported on some unauthorized troop movements. He said around three trucks of soldiers were reportedly sighted along the North Diversion Road bound for Manila. There was also confirmed movement at the headquarters of Honasan located behind the MND building.

With Honasan's forces at the MND compound were Kapunan, Turingan, Robles, Erie, and LCdr Jaime Lucas (PMA'73), among others. They had between 100-200 men under them and were backed up by armored vehicles, consisting of about ten Scorpion tanks, advanced infantry vehicles, and V-150s, which were garaged behind the MND building. The RAM-HF officers were aboard three Toyota Land Cruisers in commando team formation. They were all heavily armed and had additional stockpiles of weapons (Ultimax, Galils, Armalites, etc.) inside the vehicles, one of which was owned by Honasan's brother, Don. Most of the group belonged to the MND Security Unit of Enrile, as well as the Special Anti-Terrorist Battalion.

It was subsequently revealed that months before the attempt, these MND Security Forces would often jog at midnight from Enrile's house in Dasmariñas Village to the Defense Ministry in Camp Aguinaldo, after which they would practice shooting. Not long after the EDSA Revolt, they had on several occasions invited the men of the 15SW, which Soletto commanded, to jog with them. Perhaps they saw the potential of air support in their future plans as there were only two combat units in the PAF. Among those in the jogging group of Honasan were Legaspi, Hotchkiss (now Commander of the 16th Tactical Squadron under the 15 SW), Capt Elmer Amon (PMA '81 and also a T-28 pilot), and PAF Lt Gregor Mendel Panelo (PMA '84), all helicopter pilots of Sotelo.

The Special Anti-Terrorist Battalion was the result of Enrile's initiative in May 1986, to form an elite group from the units tasked to deal with hijacking (air, sea or land) and other terrorist activities. The battalion directly reported to Enrile as chairman of the National Action Committee on Anti-Hijacking (NACAH), and was headed by Honasan.

It was composed of specially trained men in the AFP, including the Navy's Special Warfare Operations Group (SWAG), the Army's Special Forces Unit, elements of the Scout Rangers, the PC's Special Action Force (SAF), and others.⁸⁶ In fact, this accumulation of military talent in the MND had earlier alarmed several high-ranking officers, not only because it dissipated the AFP's elite forces, but also because of its suspicious concentration in one place. However, nothing was done about it until after November 1986.

In the afternoon of 22 November, Ramos instructed Mison to monitor the moves of KBL politicians. Mison, therefore, sent surveillance teams to the homes of Yniguez, Jose Rono, and Vicente Magsaysay. Yniguez and Rono both denied any knowledge of the plan when Mison called them. Ramos tried to contact Enrile or Honasan in the late afternoon, but to no avail. Commo Virgilio Marcelo (PMA '61), then a Navy Capt and Commander of GHQ Headquarters Service Command at Camp Aguinaldo, was tasked with preventing the troops of Honasan from leaving the camp at all costs. On the other hand, BGen Javier Carbonell's brigade was given the responsibility of blocking the only road from the MND out of the camp. Carbonell, who rose from the reserve ranks, was reported to have hurled the challenge: The fight will start and finish there."

By 7:00 p.m., Marcelo had sent a reinforced company to block Gate 1 of the camp (all other gates had been sealed earlier). The composite forces under Mison were monitoring the rebels' armor in coordination with Marcelo's group. Meanwhile, Ramos had conferred with the commanders of the major services, and by 8:00 p.m., all government forces in the three military camps (Camps Crame and Aguinaldo, and Fort Bonifacio) were on full red alert and just waiting for instructions.

At 9:00 p.m., Ramos called PC Maj Efren Arayata, head of the Guardians Brotherhood, Inc (GBI), a military organization which claims membership of about 70 percent of the total AFP strength. It will be recalled that alleged Guardian members also participated in the Manila Hotel Incident of July 1986. Ramos wanted to ascertain the GBI leadership's loyalty, recalling that many of its members had been recruited for the two previous coup attempts. Arayata reassured Ramos of support. That same night, Ramos sent a message to all military field commanders nationwide to inform them of the situation. He also instructed them to "prepare for any eventuality" and to disregard all orders emanating from the MND, particularly Honasan's.⁸⁷ Shortly after midnight, soldiers were sent to guard all vital installations (communications centers, water and electric stations, government buildings). The troops guarding the Batasan complex were beefed up to three battalions.

Also at around midnight on 22 November, Ramos called the RAM-HF officers to a conference, but it was only Turingan and some junior officers who attended. Ramos asked Turingan to locate Honasan but Turingan said he could not do so because Honasan was still "with his troops".⁸⁸ Ramos then sent an unequivocal message to the RAM officers: they could leave the camp but would have to face the consequences. They were also warned not to attempt to use the parade grounds as a landing field because there would be orders to shoot them. Eventually, Honasan's group backed down, probably realizing that they were completely boxed in. At about 3:00 a.m., 23 November, they began going back to barracks.

Canieso, who was then CG PA, revealed to the Commission in June 1990 that the intelligence briefings they had received in November 1986 mentioned several other units as being involved in the destabilization plot now known as "God Save The Queen". These units were the Scout Ranger Companies attached to the MND and to the PSG, the light Armor Companies attached to the Defense Ministry and to Malacañang, the 16 IB under Malacañang, the 49 IB led by Aromin, and the 42 IB with many junior officers and soldiers formerly with the MND Security Group.

Canieso also disclosed that there were indeed some planned maneuverings by some of these units but they were dealt with effectively. In the case of the 49 IB, Arorain moved three-fourths of his battalion (about 300 men) to Manila from Quezon province. Canieso sent a superior officer to meet the troops along the way and to direct them to Fort Bonifacio to a "reserved quartering area" where they could be controlled. Canieso then sent for Aromin to tell him that he only had two options. One was to follow Canieso's orders as his CG and the other was to disobey them. Canieso said he was giving Aromin a few minutes to think about it. If Aromin chose the second, Canieso would arrest him immediately for mutiny. But if he opted for the first, then Canieso was going to allow Aromin to report back to his men and they would be authorized to return to the Bondoc Peninsula. Aromin chose to obey Canieso's orders.⁸⁹

In the cases of Malajacan's troops from the 16 IB and some elements of the 42 IB, when reports were received that they were preparing to leave their areas of operation to come to Manila, the Army Chief sent them urgent messages to stay put despite whatever plans they had, and to await orders only from him. The troops were, thus, prevented from moving out. In effect, the coup became a chess game with each side trying to anticipate and block the moves of the other. In the end, the rebels backed down without firing a shot. Thus, the majority of the civilian population was never really aware of all of the activities until the incident, which a retired general termed as a "non-event", was over. President Aquino herself was not provided all the details by Gen Ramos, even as he took all remedial measures to contain it.⁹⁰

On 23 November, Sunday, at 2:00 p.m., President Aquino briefly met with Enrile in her Malacañang office where she asked for his resignation and then immediately appointed Deputy Minister Ileto to replace him. She further asked the rest of her Cabinet ministers to resign in order to "give the government a chance to start all over again." Then, the President went on nationwide radio and television broadcast to announce her decision. She also gave government peace negotiators only until the end of November to produce a ceasefire agreement or terminate all further talks with the National Democratic Front (NDF) [the NDF had called off the negotiations following the Olalia murder]. In her statement, President Aquino firmly added, "My circumspection has been viewed as weakness, and my sincere attempt at reconciliation as indecision. This cannot continue. I hereby give notice to all those who may be inclined to exploit the present situation that sterner measures will be taken against them if they try."

Hours after the President announced her decisions on radio and television, RAM-HF soldiers surrounded the MND building, some even positioned themselves on the roof. The men were in full battle gear. Newly-appointed Defense Minister Ileto hurriedly called for a closed-door conference of the four major service commanders. Later, Ileto issued a statement that the Armed Forces were in full control of the situation. That same Sunday afternoon, the military released to the media an AFP message sent by Ramos to all major commanders and field commanders, declaring that the plot to convene the defunct Batasang Pambansa, with the support of certain military factions, had been aborted without loss of life. Ramos said that the situation in Metro Manila was calm, with the President in full control of the government. In the same message, Ramos reiterated to the commanders the need for "maintenance of order, sobriety and stability in their respective areas, and to play down any alarm the report might generate." He also called on them to strengthen the chain of command from Commander-in-Chief down to the lowest unit.⁹¹

On Monday, 24 November, Press Secretary Teodoro Benigno confirmed that the newspaper expose on the coup had been true. He said some military forces outside Manila had planned to join former KBL assemblymen in the takeover of the Batasang Pambansa to reconvene a rebel parliament. However, he said, the plot had been uncovered and "checkmated" by government troops. On the other hand, that same day, Minister Ileto appeared vague if not evasive about the details of the attempt. He said: "This plot is still a rumor. We do not have the evidence. We do not have the facts of the case." Asked about the fate of Honasan, Ileto replied, "It's too early for me to tell." However, Ileto mentioned that some of the plotters, most of whom were said to be members of Enrile's staff, had tendered their "courtesy resignations". He named Robles as one of those who resigned. Minister Ileto further stated that a preliminary investigation into the coup attempt was underway and that the results of an "informal investigation at intelligence level" would determine whether a full-dress investigation was warranted.⁹² Ileto had been given a free hand in meting out punishment against the coup plotters by President Aquino.

As testified in Executive Session, no formal investigation was ever made of the incident. On the other hand, Mison told the Commission in June 1990 that an investigation of the incident was ordered by Ramos but he was not aware of any charges filed against the coup plotters. He explained that Ramos's moves had always been conciliatory, not wanting to deepen the cleavages existing within the AFP. He said if the "iron fist" had been used, the military leadership was not sure about the sentiments and reactions of the troops in the field.⁹³ For his part, Ramos maintained that as CSAFP there was not much he could do inasmuch as the plotters were mostly under the jurisdiction of the MND and answerable to someone else.⁹⁴

The group of Honasan remained at the MND for a while even after Enrile's resignation and during Ileto's initial tenure. They were later redeployed or given different assignments back to their branch of service. One of Ileto's first acts as Defense Minister was to return the armor and heavy weaponry as well as the military personnel accumulated at MND by his predecessor to their respective major service commands. Mison was assigned to formally carry this out. In the process, he discovered that a substantial number of firearms, radios, vehicles, and some 1P2 million were

unaccounted for. After a prolonged official inquiry, the AFP Anti-Graft Board ordered Honasan to account for the money which was supposed to have been spent for the purchase of equipment. His appearance before the Board was scheduled on 30 August 1987, but this was overtaken by other events.

In the aftermath of the announced Cabinet revamp, the various reactions of people and groups were both predictable and generally optimistic. Not much was really known about the details of the coup now referred to as “God Save The Queen” nor about how it was quashed at the time, but the majority of the people appeared relieved it was over. Government officials and even some opposition leaders welcomed the Cabinet revamp which they felt would give the administration a “fresh start”. Perhaps as a compromise with rebels’ demands of “cleansing” her Cabinet of “left-leaning” members, President Aquino subsequently removed Labor Minister Augusto Sanchez. For its part, the KBL, through its Secretary General Salvador Britanico, vehemently denied any participation in the coup plot. He claimed that the accusations against his party were all part of a disinformation campaign in the struggle between factions of the military.⁹⁵ Vice President Laurel said that the resignation of Enrile should not cause panic and worry as the AFP was in the hands of the “ablest military men” (referring to Ramos and Ito). Cause-oriented groups and some leftist organizations were more cautious in their reactions. The NDF hailed Enrile’s ouster but expressed fears about the government’s policy towards the CPP/NPA because they claimed Ramos and Ito were rabid supporters of the US, which has been behind the implementation of the comprehensive anti-insurgency scheme.⁹⁶ They predicted that the so-called “left-leaning” Cabinet ministers would be removed from the administration.

The foreign reactions were likewise supportive and fairly optimistic. Australian Foreign Minister Bill Hayden said his government fully backed President Aquino. An Indonesian editorial said that the President’s decision to sack Enrile would strengthen her government, while a Thai newspaper commenting on the same said, “It had to happen.” The US reaffirmed its now familiar “strong and unequivocal support” for President Aquino. Congressman Stephen Solarz said President Aquino had “won the hearts and minds of the American people when she came here in September.” Senator Sam Nunn, chairman of the US Senate Committee on the Armed Forces, commented, The Philippine military has to be reorganized. The military has to gain the confidence of the people.”⁹⁷

A PMA graduate assigned to Central Luzon expressed what could possibly have been a dawning realization for many at that time: “The heroes of February are now the villains of November.”

D. January 1987 GMA-7 Incident

On Tuesday, 20 January, there were again reports of a possible coup attempt, this time to be launched over that weekend. The reports to the Army CG pointed to four groups that had an interest in seizing power. These were the Marcos loyalists; military men loyal to Enrile; members of the AFP who were disgusted by the security and counterinsurgency policies of the Aquino administration; and some big businessmen.⁹⁸

One scenario of the plan supposedly involved the abduction or liquidation of the Army Chief, his staff and military commanders. This was meant to paralyze the operations of the Army and prevent its personnel from responding to the normal chain of command. The ultimate objective was to topple the government of President Aquino. However, the plan was disarmed by the Army CG himself, Canieso, saying it had little chance of succeeding.

The political situation took a turn for the worse when, well into the 60-day ceasefire agreement to hold peace negotiations between the government and the CPP/NPA, hundreds of peasants demonstrating for land reform at Mendiola bridge near Malacañang were fired at by elements of the military and the police on 22 January. Many farmers were killed in what is now known as the “Mendiola Massacre”, causing the NDF to suspend their participation in the peace talks and government negotiator Maris Diokno to resign from the panel. The ceasefire was scheduled to expire on 7 February, five days after the plebiscite on the Constitution.

On 24 January, an alleged coup plot was uncovered by the military before it was put into operation. The plotters were said to be a disgruntled faction of the Armed Forces, Marcos loyalists, and some right-wing politicians. The attempt was supposedly held off, at least temporarily, when Ramos called for and met behind closed doors the alleged military leaders of the plot led by Honasan and Kapunan.⁹⁹

Three days later, a group of Marcos loyalists, many of whom were members of the GBI, attempted to take over military camps and a TV station with the intention of reinstating Marcos into office before the new Constitution was ratified. There were at least four target areas that the rebels were apparently going to hit, judging from their staging points: VAB, Sangley Point Air Base, Fort Bonifacio, and GMA-7 television station. On their way to reinforce the other rebel troops, a group of soldiers numbering a little over a hundred, coming from the Philippine Army Training Command (PA TRACOM) in Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija and Regional Command (RECOM) 3, were intercepted and apprehended by elements of the CAPCOM led by Col Reynaldo Dino at the North Expressway by the Balintawak Toll Gate, as they were entering Metro Manila at 1:30 a.m. on 27 January. The fully-armed military personnel, mostly Guardians, were headed by Capt Nemencio Carvajal, although their orders had come from Cabauatan, as was revealed by later sworn testimonies.¹⁰⁰

As early as December 1986, Maj Romeo Daclan, a GBI member, had been reportedly seen at Fort Magsaysay recruiting other Guardians to join him in a destabilizing action. He was said to have met with Carvajal and Maj Pedrito Magsino at the PA TRACOM. On 26 January, GBI leaders from Fort Magsaysay were met by PC Maj Manuel Divina (PMA '73) and his brother, Lt Edgardo Divina (PMA '77) in San Fernando, Pampanga regarding a planned disruption of the plebiscite on the Constitution scheduled for 2 February.

On the other hand, the movement at VAB appears to have been connected with the meeting of about 20 PAF officers at Kowloon Restaurant in Makati on the evening of 20 January. The meeting was reportedly presided over by Lt Col Rodolfo Calzado, despite the presence of a more senior officer, Col Romeo Javelosa. The same group supposedly met again in a private home in Quezon City on 26 January, this time with the presence of Col Bertuldo de la Cruz, Capt Nonito Calizo, and some enlisted men.

After the meeting, Calizo accompanied by Sgt Samuel Nagac went to the PAF Security Group in Porac and then to Bacolor, Pampanga to allegedly recruit more Air Force men through the GBI network for their Planned activity. A group of about ten of them then headed back for Manila but due to mechanical problems, they did not arrive at VAB until 11:30 p.m.

From the meeting in Quezon City, de la Cruz went to another one at the house of Dr Arturo Tolentino, Jr, where he briefed PC Maj Francisco Ovilla and 21 others, after which he gave them an armalite each and a substantial amount of ammunition. From there, the military men went to VAB on board a Toyota car, a jeep, and a rented coaster. Joined by another group of 41 soldiers along the way, they proceeded to VAB in front of the 205th Helicopter Wing (205 HW) headquarters.

In the meantime, at 9:15 p.m. inside VAB, intelligence reports were received that a group of loyalists were planning to attack the armory and communications facilities of the base that night or the next day. After an emergency meeting of all VAB commanders at the PAF chiefs quarters, the interior guard of the 205 HW was doubled, security of the armory was beefed up, and all Wing staff and unit commanders were instructed to take precautionary measures. At 1:45 a.m., 27 January, while Col Loven Abadia (PMA '60), Wing Commander, 205 HW, was briefing his men about the current situation in the aircraft parking area, a convoy of vehicles loaded with armed men arrived. This was presumably the group of de la Cruz. Refusing to identify themselves to Lt Col Dante Bernabe who had been sent to question them, the armed soldiers dispersed and deployed at the far side of the road facing the 205 HW headquarters, while the personnel of the 205 HW took up defensive positions. Loven Abadia then went into the headquarters building where he called up the PAF chief and the Wing Commander of the 520th Air Base Wing (520 ABW) to report the presence of the armed men, who were later identified as the "Blue Thunder Commandos".¹⁰¹

For his part, Calizo and his ten recruits joined another group of about 50 soldiers aboard an M35 cargo truck which dropped them at the Air Material Wing Savings and Loan (AMWSL) area in the early morning of 27 January, while the others got off at different points around VAB. After a short briefing, Calizo's men divided into groups of three and headed towards the 520 ABW.

Meanwhile, an exchange of automatic fire ensued between the commandos led by de la Cruz, and personnel of the 205 HW backed up by other Air Force units at 2:30 a.m. Shortly after, the rebels boarded their vehicles and tried to

make their way towards the Baclaran gate (Gate 1) of VAB. However, the road was blocked by government troops positioned in front of the 520 ABW. Another exchange of gunfire followed, during which de la Cruz was wounded.

Calizo was also hit on the leg when firing erupted at 3:30 a.m. from the direction of the PAF Security Command (PAFSECOM) tower towards where he and his men were holed out. He ordered his men not to return fire but to call an ambulance instead. When the ambulance arrived, he and his men surrendered to the Air Provost Marshal. Calizo later admitted having left Pampanga with his men to meet up with other troops at VAB in order to take over the Wing Operations Center (WOC) of the 520 ABW and to control the aircraft parking area. The men cited varying reasons for having joined the mutiny, ranging from wanting a stronger government policy against communism, having long pent-up grievances against the assignment and promotion policies of the PAF, to feeling discriminated against because they were loyal to former President Marcos.

By 5:30 a.m., the commandos realized they were outnumbered and had no chance with daylight breaking, so they surrendered one by one. Loven Abadia approached de la Cruz, the leader of the commandos, to ask him to surrender and turn in his gun, but the latter arrogantly refused. He only agreed when Abadia fired a warning shot. Altogether, there were 68 members of the commandos who surrendered, 16 of whom were wounded. There was only one killed, rebel soldier Pfc Daniel Hubag.

The Sangley Point takeover attempt began with the raid on the armory of the 240th Composite Wing just after midnight of 27 January. The raid was led by Maj Crispin Galacgac with suspected inside collusion from Capt Alonso Canete and Lt Tomasito Macatangay. Canete was said to have distributed armbands marked with the word "Retwis" in red as a countersign to the rebels.¹⁰² Orders to withdraw firearms from the armory were given simultaneously to their men by rebel officers Lt Col Domingo Bayan, Maj Benjamin Rome, Capts Rodolfo Moral, and Jesus Sam, and TSgt Celestino Fran purportedly because of the "red alert" status at the time. Recruits among enlisted men from the nearby Naval Support Command in Fort San Felipe, Cavite City, were also given firearms by PO3 Vicente Anog, Jr, who had earlier told the men they were going to attend "a happening" at Sangley Air Base.

Thus armed, the officers and soldiers went towards the 15 SW headquarters, joined by two other officers, Capt Rodolfo Jequinto and Lt Villamor Lazo. The guards at the main gate of the headquarters were easily disarmed and their outpost taken over by the rebels. At exactly 1:00 a.m., both BGen Generoso Maligat, 15 SW Commander, and Col Santiago Pitpitan, his deputy, were simultaneously awakened by armed Wel officers in their respective rooms and told to dress up because of some simulated story about an impending communist attack. The two officers were then whisked out of the base in a car owned and driven by Rodolfo Prudente, a civilian rebel sympathizer, who took them to his house in Cavite City, then later to a less accessible house in a barrio in General Trias, Cavite.

By 2:00 a.m., the rebels had overrun the WOC of the 15 SW, taking Col de Dios, Director of Operations, into custody. Bayan, the acknowledged leader of the group, controlled the communications at the WOC by ordering the removal of the mouthpieces from the telephones, except the one beside him. He also ordered the commercial radio frequency to be changed to 10.8. At one point, he told de Dios, "It is the day of the return of Marcos and we are protecting the government from communism."¹⁰³

Seven hours later, realizing the futility of the siege, Bayan and the rest of the rebels at Sangley Air Base agreed to lay down their firearms. Negotiations were facilitated by PAF officers Col de Dios, Lt Col Baquir, Hotchkiss, and Capt Ortizo. At 10:00a.m., through negotiations between PAF chief Sotelo and Bayan, Galacgac was sent to fetch Maligat and Pitpitan, earlier held hostage by the rebels in Gen Trias, Cavite. The other rebel officers who surrendered were Capts Manuel Rodis, Jequinto, and Danilo Galvez, and Lt Leodecario Aspan. At 2:30 p.m. on 27 January, the rebel officers from Sangley were airlifted to the VAB for a conference with the PAF commanding general.

At Fort Bonifacio, a group of soldiers and some civilians belonging to the GBI assembled at the quarters of Daclan on 26 January, starting from around 9:00 in the evening. Lt Rogelio Buendia and five Marine enlisted men went there and were told by Daclan that they were going to undertake a purely Guardian action against communism. At 4:00 a.m. of 27 January, on the basis of a report that armed men were grouping there, Daclan's house was raided by combined elements of the Scout Rangers, 202nd Military Police (MP) Company, Light Armor Brigade, and some

other units. Daclan, Buendia along with 11 Army soldiers, five marines, one patrolman, and 21 civilians were rounded up and brought to the 202 MP Company headquarters for interrogation.

Most of those apprehended said that they were at Daclan's quarters to attend a prayer meeting led by Buendia. However, they were all heavily armed when arrested. Seized from them were three M14 rifles, 16 armalite rifles, one M60 LMG cal 7.62 with spare barrel, one smoke grenade, a radio set with two handsets, and numerous ammunition. Subsequently, one of the soldiers revealed that Daclan had told him and the others that 28 chapters of the GBI would stage a revolution against the communists.¹⁰⁴

The occupation of GMA-7 appeared to be better planned compared to the other incidents. At 1:30 a.m. on 27 January, PAF Special Reaction Group (SRG) elements from the RPN-9 transmitter and La Mesa Dam areas entered the GMA-7 compound purportedly to augment the security detail there. The group was led by Maj Ruben Sagmit and Lt Zaragoza, assisted from the inside by A1C Romantico. The rebels took the firearms from the SRG arm rack of GMA-7 and distributed them to the members of the group. In the meantime, Sagmit told Maj Pastor Razon, CO SRG unit assigned to the TV station, that a coup d'état was taking place.

The 43 employees and visitors of GMA-7, who were around at the time, were directed to gather at the Talent Room and were prevented from leaving by rebel soldiers. At 2:20 a.m., three truckloads of heavily armed military personnel led by Maj Divina arrived to reinforce the rebels at the GMA-7. Shortly after, Col Hernando Lopez (PMA '66), SRG chief, who had been contacted by his men, arrived at the GMA-7 compound. He was supposedly told by Sagmit and Divina that they had launched a coup because they did not like the way the government was treating the military. To further convince him of the rebel cause, Abadilla spoke with Lopez by telephone for some 20 minutes. Abadilla allegedly told Lopez that PAF Col Oscar Canlas (PMA '63) would soon arrive at the station and that Lopez should not put up any resistance.¹⁰⁵

At 5:00 a.m., Canlas arrived at GMA-7 with some 100 men to join the rebels there. At about the same time, a group of 100 civilians claiming to be Marcos loyalists also entered GMA-7. Lopez requested Canlas to allow the former to pull out his men, their firearms, and belongings. The petition was granted by the rebel officer and carried out an hour later, after Lopez and his men failed to convince the rebels to give up.

Meanwhile, the government was in a dilemma as to how to resolve the crisis without bloodshed or extensive damage to property. The other four incidents had ended without great losses, except for the death of a rebel soldier and the wounding of some others. The siege at GMA-7, however, was taking longer to end, while in the meantime, it was receiving ample media coverage both here and abroad, a factor damaging to the country's image. There was also a growing number of civilians rallying to the rebels' side, most notable of whom were movie stars Alegre, Oropeza, Ferrer, and "Amay Bisaya". By 12:30 p.m., 27 January, more civilians had managed to enter the GMA-7 compound by passing over the fence, despite the military's having cordoned off the area.

At 4:00 a.m., 28 January, Gen Ramos sternly ordered Canlas and his followers to vacate the premises of the TV station but the rebels refused.

Instead, Canlas wrote a letter addressed to the Filipino people explaining the reasons why they took over GMA-7. Their basic intentions were supposedly to make people aware of the growing menace of communism, to protest against what they perceived was the "communists' access to sensitive government positions", and to decry what they saw as the uneven application of justice among members of the military organization. They called on President Aquino to step down from the presidency and for Marcos to be restored as Chief Executive because for them "only he could solve the country's problems."¹⁰⁶ Marcos and his family allegedly made an attempt to return stealthily into the country from their exile in Hawaii to coincide with the coup attempt, but were prevented from doing so by the US government.

As the second day of the siege ended, the military had begun to examine more drastic options to resolve the problem. Ramos was in a house next door to GMA-7 and they were thinking of digging a tunnel underground so that crack troops could get into the station and launch a surprise attack.¹⁰⁷ It was on the evening of 28 January that a

group of PMA officers led by Honasan met with Ramos to present a “plea” to stop the planned assault by CAPCOM troopers on the rebels, arguing that any drastic action would merely divide the AFP.¹⁰⁸

The PMA officers, mostly belonging to Classes 1965 to 1983, made the following petitions:

1. A major reform and overhaul of the AFP and a hard line communist stand;
2. The terms of military officers having reached retirement age should not be extended;
3. All soldiers, including supporters of former President Marcos, should receive equal treatment;
4. Civilian supporters of the rebel troops should be allowed to leave the Channel 7 building; and
5. There must be a guarantee that no force would be used against the rebels.

After a long series of negotiations, the rebels finally agreed to lay down their arms. By 9:00 a.m., 29 January, the civilian rebel supporters left GMA-7 and were brought to Camp Karingal in Quezon City where records-processing was done. Seven hours afterwards, the military personnel under Canlas were escorted out of the TV station and brought to Fort Bonifacio by BGen Rodolfo Biazon (PMA ’61). The siege was over after 64 1/2 hours (almost three days). On 30 January, Ramos ordered the arrest of Zumel, Abadilla, Cabauatan, and Baquiran for their alleged involvement in the rebellion.¹⁰⁹ Charges were filed both in military as well as civilian courts against those who participated in the coup attempt. Some were acquitted, some had their cases dismissed, some still have their cases pending, while others are already serving sentences.

In subsequent inquiries and assessments after the coup attempt, it was found that rebel soldiers had sabotaged the transmitter facility of the government television station (PTV-4) before taking control of GMA-7. They had also destroyed some transmission lines of RPN-9, preventing it from broadcasting for a time. The lines were restored by about noon time of 27 January, and the station was able to go back on the air. GMA-7 was estimated to have lost about P3 million in the three days that it was not able to broadcast. Electronic equipment from the studios, personal valuables, and cash from the offices were found missing after the rebels had left. The GMA-7 canteen lost P45,000 when it was ransacked. Thirty-five people, mostly civilians, were reported to have been wounded during the GMA-7 incident.¹¹⁰

It was said that the rebels, at some point, also tried to take Camp Aguinaldo, the MND building, and Fort Bonifacio, but were repulsed by government troops. This could be connected with the report that the Special Anti-Terrorist Battalion, the same one attached to the MND during the November 1986 coup attempt, had been observed making some movements. There reportedly had been military men in formation in front of the MND building, although not the size of a battalion. In his testimony before the Commission in June 1990, Mison admitted that the unit had remained surprisingly intact by 27 January 1987, despite previous attempts to dismantle it and the fact that Honasan was no longer at MND.

On 21 January 1987, perhaps in anticipation of future coup attempts, Defense Minister Ileto created an AFP Board of Officers headed by the Inspector General, BGen Hermogenes Peralta, Jr (PMA ’59), tasked to investigate destabilizing activities against the government. Just six days after its establishment, the Board had its first coup to investigate. Among some of its findings in relation to the 27 January 1987 coup attempt were the following:

1. Most of the Guardians and prominent personalities (military and civilian) who had participated in the 6 July 1986-Manila Hotel incident were also involved in the 27 January 1987 coup attempt.¹¹¹
2. There definitely had been support given to the military coup plotters from the civilian sector, mostly in the form of food, refreshments, use of homes and vehicles, and other resources. In at least one residential compound in Little Baguio, San Juan, for example, food and refreshments had been prepared for those who participated in the GMA-7 incident.

3. The leaders of the GMA-7 incident were identified to have been Col Rolando Abadilla PC (he was subsequently acquitted), Col Oscar Canlas PAF, Maj Ruben Sagmit PA, and Maj Manuel Divina PC.

As a direct response by the executive branch of government to the coup, and to prevent its being caught by surprise again in the future, President Aquino created a Cabinet Crisis Committee on 28 January 1987. Its task was “to attend to the matter of preventing a recurrence of the 27 January 1987 attempted coup and how to meet a similar situation, should it occur.”¹¹² The Committee was composed of Dr Soriano as chairman, in his capacity as National Security Director; Ministers Jose Concepcion, Jr, Aquilino Pimentel, Jr, Alfredo Bengzon, and Vicente Paterno as members. The composition of the Committee altered when Pimentel and Paterno subsequently resigned to run for the Senate. Later, other government officials were also included.

Still another response to the coup was the official designation of the National Capital Region Defense Command (NCRDC) about a week after the 27 January attempt. It was specifically assigned as the unit responsible for the security of Metro Manila amidst the destabilizing activities launched against the government. The NCRDC was not really a new unit. The counter-coup composite forces that make it up were organized right after the EDSA Revolt by then Vice Chief of Staff Lt Gen Mison, on orders of CSAFP Gen Ramos because “the situation was so unstable.” The January 1987 coup simply formalized its existence, an act that perhaps could be interpreted as immense foresight, given the important role the NCRDC played in the defense of the government in succeeding coup attempts.

The clearest response to the attempt of 27 January was the people’s overwhelming ratification of the 1987 Constitution on 2 February. The new Charter confirmed the legitimacy of the government and emphasized the primacy of civilian authority over the military, a provision found in several of its sections. This should have sent an unmistakable message to the coup plotters that the people preferred to settle political questions through electoral processes, rather than through violence or civil disruption. However, the message seemed to have been lost on the coup plotters because within two months thereafter, they launched another coup attempt.

E. April 1987 “Black Saturday” Incident

Prior to the “Black Saturday Mutiny”, as the 18 April coup attempt has been called, the political situation was again volatile. The campaigns for congressional seats were just winding up in preparation for the first legislative polls since the fall of the dictator, scheduled for 11 May. Opposition candidates had been lambasting the Aquino administration for its alleged corruption and insincerity, for the breakdown in peace and order conditions, for the alarming power outage that hit all of Luzon, for the worsening water shortage problem due to the nationwide drought, for pegging the price of cement which had led to hoarding, and for just about every other problem that plagued the country at the time.¹¹³

However, some of the complaints did have their bases. Insurgency, for example, had escalated within Metro Manila and in the countryside. Some three weeks before the coup attempt in April, 200 communist guerrillas had brazenly raided two police stations and a PC detachment in Polillo Island in Quezon province. Heavy military reinforcements were supposed to have been sent to the area but had been stalled because of reported ambush plans for the military teams.

On the same day that the coup attempt was launched, two bombs had exploded, one after the other, at the Colgate-Palmolive complex in Makati at 4:25 a.m., then at the Philippine Refining Company compound at 4:45a.m. Nobody was injured in either blast although glass windows and lighting fixtures were destroyed in the first explosion. The police could not be sure if the bombs were related to the coup attempt at Fort Bonifacio, but it had been speculated that they could have been meant as some form of diversionary tactic. Just a month before, three bombs had exploded at the PMA grandstand four days before President Aquino was scheduled to address the graduating cadets at that very stage. Four people were killed, while 43 were wounded by the explosion. All these terroristic activities added to the people’s feelings of political insecurity and confusion.

The coup plot had been hatched in a series of meetings, mostly among enlisted personnel and Guardian members. Later investigations revealed Cabauatan as the mastermind of the attempt. Early intelligence reports mentioned a

meeting of Cabauatan's group on 4 February 1987 at East Rembo, Fort Bonifacio (a subdivision where many enlisted men and their families live). The coup, which entailed a takeover of the Army headquarters, was to have been launched on 13 March but did not push through due to lack of support. On 15 March, another meeting was reportedly held, this time at the residence of a former assemblyman at Greenhills, with Zumel, Mrs Romeo Daclan, Abadilla, Cabauatan, TSgt William Quitulvo, and ex-Cpl Nestor Bete in attendance, among others. Zumel and Abadilla had allegedly promised the plotters financial support.¹¹⁴

The coup plotters met again on 3 April at a house in Philamlife Homes, Quezon City, where Cabauatan allegedly gave out eleven M16 rifles, three radio sets, countersign patches, P10,000 to Quitulvo, and P500 each to former enlisted men, Bete and TSgt Ernesto Librado. A similar meeting was held at a coffee shop on Ortigas Avenue and EDSA where Cabauatan gave Librado seven M16 rifles and more money. Still at another meeting in Philamlife Homes on 14 April, the same people met with the addition of Nilo Tayag, Alona Alegre, and Cesar Zagala, all known Marcos supporters.¹¹⁵

Intelligence reports show that at a meeting in Quezon City on 16 April, Cabauatan directed Librado and Bete to go to Quezon province and give P20,000 to Maj. Aromin and Jamora. By then, the plotters had been discussing more drastic actions (e.g., bomb Malacañang) to pressure President Aquino to step down from office, restore Marcos to the presidency and create a military junta.¹¹⁶

The attempt was launched on 18 April, Easter weekend. At around 4:00 p.m., Librado led a group of 13 enlisted personnel aboard a jeep owned by Daclan and a yellow six-wheeler truck to ram through Gate 1 of Fort Bonifacio. Shooting wildly, they drove straight to the 202 MP Coy stockade where, assisted by eight MP soldiers from inside, they released the 108 military men detained there, most of whom participated in the 27 January coup attempt. However, only 42 of the 108 men joined them. In the meantime, the gate guards had alerted the Army Operations Center (AOC), which then ordered the closing of all entries to Fort Bonifacio and the augmentation of guards at all gates.

At about 5:00 p.m., the rebels proceeded to the Provost Marshal's headquarters where they raided the armory, then went on to the Headquarters Philippine Army (HPA) building where they converted the office of the army chief of staff to their command post. Meanwhile, Bete and his group, who had previously been given other instructions, decided to join the rest of the mutineers at the HPA, bringing with them civilian and military passengers of the 12 cars they had intercepted along the way, as their hostages.

At 7:00 a.m., there was an exchange of gunfire between the rebels and the government security forces deployed around the HPA. Camp authorities had arranged to selectively deactivate telephone lines to prevent the rebels from calling for reinforcements. In other parts of the city, security had been beefed up at Malacañang and the other military camps, while the roads to Manila were supposedly secured to stop any possible reinforcements of rebel troops coming from the provinces. Ramos later said that the mutineers apparently had not intended to hold out in the camp and were forced to do so only upon realizing that all exits had been closed and were heavily guarded.¹¹⁷

At 7:30 a.m., a telephone negotiation with the acknowledged leader of the group, Librado, was conducted while government forces tightened the security ring around the HPA building. An eyewitness photographer recalled that at least four Scorpion light tanks, several armored cars, and jeeps mounted with machine guns surrounded the building.¹¹⁸

At 10:00 a.m., the mutineers fired at the government forces from the second floor where they had by then retreated to. Half an hour later, the government troops had entered the HPA building and secured the first floor. At 11:00 a.m., another telephone negotiation went on for the rebels to surrender, which they did half an hour later. The rebels admitted that they gave up after they realized they were "outnumbered and outgunned". One said they surrendered after a light tank fired a shell at the building as a prelude to an attack.¹¹⁹ By 12:15, the HPA building had been completely cleared of the rebels, following President Aquino's earlier directive to Ramos and Canieso "to resolve the problem before noon".

Of the 56 mutineers estimated to have participated in the “Black Saturday Incident” (also known as the “Enlisted Men’s Revolt”), there were 45 who surrendered, 10 escaped, and one died. Some of the mutineers had white armbands with the initials “NAP” printed on them, Presumably signifying “Nationalist Armed Forces of the Philippines,” an organization allegedly created by Cabauatan with anti-communist aims. Others, like Librado, had black triangular tattoos on their upper arms with the words “Guardians Revolt”. Librado was a “dishonorably discharged” member of the Marcos security forces who allegedly had missing since February 1986. He was said to be a member of the Guardians Centre Foundation, Inc (GCFI), a splinter group of the GBI, founded by Honasan.

Military interrogators had quoted some of the rebel surrenderees as admitting that the assault at Fort Bonifacio had been “part of a bigger plot to topple the Aquino government. This included the attempt to take over the International School in Makati and hold children of foreign diplomats enrolled at the school as hostages and the takeover of media establishments and vital public utilities.”¹²⁰ It was also discovered that most of the mutineers were former members of the military and came from Nueva Ecija. From among those detained at the MP Stockade who had joined the mutineers, it was found out that they were former men of Cabauatan, who had been part of that rebel force intercepted at the Balintawak Toll Gate during the 27 January 1987 coup attempt.

The rebels allegedly had similar grievances and demands as those articulated in the past coup attempts: that President Aquino’s approach towards insurgency was too “soft”; that she should sack the alleged “leftists” in her Cabinet; that the communists were winning because the President was weak; and that the present Cabinet set-up was corrupt and inefficient.¹²¹ In a telephone interview with DZRH at the time of the siege, a leader of the mutineers who had identified himself only as “Col Avila” asserted: “Our demand is to let the people from Malacañang turn over the country to the military for the time being.” He had also said, “We are going to fight to the last drop of our blood. We hope this is going to be the last revolt.”¹²²

In the after-coup assessment, it was found that there was only one casualty, a mutineer, ex-Sgt Toto de Guzman, while seven had been wounded (three rebels and four civilians). Not much had been materially damaged except for the gate that the rebels had destroyed to enter Fort Bonifacio, and the HPA building that had been left pockmarked with bullets. The damage was more perhaps on the image of the country faced with these obviously recurring coup threats. Although the attempt to destabilize the government on 18 April, a few weeks before the elections, had failed miserably, questions were raised about the administration’s ability to survive more attempts in the future. Consequently, however, the government appeared to have been strengthened somehow by the attempt as was evidenced by the electoral exercise. Not even the claims of “mass fraud” by the opposition party, Grand Alliance for Democracy (GAD), after the polls could throw doubt on the legitimacy of the elections and of President Aquino’s administration. Two cornerstones of democracy had been laid — the Constitution and Congress.

After undergoing court-martial, the 41 non-commissioned officers who participated in the “Black Saturday” incident were acquitted. For his part, Cabauatan was sentenced to 12 years and one day imprisonment at hard labor, similar to the sentence given some of those in the GMA-7 coup attempt.

On 15 June 1987, after five months of investigations, the AFP Board of Officers headed by the Inspector General came up with its conclusions regarding the January as well as the April 1987 coup attempts.¹²³ Some of the findings on the Black Saturday incident include the following:

1. The participation of the Guardians surfaced in both coup attempts (i.e., many of those investigated, detained or facing charges were identified with or admitted Guardian membership).
2. Failure of the intelligence community to follow up leads (e.g., previous meetings held, etc.) which could have nipped in the bud such activities.
3. The groups identified as being involved in coup attempts, particularly the Guardians, have become so pervasive and influential that some officers have joined these groups in order to have some leverage over their own subordinates, thereby obviously relegating their positions as military commanders behind those of their positions as members of the fraternity.

4. Interviews with those implicated in the coups reveal that their sentiments favored Marcos, Ver or Enrile. Also, many viewed the proliferation of fraternal associations within the AFP as military men taking it upon themselves to bring about better treatment for themselves, since they felt that not enough attention is being given them. Others felt that they are neglected, treated badly or ostracized for being Marcos loyalists.

5. In the 18 April 1987 attempt, although the plotters conducted their various meetings at the residences of civilians, the Board supposedly could find no other evidence to warrant the civilians' prosecution before the appropriate court.

6. Substantial funds had been provided to the participants of the 27 January as well as the 18 April 1987 attempts.

The Board's recommendations included the following:

1. Dismantling of all fraternal organizations within the AFP, except those authorized by law;
2. Assignment of "stigmatized" officers and enlisted personnel to positions commensurate to their skills, training, experience, and overall potential;
3. Vigorous and sustained indoctrination and reorientation; and
4. The intelligence community should closely follow up leads related to destabilizing efforts.

F. July 1987 MIA Takeover Plot

The most obscure of the attempts at military intervention is the one that was exposed in the press in July 1987 probably because, like the "God Save The Queen" plot in November 1986, it was a "non-event" — meaning, it had been discovered before it could be launched.

As far as the limited information available reveals, there seemed to have been two separate plots to overthrow President Aquino's government in July. One was publicly exposed by then Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) Chairman Ramon Diaz at a press conference on 9 July. He used as evidence the taped conversation of former President Marcos with Robert Chastain, a French businessman, and American attorney Richard Hirschfeld, a former Marcos lawyer. The two were supposedly acting as middle-men in the sale of arms to Marcos. The three-hour conversation took place at Marcos's beachside residence-in-exile in Hawaii on 27 May and was secretly recorded by Hirschfeld. Diaz, however, claimed that three tapes of the conversation were furnished to him only in June during his trip to the US. He, in turn, gave copies of the tapes to President Aquino on 12 June during the Independence Day reception at Malacañang.

The taped conversation revealed that Marcos wanted to buy "from a European country" some 1,000 Armalite rifles, ammunition good for three months, 90 mm recoilless rifles, 100 .50 cal machine guns, 100 grenade launchers, armored personnel carriers, Stinger air-to-ground and ground-to-air missiles, laser-sighting tanks, Blowpipe anti-tank equipment, helicopter gunships, and other weapons. He was planning to launch an invasion on the Philippines to be staged from Tonga, where the King was his personal friend and had offered him his island in the South Pacific. However, he would be using Hongkong as the transshipment point for the arms to be used in the operations, originally scheduled for end of June, but was supposedly changed to mid-July, for some reason.¹²⁴

The purchase of weapons worth some \$25 million was supposed to be financed by a loan from Saudi Arabian Prince Al-Fassi and repaid with gold Marcos claimed to have hidden in the Philippines. The plan was to land in northern Luzon, presumably in his home province, "and if they oppose the landing,... that's when we start the battles," declared Marcos in the tapes. Regarding what will happen to President Aquino, Marcos said they would "hold her hostage or, if necessary. . . ." Although left unsaid, assassination seemed to have been implied.

What was interesting in this belatedly exposed invasion plot, besides its fanciful scenario, was its simultaneous revelation in Washington, DC before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs. On 9

July, the subcommittee heard the Marcos tapes along with the testimonies of Chastain and Hirschfeld, who disclosed that they had posed as middlemen in the deal to get Marcos the weaponry, and had taped the conversation allegedly on their own initiative after they had failed to get US Justice Department backing for the activity.¹²⁵ The evidence from the hearings and pressure from the US Congress had supposedly prompted the State Department to place Marcos under severe travel restrictions (i.e., barring him from leaving Oahu island where his beachhouse is located).

In a written statement released to the press from Hawaii on 12 July, Marcos claimed that “The discussion in the tapes concerning arms and military action was premised on the prediction of the loss of the Philippines to a communist takeover or to a communist coalition with Mrs Aquino, and that the only hope of restoring freedom and democracy there would be a US-approved invasion which I would lead.”¹²⁶ He did not, however, deny at any point the tape’s contents.

The highly incredible invasion plot and the rather bizarre circumstances surrounding its revelation had induced most people to laugh it off or dismiss it as being just one more of those coup rumors. The military leadership downplayed the story. AFP spokesman then Col Honesto Isleta (PMA ’58) said that they doubted the veracity of the story. Although they did not question the tapes’ authenticity, they think Marcos knew he was being taped so “he was giving this message to boost the sagging morale” of his supporters.¹²⁷ On the other hand, President Aquino was “pleased” about the US warning to the ousted dictator against moves to topple her government.

Barely a week after the Marcos tapes had been made public in Manila and in Washington, DC, news of another coup had leaked to the press on 13 July. This had followed the order to arrest at least 20 more military officers implicated in the new plot by an Army major, who had been nabbed on 10 July and had supposedly confessed. The new coup plot was said to have been codenamed “Oplan Inang Bayan” and had consisted of two substage operations: Luisita I and Luisita II. The first allegedly involved an assault by helicopter gunships at the MIA and the holding of foreign hostages who would be used as shields against government troops. The second phase called for an attack on VAB also by helicopter gunships, aimed at disabling all military aircraft there. Then CAPCOM Chief BGen Alexander Aguirre said that the coup had the financial backing of a right-wing group of civilians and politicians who were said to be Marcos supporters. He added that the series of bombings in the last weeks prior to the discovery of the plot appeared to have been related to the coup bid.

Newspaper accounts mentioned that the coup plotters supposedly consisted of two colonels, one on absent-without-official-leave (AWOL) status and the other still in active service; two majors in active service and holding sensitive posts at the time; two captains; six PAF officers; four Army officers; and a Marine officer. It was said that a former military officer who ran in the 11 May polls under the opposition party was also allegedly involved. Some of the officers were said to have been identified with Enrile, while the others, with Ramos.¹²⁸

Reports revealed that the coup had been planned during several meetings in Makati. On 24 June, at 10:00 p.m., a meeting was said to have been held lasting until midnight, with the attendance of Abadilla; a Col Espejo; Majs Divina, Almario Hilario (PMA ’73), Brillo, and Ribaya. The agenda reportedly included the plan to occupy the MIA and VAB, and to establish a Council of State.¹²⁹ Another meeting was supposedly held on 2 July.

Other bits of information included the plotters’ having sought the assistance of the Guardians, who had reportedly promised to provide 3,000 fully armed members, while a Marine officer pledged 400 of his men. A big food conglomerate was supposed to have promised to help the rebels by providing them with food during the execution of the coup.¹³⁰

On 15 July, news reports came out regarding six unnamed military officers being questioned about the most recent coup plot. Defense Secretary Iletto, while confirming the interrogation, had said the officers under question “will not be arrested. Nor can they be liable to charges for their alleged participation in the plot.” He added that while the supposed plotters might have considered staging a coup, nothing was actually done. “Anybody can sit down and drink beer and say a lot of things. But to actually accuse you is a different question.” It would have been different if the plotters tried something like the attempt to capture Fort Bonifacio and their short-lived occupation of GMA-7, he further qualified.¹³¹

Although the coup plot had been admittedly “neutralized”, the attitude of the military regarding additional information about it seemed confusing, if not contradictory. While acknowledging that there indeed had been another coup plot, it tried to downplay its importance. And yet, speculations increased when the military leadership suddenly declared a news blackout by ordering all officers to withhold further information on the plot other than what had already been published in the press. Col Isleta said that this was because the military did not want to “jeopardize ongoing investigations on the plot.”¹³² However, no other information has ever been released on “Oplan Inang Bayan” since then. There is a case pending in the military court (*People of the Philippines vs. Maj Manuel Divina, et al*) regarding the MIA takeover attempt on 2 July 1987, with four officers named as the principal coup participants.¹³³ These four are Maj Manuel Divina, Maj Romeo Elefante, Capt Reynaldo Regacho, and Capt Christopher Mesias. Elefante was acquitted, while Divina, and Regacho have not been arraigned because they are still at-large. Mesias was recently arrested. The July 1987 plot remains a perplexing incident in the line of past attempts at military intervention in the Philippines.

G. August 1987 Coup Attempt

Weeks before the 28 August coup attempt, the political atmosphere was again particularly tense and extremely uncertain. Labor unrest in the cities and the dim prospects for land reform in the countryside dominated many political debates, even as Congress formally opened on 27 July. There were talks of postponing the local elections originally scheduled for November to sometime in January or February, upon recommendation of the COMELEC (they were eventually held on 18 January 1988).

Earlier, a spate of bombings had rocked Manila, making the populace unusually jumpy. Tensions peaked on 14 August when the government announced an 80-centavo increase in oil prices. The widespread public outcry against the hike extended among the different sectors and social classes in society. Strikes and demonstrations were held all over the country, followed by the intermittent violent dispersals of protestors, which elicited even more public protests. Transportation and work stoppages were resorted to, leaving hundreds of passengers stranded in the streets, or work places abandoned. The militant labor unions and student organizations, who were at the forefront of the protests, had declared a nationwide *Welgang Bayan* starting from 26 August. Despite a price cutback ordered by the President on the eve of the 26th, the national strike successfully pushed through, paralyzing 11 cities.

It is said that the RAM-HFs original launching date for the coup was 29 August, but it was moved a day earlier to coincide with the culmination of the *Welgang Bayan*, when thousands of protestors were expected to be out in the streets. The plan of the rebels appeared to have been identical to the November 1986 “God Save The Queen” coup plot, with minor adjustments. Reportedly codenamed “A Star Will Fall, The Sun Will Rise,”¹³⁴ the plan called for the takeover of Malacañang, key military installations, and radio and television stations in Metro Manila. With the occupations of the Palace and Camp Aguinaldo, which are the symbols of civil government and military authority, respectively, the coup plotters would have used the media stations to broadcast their propaganda in order to generate support from both the civilian and military sectors. The takeover of VAB and other airports, such as the one in Legaspi City, was expected to provide pick-up points for reinforcements from areas under their influence to be airlifted to Manila, the seat of government and therefore the principal battleground. By controlling these key installations for a period of time, the coup plotters expected military units as well as hordes of civilians to defect to their side.

During the coup, there were at least eight areas of major conflict between the rebels and government forces, and numerous other areas of what could be considered as minor confrontation. The eight were Malacañang, Camp Aguinaldo, PTV-4/Camelot Hotel, Broadcast City, VAB, RECOM 3-Camp Olivas, RECOM 7-Cebu, and Legaspi Airport. In the one-and-a-half-day mutiny, the rebels were able to control, at least for a time, seven of the areas mentioned above, with the exception of Malacañang.

A review of intelligence reports prior to the August coup shows that, like in many of the past attempts, there was not really a lack of information, but perhaps more a deficiency in the follow-up of leads and potential sources of information, as well as the collation and evaluation of all such data. For example, on 10 July 1987, Honasan and a certain CPO Raquion were frequently monitored at Signal Village in Fort Bonifacio, while on 22 July, Nueva Ecija local officials reported that massive recruitment of police and military men by RAM-HF officers was taking place in their area purportedly for anti-insurgency operations. Regular meetings were supposedly being held to discuss

perceived threats of a communist takeover, and yet these leads were not followed up. On 3 July, Lt Col Legaspi was said to have solicited Aromin's support "in case the core group that triggered the February '86 revolution would again move to save the country from communists." When Aromin asked what his role would be in the effort, Legaspi allegedly told him he would inform him about it in the near future. Aromin and Legaspi were neighbors then in Fort Bonifacio. It must be remembered that Aromin was the CO of the 49 IB in February 1986 and one of those arrested and publicly presented by Marcos as having been involved in the RAM plot against him. His name surfaced again in November 1986 when he brought most of his men to Manila to participate in the "God Save The Queen" plot.

Other intelligence reports included the supposed plan to liquidate the CSAFP and the PAF Chief by the groups of Hilario and Baula. The plan also included the takeover of VAB and the bombing of Malacañang. On 5 August, a report was received that some 2,000 troops would be led by a provincial commander in RECOM 3 who would take over key government installations and selected media facilities in Metro Manila. The move was to have been followed by similar military actions in other key cities in the country. On 15 August, an open meeting was reported of officers formerly identified with Enrile and the defunct PSC-NISA. The meeting could have been considered a normal one except for the presence of Lt Col Reynaldo Berroya PC (PMA '69) who had been previously reported to be meeting with different AFP units and the Chief of Staff, PSG. On 19 August, another intelligence report stated that key personalities in the AFP were included as targets by disgruntled elements in the military in a coup attempt to be undertaken at a given signal.¹³⁵ It was said that a military junta would be established composed mostly of young officers. More reports of an impending coup kept coming in. On 22 August, the PC Vice Chief of Staff called for an emergency meeting to verify the persistent reports reaching their headquarters out a plan to overthrow the government by way of assaults on Malacañang, military camps in Metro Manila and other parts of the country and media stations. Civilian and military personalities were said to have been earmarked for "neutralization." On the same day, red alert status was declared at VAB. The following day, the situation became even more tense when a telephone call received by some civilian employees of Camp Crame from their relatives who are soldiers warned them "not to stay out late at night", and that the critical period was anytime within the month.¹³⁶ On 27 August, reports were received about two separate meetings of plotters. One said that during a meeting at a restaurant in Timog Avenue, Quezon City, orders were given that the loyalists would move on 28 August at 2:00 a.m. Target areas would be Malacañang, military camps, media stations, and key government officials perceived to be "communists". It was said that simultaneous actions would be initiated in Cebu, Davao, and other provinces. The other meeting was supposedly at the Grand Atrium in Makati and talked about the Guardians launching an attack on all AFP installations. Although it is understandably difficult to verify and process the numerous bits of information received by the different intelligence units of the military, having the capability to do so and sharing this information with the civilian authorities would probably improve the government's security.

As early as 20 August, key officers of the units that would be mobilized by the rebels for the coup appeared to have known their launching date. The 14 IB stationed in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, under Lt Col Melchor Acosta, Jr (PMA '71) was alerted for action, using the scheduled visit of President Aquino to the RUC 3 as a cover. Company commanders Capt Danilo Baguio and 2Lt Rolando Cailing (PMA '85) were supposed to prepare for the security of the President during the visit, on orders allegedly received from the headquarters (HQ) of the 3 Bde. On 23 August, in Camarines Sur, 16 IB company commander Lt Hernando Caraig, Jr (PMA '84) supposedly received information that something was going to happen in Manila. Thus, he and Maj Eufemio Santos prepared a troop movement plan the next day. On 25 August, Nueva Ecija PC Provincial Commander Eduardo Matillano placed his command on red alert, directed all his officers to prepare their strike forces to be on call within 24 hours for combat operation, and to bring provisions and clothing good for three days.

On the morning of 27 August, 14 IB company commander Cailing called his three platoon leaders, Lt James Joven (PMA '84), 2Lt Alberto Gulmayo, and 2Lt Romulo Evangelista, for a meeting and gave them instructions to restrict their personnel to camp, prepare one week's provisions, and check firearms and ammunition for possible deployment anytime. Baguio did the same for his company. By 5:00 p.m., seven officers and 117 enlisted men of the 14 IB were ready to move out. Acosta conducted a briefing of the troops. He told them their mission would no longer be to provide security for the President's visit, but instead would be to go to Manila to act as a "blocking force" at Ayala Bridge against a supposed impending attack on Malacañang, after which they would converge at Camp Aguinaldo. Their rendezvous point would be the Sta Rita toll gate on the North Expressway.

Meanwhile, the Special Operations School (SOS) of the PATRACOM in Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija, was on “red alert” because of a scheduled visit of the CSAFP. The SOS then was under the command of Honasan, assisted by Maj Rodolfo Lazaro. It had a Scout Ranger (SR) department under it, headed by Capt Ernesto Lasco, with Capt Faustino Dantes as his assistant and Capt Roque Calagui, Jr as the administrative officer. At that time, the SOS was conducting SR training for three classes: SR Class #87-87 under Capt Dominador Lina, SR Class #88-87 under Lt Edmundo Malabanjot, and SR Class #89-87 under Capt Fidel Legiralde, as course directors. On 27 August, at around 10:00 p.m., the whole group of SR trainees with their officers left Nueva Ecija to link up with the other groups at the Sta Rita toll gate. Some of them were told they would be on a graded practical exercise and test mission, while others were simply ordered to board the trucks waiting for them. Lina pulled out 105 of his students on combat maneuver exercise in Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija to bring them directly to Camp Aguinaldo on the morning of 28 August.

At the Regimental Training School (RTS) of the First Scout Ranger Regiment (FSRR) in San Miguel, Bulacan, the 94 new recruits attending an SR Orientation Course were ordered to board an M35 truck and were brought to the Sta Rita toll gate, passing by the junction of Tartaro and Maharlika Highway where some of the men transferred to a waiting Baliwag Transit bus. Lt Mario Antonio, OIC, 6th Company, FSRR, also based in San Miguel, mustered 14 of his men armed with three days’ provisions, and headed for the rendezvous point. On the other hand, Capt Reynaldo Ordenez (PMA ’78) and his men arrived at the Army detachment in San Miguel, where they teamed up with the armor platoon of the 2 LAC led by SSgt Abraham Valenton, and then went to join the convoy parked at the national highway of Bulacan with one APC and one V-150 combat vehicle. Valenton claimed that the Army detachment had received a radio message earlier from the 3 IB HQ to bring the V-150 to Camp Aquino, Tarlac. It was later discovered that no such message had been sent and that it had been a ruse to get the armor out.

Maj Abraham Purugganan (PMA ’78), CO, 7th SR Company and about 18 of his men had left Benito Soliven, Isabela on two Land Cruisers at 11:00 a.m. on 27 August. They headed for San Miguel, Bulacan where they joined the batch of vehicles loaded with armed soldiers waiting along the highway. Purugganan’s group later headed directly for Camp Aguinaldo where they secured the Communications-Electronics Service (COMMEL) area during the rebel’s siege.

In the meantime, Lt Col Reynaldo Ochoa (PMA ’72), CO 62 IB, met all of his officers on 27 August at 11:00 a.m. and instructed them to get the men ready for an “operation”. His officers included Capt Daniel Mamaril, battalion operations officer; Maj Manuel Santos, battalion logistics officer; Lt Alfredo Manabat, CO “A” Coy; platoon leaders 2Lts Villamor Belmes, and Amando Escoto; Capt Felipe Muralla, CO “B” Coy; platoon leaders 2Lts Julian Mamuri, and Pablo Biglete; Capt Andres Fadrigalan, CO “C” Coy; Lt Francisco Atutubo, EX-0 “C” Coy; platoon leaders 2Lt Silver Linsangan and 2Lt Lazaro Alcoba; Capt Evaristo Bilog, CO HQ Svc Coy and his EX-O, Lt Edgardo Chua. Other officers who joined them were Capt Felipe Manlapaz and 2Lt Mario Capaycapay. Earlier, the men had already been alerted for a seven-day operation. Thus, fully armed and led by their officers, some 200 men of the 62 IB boarded 14 vehicles and left their base at Camp Tinio, Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija at 10:00 p.m. for a mission known only to a few of them. Upon reaching nearby Sta Rosa, some of the troops transferred to the four Baliwag Transit buses earlier arranged for by the PC provincial headquarters in Cabanatuan City. The convoy arrived at the Sta Rita toll gate at around 11:00 p.m. and waited for the other troops to arrive.

At Camp Aguinaldo, Commo Marcelo called for an informal conference at 4:00 p.m., 27 August, attended by Capt Sonny Sabado and LtSG Alvaran, among others. Marcelo gave instructions on the actions to be taken in the light of a projected rebel attack on the camp. After the conference an hour later, Sabado and Alvaran returned to their unit, the Security and Escort Unit (SEU), to brief their chief, Lt Col Jerry Albano (PMA ’71), who at the time was in a meeting at his office with Lt Jesus Quisano of NCRDC. When Quisano left, he ominously told one of the SEU personnel, “*Maghanda kayo at may madugong labanan na mangyayari.*”

Still at the camp, Lucas had been gathering a group of people at the lobby of the DND building supposedly to secure the Defense Department against any untoward incident. This began in the early evening of 27 August and went on all night. They were later able to pressure Rolando Cabral, Supply Accountable Officer, to issue them weapons from the DND supply room. At 12:45 a.m., 28 August, CSAFP Ramos and Vice Chief of Staff de Villa decided to set up a GHQ advance command post at Camp Crame after receiving continuous intelligence reports of unauthorized troop formations in Nueva Ecija and Bulacan. Montano and later on, Ermita were assigned to take charge of GHQ, while

the other service commanders were contacted and apprised of the situation. Ramos contacted Col Voltaire Gazmin, PSG commander, and discussed the adequacy of Malacañang's defenses in view of the unusually large force reportedly moving toward Manila.

Soriano, then chairman of the Cabinet Crisis Committee and National Security Adviser, joined Ramos and de Villa at Camp Crame a little after 1:00 a.m. Soriano said he learned about the coup at 1:00 a.m. through one of his contacts in Davao. He contacted Ramos immediately who, in turn, asked him to join the battle staff at Crame. Weeks before the coup, the Crisis Committee had been meeting every other week. They knew something was brewing but did not know when it would be launched.¹³⁷

In the meantime, the rebel troops had all arrived at the Sta Rita toll gate by midnight. All the men were instructed to transfer their flag patches over their breast pocket with the red portion on top. Honasan instructed Acosta and his men from 14 IB to head for the Ayala bridge near Malacañang. Most of the elements from the SOS PATRACOM and the RTS FSRR were to go directly to Camp Aguinaldo. It is not clear which troops Honasan himself led, but it may be surmised that he had under him a composite group made up of men from the units that met at the Sta Rita toll gate.

G.I. Malacañang

At about 1:45 a.m., 28 August, the rebels launched their attack on Malacañang. Some 20 rebels ransacked the armory of the Anti-Terrorist Task Force of the PSG at the foot of Nagtahan bridge. They attacked Malacañang from two directions along Aguila and J P Laurel Streets, but were blocked by PSG and CAPCOM elements deployed at all possible approaches. A firefight ensued, where several men from both sides were killed or wounded. The V-150 under the command of rebel Capt Reynaldo Ordonez (PMA '78) was confronted by a Scorpion tank coming from the Malacañang area near St Jude Church. After Ordonez spoke with its driver, the tank withdrew and the V-150 later left for Camp Aguinaldo. The 62 IB led by Ochosa arrived at the Nagtahan bridge area 2:00 a.m., passing through La Loma. They engaged in a firefight with government troops, where three of their companions were killed while two were wounded. After about 30 minutes, they too headed for Camp Aguinaldo. The men of the 14 IB led by Acosta arrived at the Ayala bridge at around 2:30 a.m. and were deployed on both ends of the bridges.

Later, after hearing shots from the area of Malacañang, they fired three rounds of flares to signal their withdrawal to Camp Aguinaldo.

Unable to get into Malacañang, the rest of the rebel troops under Honasan headed for Camp Aguinaldo through the Sta Mesa route. But in the course of their withdrawal, they shot at civilian onlookers who were jeering at them, killing 11 and wounding 54. Earlier, they had also fired at the convoy of President Aquino's son, Noynoy, who was then rushing home to Arlegui near Malacañang. Noynoy was wounded, while his bodyguard was killed. Two other people died, and a third one was seriously wounded in the car behind them.¹³⁸ The Marine reinforcements led by Biazon composed of five companies and four LVTs arrived at the Malacañang area at 4:30 a.m., but the rebels had by then withdrawn to Camp Aguinaldo.

G.2. Camp Aguinaldo

At 1:00 a.m., just before the rebel attack on the Palace, the DBX telephone system at Camp Aguinaldo was evidently subverted, rendering the AFP communication network inoperative. When two technicians tried to fix it, Maj Romeo Ranay (PMA '74) of the AFP Computer System Center told them to keep it shut, allegedly on orders of Erfe. It remained shut for 13 1/2 hours. Ranay would return, several hours later, with orders to call up the Antipolo radio relay station and likewise shut off the repeaters there. The orders were complied with.

Meanwhile, Marcelo was informed at 2:00 a.m. that the 2nd GHQ Battalion, composed of three companies and one APC, led by Col Luisito Sanchez (PMA '67) and five armored vehicles under the PALAB unit of Lt Col Luis Severo Melendez would be arriving to help secure Camp Aguinaldo. When they entered the camp, they were instructed to go to the GHQ grandstand and for Sanchez to report to the camp commander. However, instead of going to Marcelo's office, Sanchez went to the DND building to speak with Erfe. Later, in the crucial confrontation

between rebels and government forces, Sanchez and Melendez would again refuse to follow orders to attack the rebel troops, saying “The Cory government is not worth dying for.”¹³⁹ In fact, by 4:00 a.m., members of the PALAB unit had removed their flag patches and ammunition from their machine guns.

A similar “neutral” behavior was observed of the SEU under Albano and Sabado. Both officers were later found to have ordered their men to stay in their barracks, instead of reinforcing the GHQ building, as had been their instructions. Albano and Sabado were subsequently found guilty of failure to do their utmost to suppress a mutiny or sedition in violation of Articles of War 68 (AW 68).

At 3:00 a.m., the rebel forces under Lt Col Acosta, CO 14 IB, arrived outside Camp Aguinaldo’s Gate 1 but did not initiate any hostile action, until the long convoy of military vehicles and civilian buses full of heavily-armed mutineers arrived shortly after. Acosta’s men again fired three flare shots to signal their arrival to other rebels inside the camp. Honasan then demanded entry through Gate 1 but was refused by Templo, then NCRDC Chief of Staff, together with Marcelo and Col Pedro Juachon (PMA ’58), AFP Provost Marshal. Juachon reportedly told Honasan to return to Nueva Ecija with his men, but Honasan replied: “No way, sir. We came here and we’ve decided to stay.” Juachon further told him: “Gringo, it might help to let you know that we already have the order to hit you now, *kawawa naman ang mga mamamatay mong tauhan* because we will hit your tank with our tanks and the armor column is on its way out to Boni Serrano.” Honasan supposedly answered, “It’s alright, sir, we are prepared to neutralize your tanks.”¹⁴⁰

Failing to enter through Gate 1, the rebels went around Camp Aguinaldo through the White Plains Road and looked for a break into the camp. Meanwhile, Lucas, with some 30 heavily armed men, left the DND building and went to Gate 5 where they overpowered the guards and forced them to open the gate, thus allowing Honasan’s troops in. By about 5:00 a.m., rebel forces were inside the camp and were taking up their assigned positions. The 14 IB elements were deployed in the premises of Gates 2 and 3. Those from the 62 IB took charge of the area fronting the W Soliven building on EDSA, while Ochosa established his tactical command post at the Golf Club building. The SOS elements were deployed at Honasan’s residence, the KKK, and the golf course. The SR Class #87-87 under Lina guarded the DND and COMMEL buildings, while SR Class #89-87 occupied positions in the area of the Mapping Center and the Civil Relations Service (CRS). The elements of the RTS PSRR also occupied the CRS and Mapping Center surroundings, and the front of the GHQ building. The SR Class #88-87 were deployed in the golf course area. The 6 SR Coy under Antonio were initially deployed in the vicinity of the CRS HQ, then transferred to the area of the Officers’ (Row) Quarters. The 7 SR Coy under Purugganan, on the other hand, secured the COMMEL area.

After overpowering the guards at Gate 5, the group of Lucas went back to the DND building which served as rebel headquarters for the duration of the siege. Honasan had instructed the group of SOS (organic) Personnel to position themselves within the perimeter of his house. He told them their mission in going to Camp Aguinaldo was “to negotiate for the welfare of the Filipino”.¹⁴¹ Ordoñez, for his part, also entered through Gate 5 in the V-150. After refueling at the camp, he went to PTV-4, then later came back to Camp Aguinaldo where he eventually abandoned the tank and its crew at 3:30 p.m. on 28 August.

Earlier, Marcelo had sent Alvaran to Gate 5 to check what was happening there. Alvaran met Honasan along the way. Honasan allegedly told him: “Why did your MP try to stop us from entering our camp. I came here to reinforce you because the Aquino government has already sold us to the communists. Join me because what we are fighting for is for our children.”¹⁴² As Honasan answered a call on his handheld radio, Alvaran left and reported to Marcelo.

In the meantime, an SEU reaction force led by Capt Vicente Cervano had been sent from within the camp to augment the guards at Gate 5, not realizing that it had already been completely overrun by rebels. When the SEU force arrived there, a PC SAF team was also there confronting some 300 heavily-armed rebel Scout Rangers with their supporting tank. Honasan then appeared and tried to win over the government troops. He told the SAF team that his men “will not fight them,” and that they only went there because they had heard “the camp had been attacked by the NPA.” With Honasan’s group were Alcoba and Ordoñez, classmate and armor instructor, respectively, of Cervano. Eventually, both the SAF team and the SEU force backed down. However, government forces were deployed at EDSA from Ortigas Avenue to Gate 5 to seal off the rebels inside the camp.

By 8:00 a.m., the rebel forces had control of Gates 2, 3, 4 and 5, as well as the Communications Center (COMCENTER) and the surroundings of GHQ building. Honasan went around talking with the officers and men, trying to convince them to join the rebel cause. He went to the SEU to speak with Albano and Maj Jose Jamora, HSG commander. Later records show that Albano, Jamora, and Quisano had prior knowledge of the coup. By 9:00 a.m., the rebels had hoisted the inverted Philippine flag to show that they allegedly controlled the whole camp.

At 9:30 a.m., the rebels were operating the armed forces radio DZAF and airing a cassette tape which announced that Camp Aguinaldo, VAB, Regions I, II, III, and IV, and Cebu City were under rebel control led by Honasan. They repeatedly played this until 11:00 a.m. when there was a power failure. At 10:00 a.m., Robles and Maj Arsenio Santos, Jr were seen in fatigue uniforms walking towards the grandstand. An eyewitness later narrated that she had seen Robles earlier that morning talking with Mrs Honasan in the latter's house, and had overheard him saying, "*Atin na ang COMMEL.*"¹⁴³ Robles subsequently denied his participation, and the CSAFP on 19 May 1988 approved the recommendation of the Board of Officers to drop and consider closed the case against Robles.

Meanwhile, successive gunshots were heard all throughout the morning, from around 10:00 until the afternoon. On the government's side, a team had been sent to the rooftop of the W Soliven building overlooking Camp Aguinaldo, to monitor rebel troop movements. It was reported that boxes of ammunition and recoilless rifles were unloaded by rebels from a combi and Army jeep at the golf course around 10:40 a.m. It had earlier been reported that a helicopter had landed near Honasan's house loaded with food supplies. Meantime, Marine units from Zamboanga had been flown to Manila as reinforcements. Additional CAPCOM troops from Bicutan were sent to augment the PC forces in Camp Crame. Tanks and more troops were at the ready along EDSA, by the Corinthian Garden area.

At around 11:30 a.m., government soldiers exchanged heavy gunfire with the rebels in front of Camp Crame, and Gates 2 and 3. Several civilian bystanders were hit in the crossfire. A counter attack was launched by the CAPCOM combat group under Nazareno (later reinforced by 100 cadets of the National Police Academy) and a PA Counter-Terrorist (PACT) Battalion led by Col Rene Dado (PMA '66). A Marine Task Force under Col Braulio Balbas, Jr (PMA '60), with Maj Emmanuel Teodisio (PMA '72), CO MBLT 2, breached the rebel defenses at Gate 2 shortly afterwards.

Carbonell, CO 703rd Brigade, and his men had been assigned to force their way through Gate 3, then go to the GHQ building to relieve the pressure on MGen Ermita and BGen Montano. However, due to some lack of communication, Dado's PACT team, who by then had gotten control of Gate 3, were not informed of this, thus a misencounter occurred between both units. However, by mid-afternoon, the Marines managed to forcibly open Gate 3 and assault the rebel 62 IB elements, leading to their eventual surrender.

In the meantime, fighting had broken out in front of the GHQ building, still controlled by Ermita and Montano. A firefight had also started at Gate 4, with three V-150s firing at the rebel troops who were forced to withdraw about 150 meters. Fighting intensified as Logistics Command (LOGCOM) forces attacked the rebels from behind at the DND building. Two rebels were killed. By then, the 14 IB rebel group of Acostahad withdrawn towards the golf course area. At about 2:00 p.m., rebel soldiers burned the GHQ building to flush out Ermita and Montano. However, an air strike by two Tora-tora planes coming from Sangley Air Base relieved the rebel pressure on the government troops holed up in the GHQ.

From then on, rebel troops gradually began to surrender. Many had earlier separated from their units, changed into civilian clothes and slipped out of the camp. Others had gone to the St Ignatius Chapel to surrender or to wait it out. Honasan was said to have left the camp in a Huey helicopter piloted by Capt Rogelio Seradoy, not long before the air strike by Tora-tora planes. There are at least two versions of Honasan's escape from Camp Aguinaldo. One states that the helicopter ferried him to VAB, from where he escaped by land and the pilot (Seradoy) later abandoned the Huey at Camp Aquino, Tarlac. The other claims that a pilot, coming from Camp Olivas, flew to Camp Aguinaldo, picked up Honasan and brought him to an undisclosed place in Baguio.¹⁴⁴

The government's air strike and marine attack seemed to have been decisive in the battle at Camp Aguinaldo. By 11:30 p.m., the camp had been cleared of all rebel elements with the capture or surrender of 12 officers, including Lt

Cols Acosta and Ochosa, Majs Purugganan and Lazaro, Cpts Dantes, Calagui, and Legiralde, among others. With the retaking of Camp Aguinaldo from rebel hands, the other rebel-held areas were easily regained.

G.3. PTV-4/Camelot Hotel and Broadcast City

The troop movements of the rebels who attacked PTV-4 began on 27 August, at 7:00 p.m., when soldiers from the different PC line companies and police stations under the territorial supervision and control of the Nueva Ecija Constabulary Command began arriving at the PC HQ in Cabanatuan City. At 10:30 p.m., all the troops were ordered to board the various vehicles available and proceed to PTV-4, arriving there at around 1:30 a.m. 28 August. Upon arrival at the PTV-4 gate, one of the rebel soldiers shouted, "*Ito na*," signaling the exchange of gunfire between the attacking forces and the station's security force (5 GHQ Bn). The gunbattle ended after an hour, with five of the defending troops wounded.

At 3:00 a.m., Matillano, Nueva Ecija Provincial Commander, and his men, numbering about 120, forcibly entered and occupied the Camelot Hotel, located near the PTV-4 station. One of the hotel executives, who was ordered to cut off the hotel's internal communication system, overheard Matillano speaking over the telephone with Berroya in Pampanga. Some of the officers with Matillano were Assistant Provincial Commander Maj Eduardo Carino, Capt Jessie Arriola, Capt Cesario Valencia, Capt Antonio de la Cruz, Lt Paterno Orduna, Lt Demetrio Soriano Mamaed, 2Lt Ramon Colet Apolinario (PMA '85), and 2Lt Magno Biag.

PTV-4 and ABS-CBN, both located in the same compound on Bohol Avenue, went off the air when the network employees and other civilians caught inside began withdrawing from the area at about 9:20 a.m. The outnumbered military security of the station eventually abandoned their posts due to exhaustion, hunger, and uncertainty of reinforcements by midmorning. The rebels then occupied PTV-4 and the Camelot Hotel simultaneously.

At noon, on direct orders from President Aquino, combined elements of the police under P/BGen Alfredo Lim and the PC Special Action Force from Camp Crame led by Maj Avelino Razon, Jr (PMA '74) attacked the rebels at PTV-4. They were able to regain control of the station an hour and a half after heavy fighting, which resulted in the capture of 12 rebels.

The rest of the rebels under Matillano then withdrew to the Camelot Hotel nearby where they held out until the late evening. A follow-up assault by government forces using two V-150s and 90 mm recoilless rifles, supported by a helicopter gunship, forced the rebels to negotiate their surrender at around 10:00 p.m. However, from mid-afternoon when guests and hotel employees were being allowed to leave, many of the rebels were able to slip out by changing into civilian clothes or uniforms of hotel employees and leaving with the civilians.

On the same day, at 4:30 a.m., another group of rebels led by Maj Benhur Fernandez, 2Lts Marcelino Mendoza (PMA '81), and Andy Gauran (PMA '82) went to IBC-13 at Broadcast City and took over the television station. The station's chief security officer, Rodolfo Demillo, and some 63 soldiers under him put up little resistance. Some of the government troops from the 6 GHQ Bn under Lt Col Arsenio Esguerra, who had been sent to secure the station, even joined the rebel soldiers. These included Lt George Avila (PMA '84), Cpts Jose Cruz, and Wilfredo Milagrosa.

At around 9:00 a.m., RAM-HF officer LtSG Robert Lee (PMA '81) went to Broadcast City from the rebel-held Camp Aguinaldo. He was accompanied by TSgt Carlito Dematera and MSgt Buenaventura Clavecilla, both from the PC. Lee's mission was to broadcast over television the rebel's prepared statement, which he was eventually able to do at 12:00 noon. With other young officers and soldiers in the background, Lee appeared as the rebel spokesman on IBC-13. He denounced the "overindulgence in politics which now pervades in society," and asserted the rebels' supposed role and responsibility to "initiate the struggle for justice, equality and freedom which our senior officers had failed to do." This seemed to unveil the increasingly popular belief, especially among the young officers, that the military, as an important social institution, had the overwhelming prerogative to determine what was good for the country.

After the rebels read their manifesto on the air, IBC-13 as well as RPN-9 were knocked off the air by a power outage arranged by MERALCO. However, some technicians were able to activate their generators and put IBC-13 on the air again for rebel use at about 3:00 p.m. Among the civilians who were later found to have voluntarily and willingly assisted the rebels broadcast their propaganda were Jose and Manuel Jalandoni, Godofredo Lim, Felino Janairo, Domingo Torres, Enrique Ochango, and Bert Honasan (brother of Lt Col Honasan).

By the evening of 28 August, while the rebels were negotiating their surrender at PTV-4, the bulk of the combined police forces led by Lim went to retake Broadcast City. After a brief firefight, the government forces were able to regain control of the media stations by 11:00 p.m.

G.4. Villamor Air Base

“Red alert” had been declared at the base since 22 August due to the persistent rumors that another coup was going to be launched soon. Evidently, BGen Federico Pasion, VAB Commander and PAF Vice Commander, had issued an order that when the base siren sounded, all military personnel assigned in the different PAF Headquarters (HPAF) units should withdraw their firearms and ammunition, and secure their respective units as well as all gates to HPAF. This seemed like standard procedure, except that Pasion was later suspected of being a rebel sympathizer.

When the siren sounded at 2:30 a.m., 28 August, Pasion together with rebel officers Lt Cols Dante Bernarte and Legaspi, Maj Baula, Jr, and their men occupied the first and second floors of the HPAF. MGen Sotelo was placed under siege in his office on the third floor. The directive of Pasion was for all the gates to be closed and only military personnel belonging to the HPAF would be allowed entry. Rebel troops controlled the lower floors of the HPAF, the 419th Air Force Motor Transport Squadron (AFMTS), Gates 1 and 2, the transient officer’s quarters, and the ramp area where helicopters were parked. Also directly held hostage by the rebels was Sotelo’s son, Nickie, whom the rebels forced to telephone his father several times to try to convince him to join the rebel cause, but MGen Sotelo was adamant. Subsequent reports revealed that Tarrazona had also contacted Sotelo at some time during that morning allegedly saying that the rebel force was “composed of 60,000 troops” and that they had to stage the coup because if they did not, “the communists would take over the next year.”¹⁴⁵

The takeover of VAB was said to have been planned in four phases: controlling the main gates, neutralizing aircraft parked in the base, demobilizing the motorpool, and occupying the first two floors of HPAF. The seizure of the HPAF was allegedly dependent on the rebels’ holding Sotelo as hostage, guarding critical areas through the supposed assistance of Pasion, using the psychological presence of a V-150 armored vehicle (to be procured later by a rebel officer from Fort Bonifacio), and deploying armed troopers and base air police for the security of strategic places.

At 3:00 a.m., rebel Capt Dionisio Balisacan and some 20 men from the 521st Air Police Squadron, of which he was EX-O, were able to enter the 419 AFMTS on the pretext of gassing up. Once inside, they surrounded and disarmed the soldiers there, saying they had been sent by Pasion. At about the same time, Col Alfredo Reyes, went to Gate 1 of VAB which was already rebel-controlled. He tried to convince the men to obey him, claiming he was the newly designated acting wing commander (WC) of the 520 ABW. Just then, Legaspi and Bernarte arrived and asked Reyes to stay “neutral” because by 12:00 noon, they claimed, everything would be over and there would be a new government. Bernarte further added, “*Sa amin ka na, sir. Ginagamit ka lang nila.*” Failing to convince the rebels, Reyes left.

At the 205 HW Wing Operations Center (WOC), the first indication that things were not normal was when they received a call at 4:10 a.m. from A2 asking for additional troops to secure the CG PAF. Thus, a force led by Capt Lauro Catalino de la Cruz (PMA ’80) was sent to HPAF.

At around 5:00 a.m., Sotelo, despite being hostaged in his office, ordered the manning of all helicopters in the line. However, this was not possible because the whole parking area was by then controlled by the rebel 521st Air Police Squadron personnel. They had a jeep mounted with a .50 cal machine gun and a recoilless rifle trained on the choppers. It was later agreed between the rebel officers there (Bernarte, Maj Lorenzo Luistro (PMA ’74) and Capt

Pablo Honrade) and a pro-government officer sent to negotiate, that the 205 HW pilots would not fly the helicopters on condition that neither would the rebels. Thus, a temporary stand-off was reached.

At 6:00 a.m., an Air Force Rescue Development Center was hurriedly organized, consisting of one officer and 19 enlisted men. It was composed of three striking forces, one of which was led by Maj Dexter Huerto. Huerto's team was tasked to observe the activities of the rebels at Gate 1, VAB, particularly of Bernarte, and if possible, to isolate him from the group. The team observed about 20 rebels manning Gate 1, among them Bernarte, Capt Roberto de la Pena, and MSgt Elmo Glorioso. They also saw two mini-cruisers, one with a mounted machine gun, a buggy, a passenger jeep, and a maroon car parked near the gate. All of this information was reported back to the PAF leadership.

In the meantime, BGen Loven Abadia, 205 HW WC, was able to make it back to the base at about 8:00 a.m. from Mactan, where he had been on official business when the coup broke out. Abadia immediately called for a conference of his officers. At around 9:30 a.m., a firefight erupted at the HPAF building between the rebels and troops loyal to the government. This went on for about an hour. At 1:00 p.m., rebel Maj Allen Querubin (PMA '74) LABde operations officer, took out without authorization a V-150 combat vehicle from Fort Bonifacio into VAB. He ordered the driver of the tank to go to the Air Police HQ, apparently based on previous agreement with VAB rebels. At that very moment, with their actions covered by government forces on the ground, Abadia led a group of pilots to take off in the helicopters guarded by the rebels. Continuous firing went on until the five helicopters were able to take off. They landed in Fort Bonifacio some 15 minutes later.

The getaway of the helicopters accomplished two purposes: the escape from rebel stranglehold of the helicopters and pilots, and as a ruse to allow Gen Sotelo to make a run for it from the HPAF building controlled by the rebels. Shortly after the helicopters landed at Fort Bonifacio, Col Ruben Ciron (PMA '68) accompanied by another person reportedly approached Capt Jorge de Jesus (PMA '79) to try to convince the latter not to send out helicopters against the rebels, seeming to imply that he was on the rebels' side. When de Jesus suggested that he talk with Abadia, Ciron left without a word.¹⁴⁶

With the AOC serving as the temporary command post of Gen Sotelo, PAF air operations in support of government troops in the coup resumed. For example, a helicopter was able to check the reported advance of a convoy of rebel reinforcement troops at the Calamba entrance to the South Expressway.

Back at VAB, rebel forces began withdrawing from Gates 1, 2, and 3 of the base at 5:00 p.m. By 6:30 p.m., the siege had ended and the rebels had left. Residents of VAB reported that they saw rebels board three 10-wheeler Army trucks and head for the South Expressway at around 7:45 p.m. On 29 August, combined forces of the 205 HW and 420 SW pressured the rest of the PAF rebels, mostly from the 520 ABW, into surrendering.

It was subsequently reported that elements of the 49 IB led by Aromin had left their station in Guinyangan, Quezon on 28 August in answer to the call for rebel reinforcements from Legaspi at VAB, and in clear defiance of an earlier order from their superior officer. However, when the troops arrived at VAB at 7:30 p.m., 28 August, the siege had ended and the rebels had withdrawn. Aromin thus ordered his troops back to their station and then went on AWOL himself the next day.

G.5. RECOM 3 – Camp Olivas, Pampanga

The rebel occupation of Camp Olivas was effected by parallel actions on two fronts: an “internal group” that simply declared they were taking over, and an “external group” that invaded the camp.

From as early as 27 August, in the evening, BGen Eduardo Taduran (PMA '58), RECOM 3 Commander, had been receiving continuous reports of unauthorized troop movements in Nueva Ecija (probably Honasan's group). At 10:00 p.m., he called his battle staff to a conference and ordered the implementation of “Oplan Dimatarusan,” which called for the setting up of check points and blocking forces, among other things.

Meanwhile, the “external rebel group” was getting ready and their staging point was at Valle Verde Lodge in San Fernando, Pampanga. The rebel officers who assembled at the lodge on the evening of 27 August reportedly included Berroya; Majs Cabauatan, Divina, Nestor Sanares (PMA ’73), and Alejandro Lapanid (PMA ’73); Cpts Teofilo Melliza (PMA ’77), Roque Maranon (PMA ’77), Pacifico Avenido, Jr (PMA ’78), Loreto de la Cruz, Montano Nazario, and Christopher Mesias; Lt Abner Dimabuyo (PMA ’82); 2Lt Agripino Javier (PMA ’85); and others. While there, the officers and the soldiers they brought along with them were given or asked to invert their flag patches, red side on top over their left breast pocket, as a countersign. Firearms and ammunition were also distributed. The rebels then left for Camp Olivas in separate convoys and apparently at different times.

The PC checkpoint set up along the Gapan-Olongapo road allegedly tried to hold off the convoy of 2Lt Javier’s group heading towards Camp Olivas, but later allowed them to pass through when the rebels pointed their guns at them. The convoy consisted of one PC mini-cruiser, one 10-wheeler, six cars, and one V-150 as back-up. When the convoy arrived at the camp, they passed through the gate without resistance. It was even reported that by that time, many military men within the camp were already sporting inverted flag patches, and the flag in front of the administration building had also been inverted.

Even as the battle staff was meeting at Taduran’s office at midnight, elements of the RSAF 3 led by Maj Clifordo Noveras (PMA ’73) had began to occupy the administration building, specifically surrounding the Regional Commander’s office. At 2:00 a.m., Taduran was informed that Camp Olivas was under the control of the rebels led by Berroya, and that at that very moment the rebels were already occupying the offices below. Taduran sent two of his officers to find out what the rebels’ intentions were. Later, RECOM officers locked themselves inside Taduran’s office. The rebel RSAF 3 elements then fired flares to signal Berroya’s group to enter the camp.

As a matter of fact, Javier’s group left the Valle Verde Lodge at 2:00 a.m. and arrived at the camp at 4:30 a.m. Upon arrival, Javier ordered his troops to occupy the second floor and rooftop of the administration building. The rebels then forced the signal officer to shut off the communication lines inside the camp. The principal purpose of the rebel takeover of Camp Olivas was supposedly to prevent reinforcement of government troops in Manila emanating from the camp and to declare the regional command in rebel hands, for propaganda purposes.

By around 9:00 a.m., reports from Camp Olivas to Camp Crame said that Berroya had taken over as RECOM 3 Commander, with Maj Divina as his deputy, and Noveras as the camp commander. It was also reported that a helicopter had taken off for an air reconnaissance flight. When it came back, Sanares, Nazario, and its pilot, Mesias, went to report to Berroya.

At 6:00 p.m., another helicopter arrived at the camp. A meeting among the rebels was reportedly held on the ground floor of the administration building. At 9:00 p.m., Taduran was informed that the rebels were going to change their command post to Basa Air Base and would bring him and his key officers with them. Taduran refused to go with them, instead he and his officers decided they would stay put at all costs.

Perhaps due to the failure of the mutiny in Manila, Berroya went to see Taduran at 11:00 p.m. to inform him that they would be clearing out before midnight. Also, perhaps sensing that government troops were closing in on the camp, Berroya and his men quickly slipped out of Camp Olivas so that when the liberating forces arrived at 11:30 p.m., the mutineers were no longer around. By 6:00 a.m., 29 August, it was reported that the situation in RECOM 3 was back to normal. However, subsequent investigations found Taduran and his staff to have failed “to do their utmost” to defend Camp Olivas because at the time they had given up without resistance to the RSAF forces of Noveras, they still outnumbered the rebels who were only 75 at the time. It was only at 4:30 a.m. that the convoy of rebel troops from Valle Verde Lodge arrived. Moreover, it was felt that if the RECOM officers had thought their forces were not enough to resist the rebels, they could have asked for reinforcements from the Zambales or Bataan Constabulary Commands, whose commander had offered his troops earlier.

G.6. RECOM7-Cebu

The rebel actions in Cebu were, unlike in any of the other locations, dictated from the top. The Regional Commander himself had openly and directly supported the rebels, thus the widespread effect of his authority became

a boon to the rebel cause, especially in terms of propaganda. However, in order not to pre-empt the events in Manila, RECOM 7 Commander BGen Edgardo Abenina (PMA '58) did not immediately announce his defection.

At 3:00 a.m., 28 August, Abenina called up all the major service unit commanders in his area and informed them of the occurrence of a coup in Manila. At 4:30 a.m., he sent a radiogram to all provincial commanders and the Cebu Metropolitan District Command (Metrodiscom) CO, with this apparently deceiving text: "In view of recent developments in Metro Manila, fortify your stations and strengthen your camp defenses. Do not allow any movement of troops and take slant. Obey orders only coming from me, repeat only orders coming from me."

By 8:40 a.m., there were reports about the stand of the RECOM 7 Commander to support the rebels. An hour later, Abenina called up BGen Dominico Casas (PMA '59), WC, 220th Airlift Wing (220 AW) based in Mactan to ask him to join RECOM 7 in support of the rebels, but was turned down by Casas. The latter also denied requests from Abenina to release a C-130 transport plane to pick up rebel troops from Legaspi City and ferry them to VAB, as well as the appeal to close down Mactan Airport. At about the same time, Abenina and all his officers met with the RECOM 7 soldiers at the HQ parking lot to explain the rebel movement which was allegedly done in the interest of soldiers and policemen, and to ask for their support.

At 10:00 a.m., Abenina came out publicly in support of the rebels. He went on the air over DYLA radio and announced that the entire PC/INP RECOM 7 was backing the rebels. Abenina said, "We have decided to take this stand because we feel that our rights as citizens and policemen have been abridged and trampled by the policies of the present government." He further added, "We shall be in this status until the cause we have been fighting for shall be properly attended to."¹⁴⁷ He ordered the takeover of three government buildings and two residences, the hoisting of the Philippine flag with its red field on top, and the closure of TV and radio stations, except for DYLA which they used for rebel propaganda. Abenina also asked Col Anselmo Avenido, Jr (PMA '67) CO Cebu Metrodiscom, to secure the city and municipal halls in his area, secure the mayors, and request the media stations to stop broadcasting temporarily until further notice. Moreover, he asked Maj Digman Cenon, Assistant Provincial Commander of Cebu, to secure the provincial capitol.

Later, RECOM 7 officers carried out their commander's orders by taking over the PNB offices in Cebu, the Land Bank and its premises, the Central Bank regional office, and the DBP-Cebu branch. Similar defections and takeovers, but in a minor degree, occurred in Toledo City, Siquijor, Cordova, and Naga on the island of Cebu, as well as in Dumaguete under Col Samuel Tomas (PMA '67), and Tagbilaran under Maj Irving Malunda and P/Capt Benjamin Absalon. Closely assisting Abenina in generating support for the rebel cause were, among others, Lt Col Hiram Benatiro, RECOM 7 operations officer; Lt Col Rodolfo Tor (PMA '72), RECOM 7 intelligence officer; Lt Col Neon Ebuena (PMA '71), Region 7 AFPSLAI Manager; Lt Col Tiburcio Fusilero (PMA '71); and Lt Cecil Sandalo (PMA '80), RECOM 7 administrative officer.

Despite the constant requests made by Abenina to Casas to join the rebel cause, close down Mactan Airport, and send a C-130 aircraft to fly rebel reinforcements to Manila, the latter allegedly refused each time, but apparently did not actively attempt to engage Abenina's troops. Records show that on several occasions a week before the coup, Abenina had made similar appeals for planes to ferry him and his men to Manila, but had been refused.¹⁴⁸ BGen Romulo Querubin, then RUC 7 Commander, also apparently did not actively check Abenina's unlawful activities nor arrested him, allegedly because the "flow of information was delayed" and the latter "had not taken any hostile action against the military."¹⁴⁹ Querubin, along with his officers, Cols Apolinario Castano (PMA '58) and Miguel Abaya (PMA '59), were subsequently found to have been indecisive in their actions towards Abenina and the mutiny, and thus reprimanded under Articles of War 105. On 29 August, Abenina was relieved as RECOM 7 Commander and placed under technical arrest. Col Mariano Baccay, Jr (PMA '59), his deputy, took over as acting Regional Commander. Casas was likewise relieved from his post.

G.7. Legaspi City Airport

On 28 August, at 4:00 a.m., elements of the Albay PC/INP Command consisting of six PC officers, one INP officer and some 135 military personnel took control of the Legaspi City Airport for about 27 hours. The officers involved were Capt Leovic Dioneda (PMA '78) CO 255 PC Coy stationed in Tiwi; Capt Reynaldo Rafal (PMA '79) CO 254

PC Coy based in Ligao; Lt Renato Hernandez, OIC 251 PC Coy based in Camp Bagong Ibalon; Lt Diosdado Valeroso, Intelligence and Operations; 2Lt Eliseo Rasco (PMA '86) Junior Officer Coy RSAF Bn; 2Lt Allan Cuevillas (PMA '87) Squad leader of V-150; and P/Lt Lito Pitallano, Malilipot INP Station Commander. The group, using the rebel countersign of inverted flag patches, arrived in two 6×6 trucks, two mini-cruisers, a Toyota staff car, and a V-150 commando vehicle. They hoisted three Philippine flags, with the red on top, at the airport and posted men at the arrival and departure areas, runway and control tower. They claimed that on orders of Batac, Albay Provincial Commander, they would be picked up by a C-130 aircraft to ferry them to Manila. We now know that the plane never arrived, because it was never released in Cebu.

Before he left for Manila on 26 August, Batac had requested in writing the RECOM 5 Commander for two 6 x 6 trucks and a V-150 commando vehicle to be available at 10:00 p.m., 27 August, supposedly for the use of Albay PC/INP command operations. The request was granted with SSgt Rodelito Katigbak, SSgt Alberto Ribay, and 2Lt Cuevillas as drivers for the two trucks, and squad leader of the V-150, respectively. Cuevillas later voluntarily joined the rebel forces when they took over Legaspi Airport.

At about 6:30 a.m., Lt Col Melecio Asis, Jr and Capt Jose Arne de los Santos (PMA '79) went to the airport to verify the report they had received about armed men roaming around the airport premises. While there, they spoke with Dioneda, Rafal, and Valeroso who claimed their only purpose in positioning themselves there was to “insure airport security” while they waited for the plane to transport them to Manila. They added that they would only take orders from their provincial commander, Batac, who had left for Manila on 26 August supposedly on orders of the Secretary of National Defense (SND). The rebels were insistent that they would remain there until their aircraft came but that they would not commit any violent acts against other military units of the RECOM or against any civilians.

Earlier, Valeroso, acting as spokesman of the group, contacted local radio stations by phone and announced that they were supporting the so-called “idealist” soldiers who had launched in Metro Manila and other parts of the country what he termed as “the continuation of the EDSA Revolution”.

Meanwhile, BGen Luis San Andres (PMA '57) RECOM 5 Commander, assembled his staff to analyze the situation and take appropriate actions. The provincial commanders of Camarines Norte and Sur were contacted to set up checkpoints and roadblocks to prevent any rebel reinforcements passing through their areas. Then several people were called to try and convince the rebel group at the airport to give up their plan, among them, Bishop Concordio Sarte of Legaspi City, Col Diony Ventura (PMA '67), Lt Col Orbase, and P/Lt Fuentes. Relatives and families of the rebel soldiers were also contacted to convince their relatives-soldiers to forego their plans. Philippine Airlines (PAL) in Legaspi was advised to cancel all afternoon flights in order to deny the rebels any access to the planes. Moreover, the Albay Electrical Cooperative was told to cut off power at the airport to prevent any landings at night time.

For their part, the rebels held a press conference at the airport cargo check-in area at 5:30 p.m., presided by Dioneda, Rafal, and Valeroso. They had spent the whole day in giving interviews, and press releases and undertaking other propaganda efforts. The rebel leaders aired their alleged grievances, including their perception of government mishandling of the insurgency problem and the deplorable economic conditions of the rebels. After the press conference, RECOM 5 emissaries relayed to the rebels the assurance of San Andres that no offensive actions would be taken against them during the night. Furthermore, according to de Villa who had called San Andres earlier, the rebels would not be subjected to investigations in connection with the coup, if they returned peacefully to their stations. At 8:00 p.m., Dioneda sent word to San Andres that he and his men would pull out from the airport at 7:00 a.m. the next day.

On 29 August, at 7:00 in the morning, Dioneda and his men cleared out of the Legaspi City airport as promised, with no violent incident happening. Regular flights continued after the rebels vacated the area.

G.8. Minor Incidents

Three minor incidents merit inclusion here as they reveal what could be classified as rebel strongholds in the military: 16 IB, Fort Magsaysay, and PMA in Baguio.

G.8.a. 16th Infantry Battalion

In the early morning of 28 August, even before news of the rebel attack on Malacañang spread, Maj Eufemio Santos and Lt Caraig, Jr instructed their men in the 16 IB based in Tigaon, Camarines Sur to prepare for a military operation. The men were issued firearms and ammunition. At 8:00 a.m., Santos and some 150 battalion soldiers boarded three 6 x 6 trucks, two mini-cruisers and one Philtranco bus, and headed for Manila, escorted by a V-150 armored vehicle and three crewmen of the 4 PALAB. Maj Morris Perez CO 16 IB, who had that morning arrived at Legaspi City from Manila, caught up with the convoy in Labo, Camarines Norte, and from there, took charge of the troops.

Their mission appeared to be to join the rebel forces in Manila. However, when they reached Lopez, Quezon province at noon, they were blocked by Col Conrado Infortuno (PMA '58), a battalion commander from the 202 Bde. They were then instructed by BGen Alejandro Galido (PMA '58), CG 2 ID, via radio to proceed to Camp Capinpin, Tanay, Rizal, in an attempt to neutralize them. When the battalion reached Atimonan, Quezon at 8:00 p.m., Perez decided to bring the men back to their headquarters in order to avoid a possible violent confrontation with SOLCOM elements manning checkpoints along their route. Upon their arrival at Tigaon on 29 August, 7:30 a.m., Perez, Santos, and Caraig Proceeded to the 102 Bde HQ in Pili, Camarines Sur and reported to BGen Abraham Manuel (PMA '57), Brigade Commander. The next day, they went to Camp Capinpin and reported to Galido, who placed them under technical arrest. The 16 IB enlisted personnel were later redistributed to different line units by the SOLCOM in its counter-insurgency operations. Only 15 from the battalion were subjected to an investigation in connection with the 28 August 1987 coup attempt. It must be remembered that the 16 IB was also the unit supposedly implicated in the original RAM plot to overthrow Marcos in February 1986. It was then commanded by Malajacan.

G.8.b. Fort Magsaysay

Maj Horacio Lactao (PMA '74), CO 3 LAB, had already been suspected as sympathizing, if not supporting the group of Honasan. On 27 August, at 10:30 p.m., Army headquarters called Col Antonio Yamzon CO PA TRACOM in Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija, and told him to keep an eye on Lactao as he was apparently "being pressured" to join the coup plotters.¹⁵⁰ After the call, Yamzon went to Lactao's office and "invited" the latter to stay with him at his (Yamzon's) office, with the intention of preventing him from going to Manila to join the rebels. Lactao went with Yamzon. After breakfast on 28 August, however, Lactao asked permission to return to his HQ and by 5:00 p.m., the troops of Lactao were ready to leave. Consisting of two Scorpion tanks, two armored infantry fighting vehicles, two V-150s, and some APCs, the force of Lactao supposedly overpowered that of the PA TRACOM, thus, Yamzon claimed he had no choice but to let them go. Aside from the combat vehicles, Lactao's men also availed of one 6x6 truck, two Pepsi-Cola delivery trucks, and a number of military and civilian vehicles.

On their way to Manila, perhaps discovering that the rebels had already lost in the capital and that there would be no troops to reinforce, the 3 LAB under Lactao decided to return to Fort Magsaysay at 9:00 p.m. They arrived there at 11:30 a.m., 29 August, after which Lactao reported to Yamzon.

G.8.c. PMA-Baguió

The move by PMA cadets to support the coup effort in Manila came too late. However, it would be difficult to deny the propaganda leverage the rebels gained from the public declaration of support by the whole cadet corps. On 28 August, at noon, two broadcasters from Radio Bombo in Baguio attended a gathering of some 30 officers at PMA. They interviewed Lt Fernando Baltazar (PMA '81), who claimed to be the spokesman of the group, and Capt Gregorio Catapang. When asked about the events in Manila, Baltazar replied that speaking for the junior officers at PMA, they were supporting the cause of Honasan's group, and renouncing allegiance to the government of President Aquino. Furthermore, if asked, he added, he would personally go down to Manila to support Honasan. At the mess hall, then Cdt (IC) Allen Paredes (PMA '88) read a prepared statement saying, "In behalf of the Cadet Corps Armed Forces of the Philippines, we hereby affirm our stand by the principle of anti-communism which the forces of Col Honasan are fighting for."¹⁵¹ By 1:00 p.m., the interviews and statements of the cadets had been aired on Radio Bombo of Baguio, creating quite a stir among the public.

At 4:00 p.m., a group of four cadets went to the radio station DZWT of St Louis University in downtown Baguio and submitted a longer statement supposedly expressing the sentiments of the cadet corps. They said in consideration of the events of the past 24 hours, PMA Classes of 1988 to 1991 were reaffirming their support for the rebel cause. Moreover, they believed that politicians should observe a “hands-off policy in purely military affairs; that persons in authority must exercise justice and good sense in dealing with the rebel soldiers, avoiding drastic solutions; and that there should be a dialogue between the government and rebel representatives with full media coverage.

An hour later, three other cadets accompanied by Maj Wilhelm Doromal, a PMA tactical officer, went to Radio Bombo in Baguio to submit still another manifesto of support. It said that to protect the inherent right of the people as mandated by the Constitution, they supported the movement seeking the establishment of a better government, and that in order to move the country from imminent collapse, the cadet corps was pledging its support to the reformist cause. The manifesto was taped and aired over the radio.¹⁵²

By midnight, the cadets were getting ready for unauthorized deployment. They received a briefing from Capt Alfredo Bambico, Jr (PMA '78), PMA Tactics Group, on the camp defense plan and the moving out of cadets from Fort del Pilar to the different roads of entry to Baguio City, particularly Kennon Road, Naguillan Road, and Marcos Highway. Evidently, the intention was to serve as blocking forces against “unfriendly” forces that would enter Baguio, although it was not clear why they wanted to isolate Baguio, unless the rebels were thinking of making a last stand there. Among the other officers present at the briefing were Kapunan, then a PMA instructor, and Nelson Eslao, both former PMA classmates of Honasan. It will be recalled that Eslao was we RAM contact for the *Kamalayanelection* campaign drive at PMA in February 1986, when he served as Assistant Commandant of Cadets.¹⁵³

On 29 August, at 2:00 a.m., the PMA cadets boarded two 6 x 6 trucks and one bus procured by Kapunan. They began moving out with Catapang in a jeep that was to lead the convoy. However, they were stopped at the PMA checkpoint. Catapang got down to talk to someone at the gate, then came back shortly after to say the whole thing was off. The coup they were supporting in Manila had failed.

The following day, two cadets delivered a copy of their letter of support for the rebels to the Baguio Midland Courier, which published it. Still restive, some cadets were reported to be arming themselves and planning to go around Baguio. This was thwarted when Col Lisandro Abadia (PMA '62) Commandant of Cadets, confronted them in their barracks. Their planned strike in support of the rebels was aborted when PMA officials initiated a series of dialogues to thresh out the cadets' grievances.

G.9. The Aftermath

The 28 August coup attempt lasted for about a day and a half. In the end, there were some 53 people dead and more than 200 wounded, many of them civilian bystanders who were sprayed with bullets as they chided the rebels and cheered for the government troops in the area of Malacañang.¹⁵⁴ This was the first time coup participants had ever fired directly at unarmed civilians, an act that has done irreparable damage to the rebels' reputation and credibility. The failed coup was participated in by around 2,160 military personnel, with damage to properties surpassing millions of pesos. The Camelot Hotel alone suffered over P1 million in property losses, while the burned GHQ building was estimated to be worth over P41 million.¹⁵⁵ Then, there were the television stations whose sophisticated equipment, costing millions of pesos, were destroyed in varying degrees.

As an immediate reaction to the coup, the militant Coalition Against Oil Price Increase (COAPI) cancelled their protest against increased gasoline rates and the crack-down on participants of the *Welgang Bayan*. The demonstration had been scheduled for 31 August. Other reactions to the coup included panic-buying and hoarding of food supplies, withdrawals of money from the banks, power outages in some areas near Camp Aguinaldo because MERALCO facilities had been damaged by heavy fighting, people flocking to buy gasoline, among others. In general, it was bad for business because of the uncertainty it created, and also bad for the tourist industry, where again hotels suffered huge losses in cancellations of bookings not only for individuals but for conferences and conventions that were going to be held in the country.

In Congress, bills were rushed to grant pay increases to soldiers. Across-the-board salary increases for the whole AFP were unprecedentedly granted (106 percent for a Master Sergeant, to 36 percent for a General). Furthermore, there was a joint Senate and House investigation on the coup attempt supposedly to determine whether anti-government politicians, including deposed President Marcos and rightist elements in the US government, were behind the mutiny. Opposition Senator Enrile strongly denied any involvement in the coup. He said he deliberately made himself unavailable to the press because he had no knowledge of it and could not answer any questions about it. In an interview over DZRH, Senator Enrile was ambivalent at one point, refusing to make any statement of “condemnation or absolution”. Then, he said he did not make any statements because “he did not want to get involved,” and that because those men once served under him (referring to Honasan, et al), the least he could do was to keep quiet. Later in the interview, however, he capitulated by saying the mutineers should “rethink their positions.”¹⁵⁶

Many political watchers believe that the 28 August coup attempt pulled the Aquino administration towards the right in the ideological spectrum. They cite, as an example, her having sacked Joker Arroyo as Executive Secretary in reaction to the rebels’ demand to rid the Cabinet of supposedly left-leaning members. Another example was President Aquino’s tacit approval of armed quasi-military groups by renaming the Civilian Home Defense Forces (CHDF) as Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Units (CAFGU). Others believe Gen Ramos emerged as the second most powerful person in government as a result of the attempt. There are some, however, who think the coup revealed some discontent within the Armed Forces against the leadership of the Chief of Staff (e.g., one of Honasan’s demands was the resignation of Ramos).¹⁵⁷

It was said that the police emerged with a new role after 28 August. They were given the task of retaking the media stations and they succeeded. Some observed that the reason for their effectiveness was that they were not bound by the fraternal ties that allegedly inhibit soldiers from fighting soldiers, and therefore, they had less hesitation to shoot at the rebels.¹⁵⁸

The simultaneous lightning attacks by rebels on key target areas during the 28 August coup constituted a marked improvement in strategy compared to the earlier coup attempts. However, these were not supported by sufficient forces to execute a successful seizure (as what happened in Malacañang), or to sustain control over the occupied area. Time was an important factor for both sides. If the rebels had held on to those installations long enough to produce a stalemate, then it could Perhaps have induced the shift of allegiance by some regional and Provincial commands who may have been wavering to their side. On the government’s side, it had to act quickly and attack early (as it did in Camp Aguinaldo and the television stations), before any of the rebel reinforcements arrived. As in all the past attempts, however, the rebels did not receive any widespread popular backing despite their having chosen the timing of the coup to coincide with massive discontentment against the government. Surely, the best gauge for the success or failure of a coup is whether the people would support the alternative that the coup plotters offer.

H. Concluding Observations on Military Interventions, 1986 – 1987

The political events in the last four years have shown that the Philippines has firmly been introduced to the phenomenon of military intervention in politics. When analyzed collectively, the series of coup attempts, starting from the February 1986 plot to the August 1987 one, present a pattern of interwoven factors that put forward the idea of a continuing effort by a group of determined military officers, backed by their civilian supporters, to overthrow the administration of President Aquino and install a military junta. Although there are some variations to this pattern, the underlying image remains the same, that is, there were two main groups of people behind all the destabilizing activities which culminated in the seven coup attempts discussed in this chapter. The groups are the RAM, or more accurately after February 1986, a faction of the RAM under Honasan, and the so-called Marcos loyalists led by Zumel. Ironically, they were the opposing protagonists in the February 1986 coup attempt who were both left out after EDSA

Following this line of argument, the coup attempts may thus be classified into those led by the RAM-HF, those by loyalists, and those that reveal a possible connection between the two. This is despite the fact that Honasan had scoffed at the idea of an alliance with the Marcos followers, saying that the younger officers of the RAM who were uncompromising idealists would never tolerate working with soldiers and civilians tainted by association with the dictator’s excesses.¹⁵⁹ The February 1986 plot was definitely a brainchild and product of the RAM. The July 1986

Manila Hotel Incident, on the other hand, was a loyalist attempt, but may have been known to some RAM officers. The latter may have bailed out a few of the loyalist plotters, possibly to earn their goodwill for some future collaboration. The November 1986 “God Save The Queen” plan was principally a RAM-HF plot but could have been another attempt at some sort of collaboration between the two groups. But because the coup was never launched, the extent of collusion is not clear. The January 1987 plot reveals another loyalist effort, even if again Honasan seemed to have stepped in to intervene during the negotiations for the surrender of the rebels at GMA-7. The April 1987 destabilizing activity should not really be considered a coup, but rather a loyalist-instigated jailbreak and short-lived blitz possibly intended for propaganda purposes. On the other hand, the July 1987 attempt appears to have consisted of separate plots by the two groups, though due to the lack of official information available on the events, it is difficult to pinpoint responsibility. The July effort may have been the premature version of the August plot, which was principally led and executed by RAM-HF, but with the apparent support of some loyalists. The Commission has received testimony that in the Manila Hotel and GMA-7 incidents, the RAM-HF planned to step in if the Marcos loyalists were able to produce a critical mass of at least 500,000 people.¹⁶⁰ Whether there was an explicit “understanding” between the two groups is not established. It is clear, however, that the so-called tactical alliance between the Zumel and Honasan groups in December 1989 had its antecedents and should not have been a surprise to anyone who had done an analysis of the linkages between them in previous coups.

Seen as a whole, the seven cases that were discussed here reveal certain common features, as well as some innovations unique to particular attempts at political intervention by a section of the Armed Forces. Among the common characteristics, we find that each attempt was launched during a period of crisis, when the government was perceived to be at its weakest and when people were generally at their most vulnerable. Observing the political and economic conditions during each coup attempt, thus, gives an idea of the different settings that were deemed by the plotters as propitious for military intervention. These triggering events may be classified into two types: (a) genuine events that were brought about by socio-political and historical developments, such as labor and peasant unrest, widespread poverty and economic hardships, massive discontent resulting from years of authoritarian rule; and (b) simulated events that could be created or provoked in order to effect the tense and unstable atmosphere necessary for a coup. A good example of the second type is political assassination, which the brutal Wiling of Rolando Olalia could have been.

It is possible that if a crisis does not exist, coup plotters could find a way to bring it about. With the effective use of media, they can exploit civilian and military complaints against the government to build a favorable political climate for a coup d’etat. There are always popular issues against the administration that can be cultivated. Moreover, they can and have taken advantage of the President’s physical absence from the capital. It is after all in critical periods that the government’s ability to respond quickly and decisively is put to the test. On this depends its Political survival.

Looking at the pre-coup environments of the seven cases, we find similar circumstances that support the idea of coup attempts being launched under a particular political climate. The triggering events of the past coups have included periods of division among the people, such as during elections and plebiscites; nationwide protests like the *Welgang Bayan*; massive student demonstrations; constant labor strikes; extensive consumer disaffection with rising prices of commodities; strong public reactions against increases in oil prices or transportation fares; regular bombings and other terroristic activities; highly publicized cases of graft and corruption in government; widespread criminal lawlessness; and others. It is under such a climate that the government’s attention is necessarily divided, while the public is generally unorganized and confused. There is another reason for creating an environment where the citizens are afraid, insecure or disgusted with the authorities, and that is, people would then tend to be more susceptible to the idea of drastic military action, such as the imposition of martial law or the establishment of a military junta.

Another common denominator among the seven cases was the target areas attacked by the coup plotters. In all the coup attempts, the focus of hostilities and confrontation was Metro Manila because it is the seat of the national government which the rebels are trying to overthrow. The inclusion as targets of the regions around the capital, such as Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, and Bicol, seemed to have the dual purpose of providing easy access for rebel reinforcements to Manila from key units where the RAM-HF had built support, or allowing the rebels to intercept military reinforcements thereby crippling the government’s capacity to respond to the emergency in Manila. During the August 1987 attempt, the rebels also attacked and/or occupied civilian and military targets outside of Luzon (i.e.,

Cebu, and to a lesser extent, Bohol and Negros Oriental). This could be, on one hand, simply because of rebel supporters coming from those areas or, on the other hand, it could be indicative of the coup plotters' endeavor to widen their sphere of influence and give the impression of their movement being national in scope.

The specific target areas within Metro Manila hardly varied with each coup attempt. The rebels invariably attacked or planned to seize Malacañang to capture the President; the military camps, for logistics and communications; the media stations, to gain public support; and Villamor Air Base or the airports, with the intention of controlling air power and facilitating the rapid airlift of rebel reinforcements from the provinces to Manila. The takeover of the Manila Hotel in 1986 and Camelot Hotel in 1987 could be considered as exceptions to the rule.

The grievances and demands expressed by the coup plotters were basically similar in all the attempts. There were complaints internal to the military, such as inadequate pay and benefits; insufficient logistical services and supplies to soldiers in the field; favoritism in promotions and assignments; and discriminatory treatment, in the case of Marcos loyalists. Curiously enough, many of these were the same ones raised by the RAM against Marcos in 1985. The complaints directed against the government, on the other hand, included the consistent issue of graft and corruption and the perceived "soft-approach" of the President in her counter-insurgency policy, which the rebels implied was connected with the presence of so-called "left-leaning" officials in her Cabinet and their alleged anti-military biases.

While the grievances openly declared by the rebels may be valid, and the idealistic aspirations for good government of some younger rebel officers may be genuine, it is nevertheless important to delve into the possible unstated intentions of the key coup plotters. Most of the leaders of the loyalist attempts were senior military officers who had served under the Marcos regime. In the Manila Hotel incident, they were directly supported by former officials of the past administration. While Marcos was alive, they seemed to have a binding commitment to work for his return. However, with his death, this unifying factor has been removed and the loyalist cause appears to have gradually lost vigor. The identified loyalist leaders who have gone underground have little choice but to give up, or to support other destabilizing activities in the hope of succeeding and regaining power, even if it is snared with the RAM-HF.

On the other hand, a closer look at the principal coup plotters of the other attempts would lead us to the RAM. Although the RAM was originally organized to work for reforms within the military, its existence was related to the political survival and physical safety of then Defense Minister Enrile, by his own account.¹⁶¹ Thus, it becomes unavoidable for his name to be linked with any activities that former RAM officers, led by Honasan, undertake. Though some new personalities have surfaced as coup participants in the investigations of succeeding coups, the same names associated with the February 1986 events keep reappearing. Then, as in the succeeding RAM-HF attempts, their ultimate goal seemed to be the overthrow of the government and the creation of a military junta, presumably composed of people of their choice. This appears evident in the February and November 1986 attempts, as well as in the August 1987 coup plot. In all the seven cases taken up here, no clear post-coup political and economic program has ever been presented to the public; instead, it appears that this would depend on who sat in the junta.

According to Secretary Ramos, the first direct involvement of the troops of the Scout Rangers was during the 28 August 1987 attempt. However, according to retired BGen Almonte, a key RAM officer in the early years of the organization, Honasan had recruited battalion commanders from the FSRR, mostly majors then, for the February 1986 coup plot.¹⁶² This is not surprising as Scout Rangers, like the Marines, are considered among the best trained and disciplined members of the AFP. They are mobile units of the Armed Forces, continuously operating as a team and assigned from one place to another to influence any given military situation. Moreover, and more importantly perhaps, the Scout Rangers are given such rigorous, specialized training that they later develop strong camaraderie and loyalty towards each other—valuable traits in a coup attempt. The FSRR no longer exists today. Its members were absorbed by other units of the AFP after their extensive participation in the December 1989 coup.

Another source of recruitment in the past coup attempts was from the Guardians organization, a military fraternity composed mostly of enlisted personnel said to extend to about 70 percent of the AFP.¹⁶³ There are actually two related groups existing: the Guardians Brotherhood, Inc (GBI), which has its roots in the Diablo Squad, allegedly formed in the early 1980s; and the Guardians Centre Foundation, Inc (GCFI), founded in 1986 with Honasan as the lead signatory in its Articles of Incorporation. There was said to be considerable Guardians participation in all the

past coup attempts, particularly in the February and July 1986 coups, as well as in the January and April 1987 ones. It was reported that the GBI officially disowned any connection with Honasan after the August 1987 attempt.¹⁶⁴

The bond that unites the coup participants thus appears to be primarily based on personal loyalties, friendships, and other personal ties, rather than on shared political beliefs, principles, and a vision of the future. It is true that for many coup participants, the rallying call seemed to be anti-communism but the network of RAM-HF recruitment still frequently relied on personal relations.

The general reactions of the government to the past coup attempts have included a revamp of the Cabinet, including the ouster of some of its liberal members due to the rebels' demands; the announcement of reform measures; and the conduct of an investigation on the coup attempt (e.g., Bengzon Committee, Cabinet Crisis Committee, Vice President Laurel's informal survey of military camps). An immediate response has been the increase in budget for the military (e.g., after the 1987 coup attempts, the Senate restored P373 million out of the P500 million proposed cut in the DND's P23 billion budget). There were also measures taken to promote the soldiers' welfare by expediting action aimed at increasing their material benefits.

The military, for its part, has also conducted investigations on the coups but there appears to be uneven inquiry and reporting into the seven cases. Official military reports were only available on the January, April, and August 1987 attempts. The executive department also seemed to have been left out in the military's pre-coup reporting, as evidenced by Malacañang's lack of information and preparation in several of the past attempts. The public, on the other hand, has reacted to the coups by giving unprecedented attention and interest in military affairs. Academic studies and public fora dealing with the topic have also increased. Even religious groups have now focused on the Armed Forces as subject of prayer rallies and pastoral letters. Moreover, there has been heightened media coverage on the military since the advent of the *kudeta*. The importance of mass media, especially radio, in informing people of what was happening during the coups cannot be overemphasized. However, it has also been in this environment that the release of misinformation and disinformation about the coups has occurred. For instance, much speculation and even inaccurate information coming from foreign media were repeated in the Philippines through the wire services during some of the past attempts.¹⁶⁵ On the other hand, plotters have admittedly also manipulated the media with half truths and false "leakages" for their own purposes.¹⁶⁶

In retrospect, the coup plotters employed certain strategies that manifest careful planning and perseverance in their implementation. In recruitment, for example, the rebels generally harnessed the active participation of strategically situated, middle-level troop commanders. For the August 1987 coup, it is said that their major effort was directed at field commanders who controlled significant units in the AFP, like battalion commanders of the Army, provincial commanders of the PC, some squadron commanders of the PAF, and maybe some unit commanders of the Navy. The officers who command infantry or tank battalions stationed in or near Manila, as well as those who have control over helicopter gunships and other aircraft within striking distance of the seat of power, are crucial for a coup's success. It was easy for the KAM-HF to recruit because most of the commanders were of their age group and from the PMA, either former classmates or contemporaries at the PMA of the Honasan group. This was in contrast to the February 1986 plot where, outside of the RAM members, recruitment went up vertically to the major unit commanders with the rank of brigadier general. In 1987, the RAM-HF worked on the "horizontal cut" at Battalion level and below, as MGen Montano pointed out.¹⁶⁷ The plotters undermined the chain of command by likewise getting the loyalty of company commanders. They talked to captains and lieutenants who actually handle the troops.

Former CSAFP and now DND Secretary Ramos disclosed that rebel recruitment for the August 1987 coup was done among junior officers, sometimes even involving key non-commissioned officers, under the guise of school reunions, training sessions, dialogues, and ordinary get-togethers.¹⁶⁸ For the August attempt, it was observed that Honasan, then head of the Special Operations School (SOS) of the Army's Training Command in Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija, trained various classes of Scout Rangers but did not graduate them. About five or six classes were accumulated at one period, and instead of being graduated normally one class after the other, they were extended at the school and later mobilized for the coup.¹⁶⁹

To begin with, the reassignments of Honasan at the SOS and Kapunan at the PMA after the November 1986 coup attempt appear to have been used to maximum advantage by the coup plotters. These are precisely the places where they could considerably influence the younger soldiers and recruit them for coup or terrorist activities. Between a

group that had a single-minded purpose of taking power, regardless of means, and the Ramos/de Villa group which was sincerely working for genuine reconciliation, the former had a clear edge in planning and conspiring. There are lessons to be learned from these past coups for purposes of handling the aftermath of the December 1989 coup. These will be discussed in Chapter VII.

ENDNOTES

(1) Retired Col Guillermo G. Cunanan, who was then assigned to the MND, places the date of RAM's founding as 1982, see "Open Letter to Gringo," Philippine Star, 7 September 1987, pp. 1 and 10. Journalist and author Cecilio T. Arillo gives a more exact date of 23 July 1982 in Breakaway: The Inside Story of the Four-Day Revolution in the Philippines, February 22-25, 1986 (Manila: CTA and Associates, May 1986), p. 166. On the other hand, retired BGen Jose Almonte, Commissioner of the Economic Intelligence and Investigation Bureau and RAM member, says the idea for RAM was crystallized in 1985, although discussions had been going on long before that [from his Sworn Testimony before the Fact-Finding Commission (FFC), 4 January 1990]. American writer and Political Science Professor Alfred W. McCoy mentions two conflicting dates of "late 1984" and "early 1985" as RAM's founding dates in two separate articles in "RAM Boys Series," Philippine Daily Inquirer, February 1990, p. 3 and p. 4.

(2) McCoy, Ibid., p. 4.

(3) Arillo, op. cit., pp. 136-137.

(4) McCoy, op. cit., p. 4.

(5) Arillo, op. cit., pp. 138 and 141.

(6) Cunanan, pp. op. cit. pp. 1 and 10.

(7) Arillo, op. cit. p. 167.

(8) Sworn Testimony of Col Hector Tarrazona before the FFC, 21 August 1990.

(9) Col Hector M. Tarrazona, After EDSA . . . (Volume I) (Manila: By the Author, February 1989), pp. 25-26.

(10) Tarrazona Testimony, op. cit.

(11) McCoy, op. cit., p. 4.

(12) Tarrazona, op. cit., pp. 10-15 and 21.

(13) Tarrazona was promoted to the rank of colonel by President Aquino. It appears, however, that by virtue of a recommendation of a panel that he be severely punished under Article 105 of the Articles of War for his alleged involvement in the 28 August 1987 coup attempt, for which in time he was reprimanded, the CSAFP recommended to the President that his name be stricken off the list of officers for promotion submitted to Congress for confirmation. This recommendation was favorably acted upon by the President. Tarrazona, nevertheless, continues to wear the insignia of a colonel because he filed a motion for reconsideration which, according to him, is still pending.

(14) Tarrazona, op. cit., p. 22.

(15) McCoy, op. cit., p. 10. However, in his book, Raymond Bonner mentioned that by October 1985, coup plans were well advanced See Raymond Bonner, Waltzing with a Dictator: The Marcoses and the Making of American Policy (New York: Times Books, 1987), p. 434.

(16) Tarrazona, op. cit., p. 26.

(17) Ibid., pp. 26-31.

(18) From an interview of Navy Capt Rex Robles aired over DZRH on the mutiny's third anniversary. See "RAM Officer Talks on February 1986 Mutiny," Daily Globe, 23 February 1989, pp. 1 and 8.

(19) Tarrazona, op. cit., p. 32.

(20) Ibid., p. 33.

(21) Ibid., pp. 37 and 38.

(22) Sylvia Mayuga in Monina Allarey Mercado, ed., People Power: The Philippine Revolution of 1986, An Eyewitness Story, (Manila: James B. Reuter, S. J., Foundation, 1986), p. 77.

(23) Letty Jimenez Magsanoc, "There's Still So Much to Know About EDSA," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 23 February 1990, pp. 1 and 8.

(24) Bonner, op. cit., p. 434. Bonner cites his interviews with American intelligence and diplomatic officers as his source for the information on the proposed junta.

(25) Sworn Testimony of BGen Jose Almonte (Ret) before the FFC, 4 January 1990.

(26) McCoy, op. cit., pp. 10 and 11. Also see Cunanan, op. cit., pp.1 and 10.

(27) Arillo, op. cit., p. 11. See also Ros Manlangit, "RAM Planned to Put Marcos Couple on Public Trial in '86," Daily Globe, 25 February 1989, p. 1, for interview with retired BGen Jose Almonte and other RAM members.

(28) Arillo, Ibid., p. 37.

(29) McCoy, op. cit. However, McCoy claims on p. 11 that the rebels counted on only 300 troops at the start of the revolt. Capt Robles, on the other hand, said the mutineers initially numbered only 185; "RAM Officer Talks on February 1986 Mutiny," op. cit., p. 8.

(30) Manlangit, op. cit., pp. 1 and 12.

(31) "RAM Officer Talks on February 1986 Mutiny," op. cit., p. 1 and 8. Also see Arillo, op. cit., p. 20.

(32) Arillo, Ibid., p. 149. After Cory Aquino took over the presidency, Gador briefly took charge of the Presidential Security Command (PSC) upon Enrile's recommendation but was replaced by Col Voltaire Gazmin, a personal choice of Aquino. The PSC changed its name to Presidential Security Group (PSG) on 1 March 1986.

(33) Manlangit, op.cit., pp. 1 and 12. See also Tarrazona, op. cit., p. 46.

(34) Nick Joaquin [Quijano de Manila], The Quartet of the Tiger Moon: Scenes from the People-Power Apocalypse (Manila: Book Stop, Inc., 1986).

- (35) Ibid.
- (36) McCoy, op. cit., p 11.
- (37) Ibid.
- (38) Ibid.
- (39) "RAM Officer Talks on February 1986 Mutiny," op. cit., pp. 1 and 12.
- (40) McCoy, op. cit., p. 11.
- (41) Arillo, op. cit., pp. 170 and 172.
- (42) Tarrazona, op. cit., PP. 49-50.
- (43) Arillo, op. cit., pp. 172-173.
- (44) Tarrazona, op. cit., pp. 55-56.
- (45) Arillo, op. cit., pp. 30-31.
- (46) Ibid. p. 51.
- (47) Sworn Testimony of BGen Jose M. Crisol (Ret) before the FFC, 24 August 1990.
- (48) "Tolentino Courts Sedition Charges," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 7 July 1986, p. 6.
- (49) Luis D. Beltran, "Alcuaz and Loyalist Radio Stations," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 8 July 1986, p. 4.
- (50) Paper presented by Professor Alfred W. McCoy before Philippine-American Community in Los Angeles, California in February 1990. Cited in Antonio C. Abaya. "Twixt the RAM and the NDF," Manila Chronicle, 23 May 1990, p. 4.
- (51) Beltran, op.cit., p. 4.
- (52) "The Philippine Experience," Final Report of the Department of National Defense Special Investigating Committee to President Aquino, 22 March 1990, p. 1.
- (53) Rey Arquiza, "Allegiance? No Way—Recto," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 11 July 1986, p. 6.
- (54) Victor Agustin, "Cabinet to Decide on Loyalist Plot," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 9 July 1986, pp. 1 and 2. See also Belinda Olivares Cunanan, "Questions on the Loyalists' Caper," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 10 July 1986, p. 5.
- (55) Belinda Olivares Gunanan, "A Quiet Sunday at the Historic Manila Hotel," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 8 July 1986, p. 5.
- (56) Victor Agustin, "3 p.m. Today or Else," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 8 July 1986, p. 11.
- (57) "The President's Statement," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 8 July 1986, p. 1.

- (58) "Tolentino: I Was Pressured," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 8 July 1986, p. 2.
- (59) Belinda Olivares Cunanan, "Now That the 'Other Party' Is Over. . .," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 9 July 1986, p. 5.
- (60) "No Charges, Retaliation — Enrile," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 9 July 1986, p. 1.
- (61) "Enrile: No Charges, If. . .," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 8 July 1986, p. 2. In a separate article, Hilarion Henares makes the connection between Honasan, who was listed as signatory in the Articles of Incorporation of the Guardians Center Foundation, Inc, and some of the troops that occupied Manila Hotel, who were reportedly Guardian members. Henares further notes that the negotiating panel sent by Minister Enrile to deal with the rebels were: Honasan himself, Kapunan, and Boy Vasquez. See Hilarion M. Henares, Jr, "Who Will Guard Us from the Guardians?" Philippine Daily Inquirer, 16 July 1986, p. 5.
- (62) "No Charges," op. cit., pp. 1 and 3.
- (63) "Special Treatment for Loyalists," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 9 July 1986, p. 4.
- (64) Cunanan, "Questions on the Loyalists' Caper," op. cit., p. 5.
- (65) See the following for reports of damages and losses resulting from the Manila Hotel Incident: "The Philippine Experience," op. cit., pp. 1-2; Tolentino: I Was Pressured," op. cit., p. 2; and various newspaper articles covering the incident.
- (66) It was reported that Gen Prospero Olivas and Col Rolando Abadilla did not attend the oath taking ceremonies. See "Loyalists Back Down," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 30 July 1986, p. 2.
- (67) The findings cited here are from the Presidential Fact-Finding Committee Reports on the Manila Hotel Incident of 6 July 1986 (First Report, 24 July 1986, and Second Report, 14 August 1986).
- (68) Sworn Testimony of Health Secretary Alfredo Bengzon before the FFC, 11 July 1990.
- (69) Rey Arquiza, "No Sanctuary for Turing' and Henchmen," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 8 July 1986, p. 2.
- (70) Victor Agustin, "Loyalists Go Free," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 10 July 1986, p. 1.
- (71) From various testimonies received by the FFC in Executive Sessions.
- (72) "The Philippine Experience," op. cit., p. 6.
- (73) Sworn Testimony of Rear Admiral Tagumpay Jardiniano (Ret) before the FFC, 27 June 1990.
- (74) Testimony given before the FFC in Executive Session.
- (75) Ibid.
- (76) Ibid.
- (77) Ibid.
- (78) Sworn Testimony of MGen Rodolfo A. Canieso (Ret) before the Fact-Finding Commission, 29 June 1990.

- (79) Testimony given before the FFC in Executive Session.
- (80) Ibid.
- (81) Ibid.
- (82) Sworn Testimony of NSC Director General Rafael Ileto before the FFC, 10 July 1990.
- (83) Canieso Testimony, op. cit.
- (84) Sworn Testimony of Former NBI Director Antonio Carpio before the FFC, 19 July 1990.
- (85) Dave Veridiano, "The Foiled Coup Try: How It Was Planned," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 24 November 1986, pp. 1 and 9.
- (86) Sworn Testimony of Former CSAFP and now Defense Secretary Fidel V. Ramos, before the FFC, 16 April 1990.
- (87) Veridiano, op.cit., p. 9.
- (88) Sworn Testimony of Lt Gen Salvador Mison (Ret) before the FFC, 27 June 1990.
- (89) Canieso Testimony, op. cit.
- (90) Testimony given before the FFC in Executive Session.
- (91) Veridiano, op. cit., p. 9.
- (92) "Coup Attempt Probed, Putschists on the Run," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 25 November 1986, pp. 1 and 3.
- (93) Mison Testimony, op. cit.
- (94) Ramos Testimony, op. cit.
- (95) Veridiano, op. cit., p. 9.
- (96) "Aquino Decision Generally Okay," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 25 November 1986, p. 8.
- (97) "U.S. Backing for Cory Reaffirmed," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 25 November 1986, p. 8.
- (98) "The Philippine Experience," op. cit., p. 7.
- (99) Ibid., p. 8.
- (100) Final Report (MND Order No. A-005) from the Office of the Inspector General (OTIG) Board of Officers to the SND, dated 15 June 1987, Exh. "RRRRR-3"- Commission.
- (101) Chronology of Events of January 1987 Attempted Coup Submitted by BGen Loven C. Abadia, Vice Commander, PAF and Wing Commander, 205 HW, dated 3 August 1990.

(102) PTI Report on Sangley Point Incident from PTI Panel to CSAFP, dated 7 April 1987, Exh. "OOO-3-C-Commission.

(103) Ibid.

(104) Summary of Events of 27 January 1987 from the SND to President Aquino, dated 28 January 1987, Exh. "RRRRR-3"- Commission,

(105) Ibid.

(106) "The Philippine Experience," op. cit.

(107) Testimony before the FFC in Executive Session.

(108) Vittorio Vitug and Sonia Dipasupil, "Ramos Orders Gen. Zumel, 2 Colonels, Major Arrested," Malaya, 31 January 1987, p. 6.

(109) Ibid., p. 1.

(110) Jose de Vera, "Siege Ends As Troops Pull Out of TV 7," Manila Bulletin, 30 January 1987, pp. 1 and 18.

(111) Final Report, op. cit.

(112) Memo on the Creation of a Crisis Committee, 28 January 1987, signed by Executive Secretary Joker P. Arroyo.

(113) "The Philippine Experience," op. cit., p. 13.

(114) Final Report, op. cit.

(115) Ibid.

(116) Ibid.

(117) "Mutiny Crushed," Manila Chronicle, 19 April 1987, p. 6.

(118) "Black Flag Marks Black Saturday Rebellion," Manila Chronicle, 19 April 1987, p. 6.

(119) "Mutiny Crushed," op. cit., p. 6.

(120) "Mutiny Part of Bigger Plot," Philippine Star, 20 April 1987, p. 1.

(121) The Philippine Experience," op. cit., p. 14.

(122) "Mutiny Crushed," op. cit., p. 6.

(123) Final Report, op. cit.

(124) Jerry Esplanada, "FM's 'Invasion' Plot Thwarted," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 10 July 1987, p. 8.

(125) "Reagan Urged: Jail FM," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 11 July 1987, p. 1.

- (126) "Ex-Ruler Admits Planning Invasion," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 13 July 1987, pp. 1 and 9.
- (127) Cesar M. Espino, "Cory Pleased; Military Cool," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 10 July 1987, p. 8.
- (128) Dave Veridiano and Cesar Espino, "AFP Links 20 Officers to FM Plot," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 14 July 1987, p. 9.
- (129) Report Re: 28 August 1987 Coup Attempt from BGen Pedro G. Sistoza, CG CSG, to Chief, PC, dated 1 September 1987, Exh. "RRRRR-2" – Commission.
- (130) Veridiano and Espino, op. cit., p. 9.
- (131) Cesar Espino and Dave Veridiano, "Six Officers Held on Coup Plot," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 15 July 1987, pp. 1 and 9.
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- (133) Prom PTI Report of Lt Col Rodolfo G. Munar JAGS to CSAFP on Maj Manuel Divina PC, Maj Romeo Elefante PN (M), Capt Reynaldo Regacho PN (M), and Capt Chris Mesias PAF, dated 25 August 1987.
- (134) Francisco Nemenzo, "Military Insurgency: Reflection on Gringo's Adventure," Kasarinlan (Philippine Quarterly of UP Third World Studies Center), Vol. 3, No. 2 (4th Quarter 1987), p. 8.
- (135) Report Re: 28 August 1987 Coup Attempt from BGen Pedro G. Sistoza, op. cit.
- (136) Ibid.
- (137) Soriano Testimony, op. cit.
- (138) "Cory Orders Probe of Killing," Philippine Star, 7 November 1987, p. 3.
- (139) Memo Re: Case against Col Antonio Q. Romero PA, et al in connection with the 28 August 1987 Failed Coup from AFP Board of Officers to CSAFP, dated 16 December 1987, Exh. "OOO-5"-Commission.
- (140) Memo Re: Case of Col Gregorio Honasan, et al for Alleged Violations of AW 67 and 96 from AFP Board of Officers to CSAFP, dated 16 October 1987, Exh. "OOO-5"- Commission.
- (141) Ibid.
- (142) Memo Re: Case against Lt Col Jerry Albano, et al (Alleged Involvement in the 28 August 1987 Failed Coup Attempt) from AFP Board of Officers to CSAFP, dated 22 October 1987, Exh. "OOO-5"- Commission.
- (143) Memo Re: Case of Capt Rex C. Robles PN from AFP Board of Officers to CSAFP, dated 25 April 1988, Exh. "000-5"- Commission.
- (144) Frankie Tuyay and Alden M. Alag, "Pilot in Gringo Getaway Captured," Philippine Star, 24 November 1987, pp. 1 and 7. See also Lito Mangaser and Maning Silva, "Gringo Flown to Baguio, Hunt On," Manila Chronicle, 30 August 1987, p. 1.
- (145) Memo Re: BGen Federico Pasion, et al for Violation of AW 67, 68, 96 and 97 from AFP Board of Officers to CSAFP, dated 9 October 1987, Exh. "OOO-2-D"- Commission.

(146) Post Operations Report of August 1987 Attempted Coup submitted by BGen Loven C. Abadia, PAF Vice Commander and WC, 205 HW, dated 3 August 1990.

(147) "Rebels Control Olivas, Cebu," Manila Chronicle, 29 August 1987, p. 8.

(148) Memo Re: Case against BGen Edgardo Abenina, et al for Violation of AW 67, 96, and 97 and Article 139, Revised Penal Code, from the AFP Board of Officers to CSAFP, dated 28 November 1987, Exh. "OOO-4" – Commission.

(149) Ibid.

(150) Memo Re: Alleged Mutinous Activity of the Elements of the 3 LAB at Fort Magsaysay, Palayan City on 28 August 1987, from the AFP Board of Officers to CSAFP, dated 21 December 1987, Exh. "OOO-5-C"- Commission.

(151) Memo Re: Alleged Illegal and Unauthorized Activities of Officers and Cadets of PMA, dated 8 October 1987.

(152) Ibid.

(153) Memo Re: Involvement of Lt Col Eduardo Kapunan PA and Lt Col Eslao in the Unauthorized Operations of PMA Cadets in Connection with the 28 August 1987 Attempt in Metro Manila from AFP Board of Officers to CSAFP, dated 30 October 1987, Exh. "OOO-2-A"- Commission.

(154) "The Philippine Experience," op. cit., p. 16.

(155) According to a report of the GHQ Survey Board dated 6 January 1988, the total value lost in the GHQ fire was about P30 to P40 million. However, according to the camp engineer's report on 14 September 1987, the value of the GHQ building alone was over P41 million, plus other property damage of over P200,000.

(156) Jess Diaz, "Enrile Urges Gringo to Yield," Philippine Star, 31 August 1987, pp. 1 and 8.

(157) Amando Doronila, "Crisis Makes the Military Stronger," Manila Chronicle, 30 August 1987, p. 5.

(158) Ding Marcelo, "Crucial Palace Moves Recalled," Manila Bulletin, 31 August 1987, pp. 1 and 4.

(159) Letty Jimenez Magsanoc, "AFP Disloyalists: 'Guns To Our Heads,'" Philippine Free Press, 20 January 1990, pp. 3 and 47.

(160) Testimony given before the FFC in Executive Session.

(161) McCoy, op. cit., p. 4.

(162) Almonte Testimony, op. cit.

(163) R. M. De Joya, Jr. national chairman of the GBI in 1987, claimed that their organization represented about 80 to 85 percent of the total AFP manpower; see "Guardians' Expel, Disown Honasan," Manila Times, 24 September 1987.

(164) Ibid.

(165) Ramos Testimony, op. cit.

(166) "RAM Officer Talks on February 1986 Mutiny," op. cit., pp. 1 and 8. See also Arillo, op. cit., p. 20.

(167) Sworn Testimony of MGen Ramon Montano before the FFC 25 January 1990.

(168) Ramos Testimony, op. cit.

(169) Montano Testimony, op. cit.

The Final Report of the Fact-Finding Commission: III: The Environment of the Philippine Military

III

THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE PHILIPPINE MILITARY

Coups begin in the minds of men. Soldiers who launch coups have a particular state of mind — values, perceptions, attitudes, and expectations — that define coups as desirable and feasible.

Chapter I notes that a military group must have both the occasion and the disposition to intervene in political affairs. Occasion refers to the opportunity or conditions which are favorable to staging the coup. Disposition refers to a combination of conscious motives and of a will or desire to act. Chapter II analyzes the transformation of the Philippine military in response to political changes in the country.

This chapter takes a closer look at the economic, political, and foreign environment of the Philippine military. Environment refers to the surrounding conditions or forces that influence or modify the behavior of the military and its component units or individual members.

In examining the coup environment, this chapter focuses on the specific environment of the December 1989 coup attempt. However, it is necessary to look into the general environment of the previous seven coup attempts as a series, and of the continuing occasion for military groups to attempt a grab for power.

Two inseparable but distinct concepts of the environment are used — the idea of the “objective milieu,” or the environment as it really is, and the idea of the “psychomilieu,” or the environment as it is perceived by an individual or group. Thus, this chapter seeks to provide an objective interpretation of the landscape of the coup attempts and to describe the military’s perception of that environment. Necessarily, the psychomilieu is an approximation of the objective milieu and is distorted to some extent.

Some psychomilieus are more accurate than others. Regardless of their accuracy, however, men act on the basis of their psychomilieus. Whether they are in fact right or wrong, military groups who believe coups are right and have a high chance of success will continue launching them, until the consequences of their actions tell them otherwise.

The presentation of the milieus, objective and psycho, of the Philippine military begins with an overview of the socialization process through which the specific psychomilieu of Filipino military officers are formed. This is in Section A. The objective economic, political, and foreign environments of the military identifying the specific factors that may have induced a predisposition among military men to launch coups are discussed in Sections B, C, and D. Finally, Section E provides a description of the actual political predisposition of selected military officers, men, and their units. These predispositions are the closest this Report could get in conjecturing how strategic military units might act in the event of another coup attempt. These political orientations are telling indicators of how these units appreciate and interpret the environment as being conducive or not conducive to military intervention in government and politics.

A. The Socialization of Military Officers

This section describes and analyzes the socialization process that shapes the contemporary Filipino soldier, identifying the factors that may influence his political orientation and predisposition towards coups. The data and analysis were generated by a study on military socialization engaged by the Fact-Finding Commission.¹ The study conducted in-depth interviews of 64 officers purposively, rather than randomly selected from different service units.

The study also conducted in-depth interviews of key personnel from eight military schools — the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), the Metropolitan Citizen Military Training Command (MCMTC), the AFP Training Command (AFP TRACOM), the Philippine Air Force Flying School (PAFFS), the Philippine Army Training

Command (PATRACOM), the Naval Training Command (NTC), the Philippine Constabulary Training Command (PC TRACOM), and the Command and General Staff College (CGSC).

Other sources of information were training materials and school records, personnel files of 72 officers, 47 of whom are suspected coup plotters, case studies of three individuals, and secondary research materials. Newspapers were also content-analyzed.

A.1. Socialization Factors

Socialization is the process by which the behavior of members of a given society is shaped by other members of the society. More specifically, it is the way in which a member acquires a knowledge of the standards and rules that are required to function in a particular society. It involves behavioral conformity, the internalization of norms and values, and the development of more autonomous internal principles.

A.1.a. Personal Background and Cultural Influences

Officers come from middle-class families. Many have relatives in the military. Their families tend to view the military positively. A military career is viewed by many families as a source of a free education and a secure lifetime job.

As gathered from the interviews, stressed in the families of the officer-respondents are respect for authority, the value of education, discipline and loyalty, hardwork, cooperation, thrift, and Christian values — values that reflect those prevailing in Philippine culture as a whole.

Additionally, Philippine society at large teaches the future soldier more authoritarianism, strengthening the predisposition learned at home. The future soldier growing up in Philippine society learns to view his world in terms of personal relationships. This is carried over to his view of leadership. Personality traits as well as personal relationships with the leader are emphasized.

The recruit into the military begins formal military training with certain predispositions from his home background and from the culture at large. He views the military and a military career favorably and expects positive outcomes from his joining the military. The cultural traits just discussed interact with the norms of the military establishment.

A.1.b. Philippine Military Academy and Other Military Schools

There are selected subjects in all regular courses that are politically relevant. Specifically, these are Civil Military Operations, Military Justice (which includes Human Rights), Insurgency, History and Constitution, Socio-Humanistic subjects at the PMA, and the Management-Leadership subjects at the CGSC.

More than half of the subjects in all regular courses are combat-oriented and teach the soldier how to win in battle. The teachers are Tactical Officers. Ideally, the best faculty members for these subjects would be those who are in the field and who excel because of their military skills, moral integrity, and constitutional orientation. This is because personal values are unconsciously but effectively passed on to the student during the highly-charged war game experiences in training camps.

But such “good” military leaders seldom teach in training schools because their commands need them in the field and refuse to let them go. Moreover, military culture tends to look down on teaching duties as assignments for weaklings, old officers or ineffective ones, and the career advancement incentives are lower for training assignments and higher for field assignments (“Invisible” income from other assignments may also not be available in a school setting).

Almost all military training experiences are physically and intellectually isolated from civilian life. This results in a psychological gap between military men and civilians. Intense bonding takes place among cadets, a function presumably of hazing and a very tough plebe year. But this bonding combined with military-civilian separation merely serves to build discomfort, suspicion, and, ultimately, group conflict between these sectors.

The training centers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) teach students that the primary task of the military is to fight the enemy — the communists. Anti-communist sentiment (oddly, not pro-democracy sentiment) becomes inculcated in the minds of the student. Such strong anti-communist feelings may actually lead to the appeal of rightist authoritarian rule which coups represent.

Although PMA barracks are immaculately neat and the honor code is drummed into their minds for four years, there are few opportunities for the cadet to freely and spontaneously express what he is thinking or feeling. The most rewarded phrase in camp is “Sir, yes Sir!” Thus, the formation of consciousness and conscience is highly external with little attempt at interiority. And this is done during the highly impressionistic age between 17 and 22 years.

Such an arrangement produces its desired results when the environment is highly structured. But placed in situations where no clear-cut behavior is defined by an authority, the external-based conscience may not function adequately. In the field, circumstances are unpredictable and are not clearly right or wrong. More so in coups d’état, when multiple authorities demand obedience.

A.1.c. The Military Career

The main reasons for joining the military are glamor and prestige of the military, influence of relatives, desire to become pilots and ship navigators, economic need, and patriotism. The typical career path follows a cycle —

TRAINING → FIELD ASSIGNMENT → STAFF ASSIGNMENT → TRAINING

although this is not always implemented properly as some stay too long or too short in an assignment. Field assignments are consistently viewed as more desirable than staff assignments.

The rewards and punishments system within the military as an organization is a function of the rewards and punishments system applied to the military by its governmental, political, and economic environment. For instance, room for promotions depends on the military’s share of the national budget. The internal system of rewards and punishment in the military is governed by the Articles of War, the hiring policy and guidelines, the traditions of the unit, and the policy of the Commanding Officer.

According to the respondents, officers are rewarded for gallantry, bravery, honesty, dedication to duty, and excellent performance on the job. They are punished for violations of the Articles of War, unnecessary violence, involvement in coup attempts, immorality, and failure to perform one’s duty. Their reactions to the system are mixed; half views the system of rewards and punishments as generally effective, while the other half claims that the system is poorly implemented and the system of rewards and punishments is ineffective.

The top characteristics respondents admire in military leaders are: being principled (fair, straight, honest); disciplinarian/“nonsense man”; decisive but fatherly; very knowledgeable/intellectual/analytical; and “action man”.

The most mentioned shortcomings of military leadership are: involvement in or serving the interests of politicians; absence of coordination among themselves; indecisiveness/inconsistency; improper implementation of the reward and punishment system; abusiveness/leniency; being out of touch with his men; complacency; being misinformed; and, involvement in graft and corruption/materialism.

Aside from co-workers and their families, the officers are closest to their classmates with whom they train. Because of that special bond, classmates influence their decisions, sympathies, and attitudes.

The respondents were asked to rate the military on prestige, power, competence, honesty, support to civilian government, and morale of soldiers for three different periods upon joining the military, ten years ago, and today. They give most favorable ratings for the period when they joined the military and the least favorable ratings today. PA officers give the lowest ratings. Junior officers give lower ratings than senior officers. The lowest ratings are for morale, prestige, and honesty.

The pre-martial law years are viewed positively as productive years. The first years of martial law are also viewed positively as years of order and discipline. But its later years are seen as the country's and the military's worst. The assassination of Ninoy Aquino is perceived as the greatest blunder of the Marcos government.

The February 1986 events are viewed differently by the respondents. One group views them positively as the height of people power and the prestige of the AFP. Another group views them negatively as being motivated by vested interests of military leaders and leading to instability because they started the series of coup attempts. The recent coup attempts are viewed as stemming from valid issues but using the wrong means.

The literature on the Philippine military obtained and reviewed by the study suggest a military mind peculiar to the profession. This military mind views conflict as part of human history and only the build up of arms can prevent war. There is emphasis on the threats to security particularly from the communists.

A.2. The Military Socialization Process

The young recruit brings into military school the authoritarian and personalistic values of Philippine culture. Military school has a strong and lasting impact on the young recruit. Through the formal program of instruction in school, he acquires knowledge and skills needed by an educated man and a competent professional soldier. He learns the military code which emphasizes discipline, honor, and courage. He is taught to be a good leader by first being a good follower.

Through the increased number of social science courses, he broadens his socio-political awareness. This is enhanced by the political atmosphere in the rest of society as well as by key historical events. At the PMA, the young cadet experiences violence and aggression through the practice of hazing. He also learns to use arms, fulfilling what is probably part of most Filipino males' fantasies. The authoritarian values he brought with him into the military school are further strengthened by the authoritarian culture in the military. In school, he becomes very close to his classmates and the rest of the young men with whom he goes through the rigors of training. Intense loyalties are formed. Through special rituals and ceremonies, a strong identification with the military establishment is developed and the young recruit is proud to be a soldier.

A3. Seasons in a Military Career

After training, the graduate is commissioned and begins his military career. Life in the military has its high points and low points, but whether up or down, the socialization process continues and the young officer faces a lifetime of exposure to such socializing agents as the military culture, role models, peer influence, reward and punishment, organizational climate, and historical events in the country.

The military code continues to be held up as an ideal. Authoritarian values continue to be reinforced and personalistic values are introduced as it becomes apparent that personal loyalties operate beneath the objective system. Out in the real world, the young officer comes face to face with the imperfections of the institutions he has committed himself to protect with his life. He discovers that some of the leaders he is bound by duty to obey have feet of clay. Soon enough he finds out that the career he had selected partly because of its status and economic perks had in fact promised more than it could deliver. There is demoralization and disillusionment.

But through his disappointment and in some cases even through his own betrayal of these ideals, the officer seems to retain clear expectations of what a professional officer should be, as well as the responsibilities of military leadership. In a sense, he retains a certain degree of idealism.

His military career continues the socialization process began in school as the officer reacts to events in the country, particularly those involving the military. The martial law years, the assassination of Ninoy Aquino, the EDSA People Power Revolt (EDSA Revolt), and the recent coup attempts all contributed to this process. The problems in the country and the government's continued difficulty in solving them induce a belief that military intervention might be necessary.

Throughout his career, the officer retains close ties with his classmates through regular reunions and get-togethers. Classmates are a sounding board for ideas and a source of support. Given the risk of being killed in action, class unity becomes even more important as survivors usually adopt the family of their slain classmates.

A.4. Military Socialization as a Factor in Coup Participation

Having described the military socialization process and the impact of military schooling and career on the young recruit, one asks: What factors in the military socialization process may contribute to an officer's politicization, i.e., his predisposition to participate in a coup d'état?

The socialization process broadens the cadets' perspectives about society and politics making him politicized. Politicalization is the process whereby one's socio-political awareness is developed. There are several hypotheses on the factors that heighten both politicization, one form of which is the predisposition to launch coups, and politicalization. These hypotheses are synthesized from the interviews and analysis of data obtained in the study.

A.4.a. The Politicalized Cadet Hypothesis

Some believe that the curriculum at the PMA contributes to the politicalization of the cadet and this politicalization leads to participation in coup attempts. While an analysis of the program of instruction does reveal a number of courses where political discussions may take place, it is also suggested that faculty influence is a contributing factor to political orientation. The most important factor is the general environment in the country itself, i.e., the growing politicalization and activism of students and citizens which make politicization in the PMA not inconceivable. No matter how much the PMA connection appears as a contributory factor, PMA experience is still not a sufficient condition for participation in attempted coups.

A.4.b. The Disgruntled Officer Hypothesis

The poor organizational climate in which officers operate and the demoralization of the military are often blamed for the coup attempts.

A.4.C. The Power-Hungry Officer Hypothesis

According to this explanation, the career paths of coup plotters which led them to the corridors of power during the Marcos years as well as the role they played in the EDSA Revolt are factors that lead to coup participation. These officers believe that they succeeded in grabbing power in 1986 and therefore, should be able to do it again.

A.4.d. The Idealistic Young Officer Hypothesis

This explanation recognizes that many officers still value the ideals they learned early in their military careers and thus, the disillusionment with corruption and incompetence both in the military as well as civilian leadership leads them to launch coups in order to save the country. These officers and a number of their peers believe that coups are justified under extreme conditions.

A.4.e. Problem Personality Hypothesis

Some of the known coup plotters manifest definite personality disturbances that may partly explain their participation in the attempted coups. Persons with high power needs, who are narcissistic and have sociopathic tendencies (psychological patterns that have been established for some plotters) are prime candidates for coups. While a systematic psychological study of all the coup plotters has not been done, it is reasonable to conclude that personality problems contribute to the explanation.

A.5. Military Socialization and the Coup Environment

While these factors all contribute to a predisposition towards coups d'état, none of these factors working alone or even all of these factors working in combination can explain coup participation. The study suggests that military socialization factors by themselves cannot explain coup-related behavior. A politicalized military will not necessarily attempt to overthrow the government. Military socialization produces a politicalized officer who then interacts with the "coup environment" existing in Philippine society as described in Chapter II and subsequent sections of this chapter. Coups d'état are a product of that interaction.

Using force field terminology, the coup environment consists of driving forces or those factors which push the politicized soldier towards coups d'état and restraining forces or factors that keep him from participating in coups. Some of the main driving forces in the environment are (a) the criticism hurled against the Aquino government and the present military leadership, (b) pressure from leaders and peers to join them in support of coups, (c) the fact that past coup plotters have not been seriously punished for their crimes, and (d) the poor quality of military life.

The main restraining forces in the environment are (a) the strong public opinion against coups, (b) the strength of the constitutionalist armed forces who will defend the government against attempts to overthrow it, (c) the popularity of the present government, and (d) the job security and other benefits of a military job that will be lost to the officer and his family should the coup fail.

B. The Economic Environment²

The previous section suggests that personal background and cultural influences, military training, and career patterns, are factors that may help predispose military officers to intervene in government and politics. However, it emphasizes that military socialization factors by themselves cannot explain coup-related behavior. At best, the military socialization process produces a politicalized officer who then interacts with the "coup environment". When a critical mass is politicized by the interaction, a coup happens.

Violent political events have often been predicated on adverse economic conditions. One popular hypothesis is Davies's "J" Curve — rising expectations and gratifications, if followed by a period of a short, sharp reversal in gratifications, create a wide gap between what people want and what they get, then the probability of revolution (or other violent event) increases greatly. Conflict develops in a society when major segments acutely suffer this sudden "subjective" deprivation, which usually occurs during an economic downturn. "Violence becomes increasingly likely when any kind of basic need which has come to be routinely gratified suddenly becomes deprived."³ The conjoining factor is the common state of mind: the profound frustration that develops when the environment in the form of culture, society, and government denies the opportunity for basic needs to get fulfilled.⁴

In applying these insights to the Philippine coup environment, we may hypothesize that

1. The probability of the occurrence of an intervention (military or otherwise) in government rises with a decline in human welfare.
2. The probability of success of such an intervention approaches certainty as the indicators of welfare sink to a critical level.

People may differ in their opinion of what constitutes a critical level. "Critical" can be defined in two ways — an inability to meet the most basic needs, as posited above, or popular dissatisfaction even when there is an

improvement in the objective economic situation. The latter would not necessarily be inconsistent with the relative deprivation hypothesis since actual conditions in reference to expectations, and not to previous conditions, can also result in dissatisfaction. Certainly, the EDSA Revolt created extremely high expectations among the people, especially in Metro Manila, which is the immediate environment of the coups.

Usually, however, a serious economic recession hastens the formation of a consensus that a critical level has been reached.

By way of a test of the above proposition, the behavior of some macroeconomic variables that correlate well with “human comfort” are examined. Welfare is essentially multi-dimensional, and may include items like per capita income, energy consumption, nutritional status, and political freedom. The discussion in this section abstracts from many of these dimensions of welfare.

B.1. Some Macroeconomic Indicators of Welfare

Macroeconomic variables are analyzed for the two years preceding the EDSA Revolt in 1986 and the three years preceding the December 1989 coup. The EDSA Revolt and the December 1989 coup are of interest because one attained its goal of changing the government and the other did not. Were there significant differences in the behavior of these macroeconomic variables that would help explain the differences in political outcomes?

Table III-1 shows the behavior of real gross national product (GNP), growth rate of real GNP, and the inflation rate for the period 1984 to 1989.⁵

Table III-1 — The Real GNP and Inflation Rates: 1984 – 1989

Year	Real GNP (million pesos)	Growth rate (percent)
1984	91,644	-5.50
1985	87,867	-4.12
1986	89,504	1.86
1987	94,705	5.81
1988	101,093	6.75
1989	106,830	5.67

In 1983, the balance of payments difficulties of the country came to a head and the government was forced to negotiate a standby credit arrangement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), while the exchange rate collapsed. The conditionalities agreed upon with the IMF called for austerity measures that led to a contraction of real output in 1984 – 1985, the first in the postwar history of the Philippines.

The negative to poor aggregate performance of the economy in 1984 and 1985 can readily be seen in terms of the level and growth rate of real GNP, and of the inflation rate. In 1984, the economy receded with a negative growth rate in real GNP of 5.5 percent. The recession persisted in 1985, as real GNP further declined by 4.12 percent. With respect to the general price level, the inflation rate in 1984 rose to 50.3 percent, surpassing even the average rate of the inflation-ridden 1970s. In 1985, the inflation rate moderated somewhat to 23.1 percent.

The above trends can be contrasted with the behavior of the same macroeconomic variables in 1987, 1988, and 1989. The year 1989 is included because the attempted coup d'état took place in December 1989s when it was too late in the year for the overall performance of the economy to be adversely affected.

In 1986, the economy experienced a turnaround with a modest 1.86 percent growth rate in real GNP. In 1987 and 1988, however, the economy grew by 5.8 percent and 6.7 percent respectively. While the economy's momentum slowed down somewhat in 1989 it still registered a respectable growth rate of 5.7 percent. Concerning the behavior of the price level, one notes that the inflation rate was rising from 1987 to 1989 — from 3.8 percent in 1987, to 8.8

percent in 1988, and 10.6 percent in 1989. Although the inflation rate hit the double-digit mark in 1989, it was still low compared to the 23 percent inflation rate in 1985.

Looking at the behavior of output and the general price level two years before the 1986 EDSA Revolt and three years before the 1989 attempted coup d'état, the contrast is quite marked. In line with the proposition of the political economy model presented above, the chance of success of the 1989 attempt was relatively slim. The segment of the military that staged the 1989 attempt failed to build a critical mass of civilian support. In 1986, a massive coalition supportive of the objective to overthrow the Marcos government responded to the call for a popular uprising.

Additional indicators of economic welfare are shown in Table III-2.⁶ The figures shed further light on the difference in political results between the 1986 EDSA Revolt and 1989 coup attempt. The figures show personal consumption expenditures of households and compensation of employees, entrepreneurial and property income of persons, both adjusted for the inflation rates. Personal consumption expenditures, a component of aggregate demand, is close to 75 percent of GNP. Taking it from the income side, compensation of employees and other income of persons is slightly above 75 percent of national income. These two measures correlate highly and positively with human comfort. Again, the trends that emerge from these figures are a decline from 1984 to 1985, as against a steady rise from 1987 to 1988, followed by a mild slowdown in 1989.

Table III-2 — Real Consumption and Compensation/Income: 1984 -1989

Year	Real Personal Consumption (million pesos)	
1984	66,032	
1985	65,977	
1986	66,597	
1987	70,409	
1988	74,646	
1989	78,929	

In terms of job creation, 1.2 million new jobs were generated in 1987 and 1.1 million jobs in 1988. The trend dipped to 700,000 new jobs in 1989 but continued to be significantly positive. Poverty incidence also dropped from 59 percent in 1985 to 49.5 percent in 1988 with the National Capital Region, where the coup attempts were concentrated, experiencing one of the highest improvements.

Based on the objective statistics, it seems curious why a segment of the military thought that their coup attempt in 1989 would receive popular support. Going by the behavior of the macroeconomic variables described above, the coup plotters might have thought that the slowdown in the growth rates of these macroeconomic measures was misery-inducing enough to push civilian groups to support their cause. Obviously, it was an erroneous assumption, evident from the fact that civilian groups did not rally to their call.

Their miscalculation may have been influenced by several events in late 1989. As also mentioned in the discussion of the political environment, there was in fact some restiveness among the people. A legislated minimum wage increase in June 1989 was widely criticized by industry, particularly small and medium-scale Filipino enterprises, at the same time that labor was protesting the inability of government to enforce compliance with minimum wage laws by a large number of enterprises. Petroleum prices increased in August and November 1989, along with transport fares, resulting in inflationary pressures on prices of basic commodities. Students protested tuition fee hikes, government workers were aggrieved by the Salary Standardization Law, farmers clamored for an increase in the palay subsidy, thousands of commuters could not get a ride to and from work. There were threats of *Welgang Bayan* (general strike) and jeepney drivers and teachers engaged in selective labor demonstrations. There were also frequent power outages in the third quarter of 1989.

These were on top of unrest in the streets by a broad cross-section of Philippine society not due to economic but to political reasons: Marcos loyalists wanting to bring back the body of Marcos, and military elements complaining of bad treatment by the civilian leadership. The proposed PC-INP bill also agitated the military top brass of the PC because it created uncertainty and morale problems in the ranks.

The resulting price increases and sectoral agitation did not, however, result in serious enough economic slowdown in the aggregate, which could have meant a drastic fall in human comfort, at least by the time of the coup attempt in December 1989. In other words, the critical level was not reached.

This section shows that while economic misery marked the period before February 1986, the same could not be said for the period before December 1989, when the economy was experiencing output growth and relatively mild inflation. While some groups may have been bypassed by the growth in the economy, their economic difficulties were not sufficient to induce a critical mass of civilians to support the forces aimed at overthrowing the government headed by President Aquino.

B.2. The Present Economic Situation as a Coup Environment

However, given disquieting current trends in the economy (i.e., growth rate, inflation rate, interest rate, trade balance, budget deficit), and the domestic economic reverses resulting from the drought and recent massive earthquake, appropriate government policies to address critical areas of economic performance assume added importance.

The government has to institute measures at a time when sectors which have been very supportive of it have become openly critical of two key economic policies, namely, influential members of the church hierarchy with respect to the management of the external debt, and the business community with respect to the restructuring of tariffs. The government has had to backtrack on the implementation of tariff reform in the face of the criticism and of a probable rebuff from Congress.

That task is made more difficult by unfavorable international developments — external resources are less easily obtainable as the industrial countries pay greater attention to the needs of Eastern Europe at a time when the total available foreign aid is declining, and trade protectionism continues to rise. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait will also have tremendous adverse repercussions for the Philippine economy. It has disrupted overseas contract workers' output and earnings, reduced further deployment opportunities of contract workers, and raised the cost of oil. The expected increase in domestic oil prices will trigger other price increases and labor demands for wage increases, unless the government can mitigate the impact with a comprehensive fiscal reform program.

Some experts hazard a guess that a recession as severe as the one in 1984 – 1985 may give rise to a predisposition by a significant portion of the civilian population to support, or at least not actively resist, another attempt at military intervention. While the deterioration in economic indicators has become more pronounced than at the time of the December 1989 coup attempt, with real per capita income declining in the second quarter of 1990 for the first time since 1987, a balance of payments crisis and a recession of that severity are still avoidable depending on how promptly and effectively the government handles the situation.

C. The Political Environment⁷

The previous section compared the economic environment preceding the February 1986 events with that of the December 1989 coup attempt. It showed that in terms of "relative deprivation" there was no basis to warrant an expectation on the part of the coup plotters that their attempt would receive massive popular support. Contrary to their perception, the objective economic situation, despite some deterioration by the end of 1989, could not have been a real cause for launching the coup. The restiveness of various sectors was misread by the coup plotters and served to influence their timing.

Independent of the economic environment, there were other variables that may have influenced the behavior of the coup plotters for the December 1989 attempt as well as the six others launched against the Aquino administration. These were the state and dynamics of national leadership, government, politics, and political performance. They constituted the political environment of the coup, which is discussed next.

C.1. An Auspicious Start

The period between February 1986 when Corazon C. Aquino was ushered into power and December 1989 when the latest and most serious coup attempt was mounted, is vital in getting a sense of the political climate surrounding the repeated attempts to destabilize the Aquino government. In spite of the failure of her major initiatives in the first year of her administration to forge peace pacts with the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army (CPP/NPA) and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), two developments in 1987 augured well for her fledgling government. The first was the overwhelming ratification of the new Constitution in February, which strengthened the legitimacy of her government. The second was the May national elections, the first credible elections since Marcos placed the country under martial law rule in 1972. The May elections resulted in overwhelming majorities for the candidates for the Senate and the House of Representatives who were personally endorsed by President Aquino and the coalition she headed. She had a convincing mandate to govern.

C.2. A Beleaguered Government

Despite that mandate, the most important feature of the political environment of the Aquino administration has been what Ninoy Aquino predicted — whoever became president would face a most unenviable task. Philippine history has been a parade of no less than ten crises administrations from Emilio Aguinaldo to Ferdinand E. Marcos that have failed to satisfactorily contain or resolve the outstanding social, economic, political, and foreign policy crises of their time. The accumulated crises of the past have conjoined to constitute the most severe test of any Filipino political leadership. On top of age-old problems of poverty, gross inequities of income, wealth, and political power, and graft and corruption exacerbated by the excesses of the Marcos administration, the country has to contend with a foreign debt burden of staggering proportions and the problem of governance inherent in a newly-restored democracy.

The gravest threat to the survival of the Aquino government has been the coup attempts. Almost from the start, the repeated attempts by military groups to wrest power from the Aquino government have diverted its attention, time, energy, and resources and sidelined efforts at a systematic resolution of the myriad problems of the nation.

All the coups failed because, among other reasons, they were lacking in political strategy and support. The plotters apparently expected a spontaneous display of "People Power" against the Aquino government which never materialized. The August 1987 coup attempt was deliberately timed to ride on Left-oriented protest demonstrations and strikes against the Aquino government's inaction on agrarian reform and its decision to increase petroleum prices. The December 1989 coup followed a strike of jeepney drivers demanding a fuel price rollback, a teachers' strike for higher pay, and a mass walk-out of hospital workers. Such restiveness turned out to be insufficient to ignite popular support for a coup d'état. The plotters miscalculated the sentiments of the people against military interventionism.

What could have emboldened this miscalculated adventurism are two beliefs shared by some segments in the Armed Forces, namely: that the Aquino administration is too soft on the communist insurgency, and that the military handed power to the Aquino administration in February 1986.

To counter this perception, President Aquino visibly hardened her approach to the insurgency problem, in her words, "unsheathing the sword of war" and giving more prominence to the military aspect of her total war strategy. The coups helped pull the Aquino government incrementally to the right, through successive cabinet reorganizations and policy adjustments. It endorsed the organization of armed civilian anti-communist vigilantes in both rural and urban areas. In February 1988, the Secretary of National Defense, Rafael Ilete, was removed over a disagreement within the military regarding the counter-insurgency approach.

The people did not lend support to the second belief, as they applauded the dismissal of Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile in the wake of the “God Save The Queen” coup attempt, who had been demanding a power-sharing arrangement on the basis of that belief. Despite his initial popularity after the EDSA Revolt, Enrile barely made it as a senator in the May 1987 congressional elections.

The people supported the government throughout the various coups that have been mounted against it. However, it seems the government has mismanaged each post-coup situation and failed to capitalize on its reservoir of mass support.

For example, after renegade Lt Col Gregorio Honasan was caught in November 1987, he was put on a Navy ship in Manila Bay with guards who eventually helped him escape in April 1988. On hindsight, President Aquino’s handling of Honasan now appears to be a case of reluctance to confront a problem squarely. As Commander-in-Chief, she could have ordered a court-martial for Honasan. However, Malacañang chose to deal cautiously with Honasan, saying the government did not want to make a martyr of him and other rebels, nor did it want to antagonize a segment of the military. The December 1989 coup attempt is partly the result of the indecision of government to deal firmly with the participants of earlier coup attempts, despite massive popular support for such an approach.

The coup attempts periodically reinvigorated the Aquino presidency. The cause-oriented and centrist groups, despite their increasing disappointment with President Aquino’s temporizing over socio-economic reforms, came out strongly after each coup attempt in defense of the Aquino government and the democratic institutions and space it restored.

However the Aquino government has not effectively consolidated and mobilized its popular support on a systematic and long-term basis.

Hence, her presidency has been “invisible” to supporters who needed a focus for political participation and wanted to see decisive action on major governmental efforts. She would time and again encourage the formation of grassroots organizations, but would not follow through with a major governmental effort, until June 1990 when she finally launched Kabisig.

President Aquino also sought to draw from foreign, governments’ support that the EDSA Revolt generated. She immediately set out to visit ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries, the UN Headquarters, the United States, and Japan within her first year in office. She later visited China and Europe. The US government and the American people were clearly the biggest potential source of assistance.

There is a growing perception that the Aquino government has become less of a rallying point for post-Marcos reforms in the areas of human rights, participatory democracy, agrarian reform, urban land reform, and the establishment of a new moral order. It is claimed that her last two years would just be a matter of survival, with her accomplishments in re-establishing democratic institutions, constitutional government, and the restoration of democratic space serving as the staging point for more comprehensive reforms by the next administration. This seems consistent with her own concept of a transitional leadership from a dictatorship to a full-fledged democracy.

C.3. De-Marcosification

One of the tasks of the Aquino administration was to remove the pernicious practices of the Marcos years in society, the economy, and in government. The effort included recovering the hidden wealth of the Marcoses and their cronies, prosecuting them, neutralizing Marcos politicians and civilian forces, and dismantling the authoritarian machinery and institutions built by Marcos for more than a decade. There have been significant accomplishments in such areas as the abolition of monopolies in certain major commodities, re-direction of government financial institutions, and privatization of some government assets.

On the other hand, the President has not been very successful in consolidating her political base through a political party or movement. This may be due to her desire to avoid criticism that she was copying Marcos’s tactics. She

understood that she had to get her people into key national and local governmental positions, ousting Marcos loyalists, but she has not ensured, either by selection or indoctrination, that they share her vision for the government and the nation.

C.4. Democratization

Domestic politics in the last several years have also been characterized by a continuing process of democratization. The President commissioned the drafting of a new Constitution and called for a plebiscite to ratify it. Upon its overwhelming approval by the people, the first free, honest, and credible congressional, local, and barangay elections in a decade were conducted separately.

The new Constitution captures the idealism of the EDSA Revolt in both domestic and foreign policy. It establishes an agenda that is more far-reaching than what a conservative Congress is prepared to legislate. The Constitution also circumscribes the Executive within stringent safeguards against a return to authoritarianism. The resulting structure is a delicate system of checks and balances that requires a high degree of statesmanship in the country's political leadership.

After EDSA, the mass media quickly blossomed under the restored democratic atmosphere, with national daily newspapers alone increasing to more than 25. While a number of newspapers clearly maintain a high level of social responsibility, there is a debate about some of the others as to whether they have deteriorated into the sensationalist, licentious pre-martial law genre. The same can be said about radio. While many practice responsible journalism, there are commentators who concentrate on dramatic political tidbits and still others who deliberately undermine the government.

In the free market of information where government has often been ineffective if not reluctant in speaking for and explaining itself, it has become the victim of propaganda offensives by its enemies — coup plotters, insurgents, foreign interventionists, secessionists, and the political opposition.

However, on balance, the Constitution has been strengthened by the coups and the continuing insurgencies that have challenged it. Democratization has brought democratic space to Filipinos, even though the elite, both old and new, have been quick to corner its benefits in and out of government, possibly preempting wider socio-economic reform.

C.5. Return of Traditional Politics

The first two elections under the Aquino government were a testimony to the durability, if not of the traditional elites, then certainly of traditional styles of political support and mobilization.

Traditional politicians have been cited by coup plotters and by communist insurgents alike as a major reason for their actions. Even the administration itself, in launching Kabisig, hit a raw nerve among the politicians in Congress when the movement was depicted as a movement to bypass the “trapos” (meaning traditional politicians, but the contraction literally means “dirty rags”).

It must be recalled, however, that alliances with some traditional politicians [even those who belonged to the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL) and were loyal to Marcos] were resorted to by the allies of the Aquino administration in a bid to win congressional and local posts and build a nationwide political machinery in 1987 and 1988.

In the final analysis, the return of traditional politics may be traced to the lack of opportunities for various elites to surface during the Marcos regime. The recruitment process for the “best and the brightest” in various fields was disrupted and corrupted. It is only under the democratic space created under the new administration that the normal process of renewal of societal elites, in government and politics, business and industry, the military, and perhaps also in the arts and culture, has resumed. The results of this renewal process are not yet apparent, because of the early lead and positioning the traditional elites have taken.

C.6. Break-up of the Ruling Coalition

The EDSA revolt brought together a broad spectrum of interests, including segments of the military, united by their outrage of Marcos. From this diverse array of forces was drawn the political leadership for the post-Marcos government, led by President Aquino. This incoming ruling coalition in the Aquino government was studded with prominent erstwhile Marcos cabinet members and politicians, side by side with veteran political leaders who fought Marcos and the “best and the brightest” non-political types. Their main challenge was to revive democracy and restore basic freedoms to Filipinos. They assumed that the factors that bound them together in the so-called “rainbow coalition” were sufficiently strong to overcome deep-seated disagreements on social reform and economic policy. Unfortunately, much more is required of political leaders.

Ruling elites usually possess a coherent structure, infused by a particular ideology. In Singapore, the ruling class is almost a homogenous grouping of economic-minded followers of Lee Kuan Yew, who set the tone and direction for national development. In Thailand, one can predict that the ruling clique will come from the ranks of the military and bureaucracy, bound together by their elite status in society. In Malaysia, the United Malay National Organization (UMNO) elite will certainly dominate national political leadership. In Japan, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), and in Taiwan the Kuomintang are the predictable sources of the ruling elite.

Elites in these countries think as one in moving their countries ahead. The ruling elite has a clear consensus indicative of a disciplined process of decision-making.

This has not been the case with President Aquino’s ruling coalition. Only after a few months, the deadly virus of Philippine politics — fractiousness — reemerged. The May 1987 elections further depleted the Aquino circle of advisers. In time, some of these former cabinet advisers would chart their own agenda, and while still loosely considered part of the coalition, they would have very little in common with the President.

In fact, the appointing power of the President became a focus of politics between the executive and the legislative branches of government which included legislators who were clearly elected on the basis of the President’s endorsement. President Aquino refused to subject some of her appointments and promotions to the review of the Congressional Commission on Appointments. She vetoed a bill delineating the powers of the Commission, and Congress threatened to override her veto. The controversy may be viewed as part of a larger effort to determine the appropriate sharing of policy-making powers by the legislative and executive branches of government. As played by some legislators, the game deteriorated into pure political grandstanding.

The constant changes in the national leadership contributed to the political insecurity of the country in the two years separating the 1987 and 1989 coup attempts. In some areas, such as land reform, there were changes just about every year. In terms of the economic agenda, the Central Bank would have one idea and NEDA, another. A third dimension would be contributed by the Department of Finance. This fragmentation was an indication that institutional coordination was lacking and no one was in firm control.

But the fractiousness in government and politics is a price for democracy which often leads to a dilemma. Its essence is openness and accommodation. But without firm institutional moorings and a unifying political vision, this becomes sterile and even destructive, often leading to chaos. The ensuing turmoil in civilian politics is an invitation to military intervention. As Fr Joaquin Bernas sees it, “Once politics get into the military, the danger is that the military will get into politics.”⁸ The ultimate result is a political polarization in society at the expense of national consensus and unity, and the danger of military adventurism.

C.7. The Legislature

The government under the 1987 Constitution places greater initiative for policy on the legislature compared to the previous dispensation. The powers of the Executive are significantly reduced. The adoption of the presidential form of government with broad constitutionally guaranteed civil, political, economic, and social rights of the people shifts the center of political gravity from the Executive to the Legislative.

The people, however, continue to look to the President for major decisions affecting national life. Their expectations of the Presidency are too high, especially for an admittedly inexperienced even if charismatic leader such as President Aquino. For example, on agrarian reform, it did not sit well with the people that the President chose to shift the resolution of major issues to the incoming Congress.

The state of confusion and lack of direction that has characterized the political situation is therefore attributable not only to the President's action or inaction, but also to the legislature's. The problems besetting the nation and specific sectors, such as the military, teachers, students, workers, farmers, and urban poor, are problems not only of implementation, but of policy formulation and coordination between the Executive and the Legislative. Thus, the restiveness of the military might have slackened if numerous bills relating to the military had been passed promptly.

Congress had never been rated highly by citizens in pre-martial law years. The new Congress in the Aquino Government was welcomed in July 1987 mainly because it completed, along with an independent judiciary and the restored civil liberties of the people, the return of the democratic system. It also looked promising because of the election of a significant number of so-called "non-traditional politicians" which indicated a growing maturity of the electorate. But the new Congress is still predominantly conservative.

It did not take long before the body's popularity began to decline precipitously. In September 1988, the House margin of satisfaction (percentage of very satisfied/satisfied minus percentage of dissatisfied/very dissatisfied), according to a Social Weather Station (SWS) survey was +22 percent, which was healthy. That dipped to +8 percent in February 1989, decreasing by 14 percentage points. The Senate declined even more in satisfaction ratings. From +26 percent in September 1988, it fell by 21 percentage points to only +5 percent in February 1989.⁹

What accounts for the sudden drop for both chambers? The survey mentioned "sexcapades, imported Uzis, imported luxury cars, self-granted bonuses, new Congress building, and many more" as the reasons. These were no doubt reinforced by media reports which are easy to come by in exaggerated form. Because members of Congress are very visible, they are vulnerable to media exposure. It takes only one legislator to misbehave for the whole institution to be tainted.

With barely two years left of the term of its present members, Congress may not be able to enact vital legislation to implement several provisions of the 1987 Constitution which require immediate action, such as its provisions on human rights and social justice, i.e., diffusion of wealth and political power.

C.8. The National Leadership

Upon assuming power in February 1986, President Aquino and her Cabinet, mostly newcomers to government service, had to formulate and oftentimes agonize over piecemeal policies, even as an expectant nation and an international audience demanded a comprehensive political and socio-economic blueprint.

Not wanting to be dictatorial, President Aquino was reluctant to decree under the Freedom Constitution not only such a blueprint but also key policies despite the vast legislative power she held until the convening of Congress on the fourth Monday of July 1987. Instead she concentrated on restoring the democratic process, so she could immediately pass on to the new Congress the task of substantive policy-making. This departed from past practice, considering that the President even under the previous liberal democratic regime (1946-1972) prior to Marcos's authoritarian rule, usually set the tone of domestic and foreign policy.

Her main decisions in her first two years in office were institution-oriented. Amidst threats to the survival of her government, she sought to restore democratic institutions and practices to the country. The democratic space she created, however, has encouraged the reemergence of the traditional elite and caused hopes for a new politics to recede. Without resolute government leadership in pursuing needed socio-economic reforms, the forces for the status quo have prevailed.

The people's expectations for meaningful reforms remain high, despite the disappointments of the past four years. Innovative paths continue to be proposed by non-government organizations such as the peace process.

On the other hand, while agreeing that the post-Marcos environment would not be easy, institutions, groups, and concerned individuals have not adequately responded to the challenge of strengthening participatory democracy at the grassroots. This is particularly true at the barangay level where presumably the ordinary citizens feel competent and willing to participate and express themselves as citizens. However, no frenzy of grassroots, community, village, or barangay organizing, discussing, and meeting has ensued since the EDSA Revolt.¹⁰

The centerpiece of the Aquino administration is purportedly the agrarian reform program. This program was projected to cost about \$2.5 billion over a five-year period. Doubts were widely expressed that the government would have the support of the landlords who demand the most in terms of cash settlement. The big question was whether they were willing to subordinate their short-term interest in favor of the nation's industrial future by accepting, say, bonds instead of cash. Given the reactionary nature of this elite, as validated by the nation's history, the answer would be negative. It was demonstrated by the House of Representatives' emasculation of the agrarian reform legislation. Yet there was insufficient public pressure for the legislature to act otherwise. The emasculated Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law is as much the failure or default of grassroots organizations to mobilize for social reforms as it is a victory of traditional power groups.

This state of affairs in the circles of power prompted Jaime Zobel de Ayala, a prominent industrialist and well-known Aquino supporter, to comment that "there must be anarchy in our blood." In essence, "resident Aquino was being left to govern alone. "Politicians, save a few, seem to have forgotten that they are there to serve the people. They waste their time playing to the grandstands of their own creation. And often, we let ourselves be used as their cheering squad."¹¹

In his analysis of the disarray in Aquino's administration, Zobel de Ayala castigated his fellow businessmen as well. "We have forgotten that our companies are more profitable than ever, principally because she has made it possible. . . In the meantime, the President stands by herself, dissected, criticized and crucified daily for all kinds of failings. And not enough are willing to come to her defense."¹²

C.9. The Bureaucracy

Except for the top layer, the one-million-strong bureaucracy has essentially remained the same, despite the efforts of the Aquino Presidential Commission on Government Reorganization and the one-year purge of misfits from the bureaucracy authorized by the Freedom Constitution. The elimination of progressives from the top echelons of the bureaucracy, victims of compromise and horse trading, helped derail bureaucratic reforms. Bureaucratic corruption continued as existing networks of grafters and misfits were left untouched by the reorganization.

C.10. Graft and Corruption

President Aquino's image and character are one of integrity and uprightness. Since the time she decided to fight Marcos for the presidency, she has been on moral high ground. Within a year after her accession to power, the government had filed 39 civil cases with the Sandiganbayan involving 314 defendants headed by Marcos and his family. These cases were mostly for graft and corruption, theft, embezzlement, fraud, and other crimes allegedly committed by Marcos and his cronies.

But President Aquino's moral ascendancy has not filtered down to the lower reaches of the bureaucracy and to other branches of the government where corruption remains. Rumors about the questionable activities of certain presidential relatives began to circulate. In her official family, one of the most damaging scandals was the Garchitorena case at the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR). Smuggling of all kinds of commodities, including guns, was unabated during this period. A member of the House of Representatives was caught smuggling in more than 300 pieces of handguns a few months before the December coup attempt. However, it is a credit to a concerned media and public and the leadership and membership of the House that the convicted member eventually resigned.

C.11. Civil Order

The upshot of a weak power center in a polity is the propensity of the larger civil society to be restive and disaffected. Alienated groups are politicized. This perpetuates a vicious cycle, because central authorities begin to crack down on civil dissent and a hardening of lines becomes more acute.

Public school teachers, the religious sector, and even those in the creative arts, conventionally apolitical, have increasingly taken to the streets. Political awakening is infectious, and it is not surprising that military elements get politicized as well.

A politically charged atmosphere also invites crime and other types of anti-social behavior. This especially becomes pronounced in times of economic hardship. Manila has one of the highest crime rates internationally. In a report of Defense Secretary Fidel V. Ramos, 179,661 crime incidents were registered nationwide in 1987, or 26 incidents per 100,000 people.¹³ But what has created the image of civil disorder in the minds of the people, perhaps beyond what is warranted by the objective situation, is a number of sensational cases that have been particularly mishandled by government and which media have seized upon. Among these are hostage crises such as the Rizal Alih drama that led to the deaths of BGen Eduardo Batalla and Col Romeo Abendan and the assassinations of Congressman Moises Espinosa and American Col James Rowe. The President and Department of National Defense strongly condemned the Digos and Asturias massacres, but like other incidents in the past, these two major crimes are likely to remain unsolved.

Contributing to the general state of civil disorder were the strikes, work stoppages, demonstrations, and other forms of protest actions by all kinds of organizations representing teachers, students, workers, farmers, fisherfolk, women, jeepney drivers, and other constituencies. The problems fed into each other; people were confronted not only by transportation, garbage, and traffic problems, but also power outages and water shortages. This confluence of events provided the setting for the launching of the December coup attempt which nearly put the country over the edge. A final straw was the increase in oil prices a few days before the attempted coup. The Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) and the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) were poised to go on a *Welgang Bayan*.

C.12. Fragility of Democracy

There is a greater consciousness among Filipinos of the reversibility of political arrangements. Change applies not only to administrations, but to systems as well. The coup attempts, the insurgency, and the secessionist movements are persistent reminders that if real reforms are not obtained under a democratic dispensation, radical alternatives may become acceptable, feasible, and even affordable.

It is far easier to dismantle a dictatorial regime than to make a democracy work. The forces and resources for achieving the former maybe the least appropriate in achieving the latter. People power was easier to galvanize against a hated dictator than to build consensus on pressing and crucial issues such as foreign debt, retention of the US military facilities, agrarian and urban land reform, decentralization, and population control.

Democracy requires an atmosphere of experimentation, pluralism, tolerance, empathy. Such an atmosphere is instantaneously denied by the resort to terrorism and violence that accompany coup attempts. The survivalist response of government to the coups detracts from its developmental functions, as well as impairs its ability to guarantee a democratic space under which democratic institutions can take root and gain strength.

The choice of democracy is at once a choice, at least in the short term, of “inefficiency” in discerning and pursuing the collective purpose. Premium is given to the participatory process as an end in itself, detracting resources and attention from the objectives of poverty-alleviation, social equity, delivery of basic services, and sustainable economic growth.

The change of government from Marcos to President Aquino demonstrated the desire of the people to make Philippine democracy more participative. This much is enshrined in the 1987 Constitution. However, the government has not been as supportive of grassroots organizations as it promised, and no law has been enacted which would effectively allow people’s organizations to participate at “all levels of social, political and economic decision making” as envisioned in Article XIII, Sections 15 and 16 of the Constitution. If the government were more

responsive and such a law passed, the people's stake in the working of democracy would increase and grassroots organization would provide an effective force against undemocratic attempts to gain political power.

C.13. Popular Support for Government

A review of the social history of protest movements in this country reveals an increasing emphasis on the notion of "rights" and a corresponding ability to mobilize action in pursuit of those rights. It is no longer just a matter of asking for higher wages or more amenities from the government. People's groups have become more militant in asserting their rights, and in the process, questioning, confronting, or even seeking the overthrow of duly constituted authority.

While there has been an increasing political sophistication among various citizens and groups on the issue of people's rights and entitlements, there has not been a corresponding increase in their ability to assume more responsibilities and obligations. As University of the Philippines (UP) President Jose Abueva puts it, we have a societal imbalance that may be traceable to the "expansive and romantic" rhetoric of the Constitution and the fact that "our constitutional rights are not balanced by a bill of duties and obligations."¹⁴

While the people themselves are not blameless for the general ills of our society, a more transcendent leadership in the various sectors of government, particularly the Executive, is crucial, when the age-old problems of social unrest, political alienation, economic inequities, lack of progress especially in relation to our Asian neighbors, and graft and corruption are complicated by an unusually heavy debt problem and the dynamics of a society in transition from a dictatorship.

The political environment for the December 1989 and earlier coup attempts saw the increased restiveness of various sectors of the population in response to issues and problems. This may have led the coup plotters to believe that the environment was conducive for such an attempt, thinking that the people would rally behind them.

The people did not. No matter how dissatisfied and frustrated the people have become under the current political situation, a military takeover has not been considered a preferred alternative by a significant number of people. In the August 1987 coup, civilians were shot, wounded, or killed by coup participants because they were jeering the soldiers. The people denounced the violence that was perpetuated by the coup forces, especially in August 1987 and in December 1989. Clearly, while many sectors are restive and are demanding governmental action on political, economic, and social reforms in response to the complex crisis that appears to grip the nation, it was a mistake for the plotters of the December 1989 coup attempt to read this political climate as being conducive to a military takeover of government.

D. Foreign Military Influence¹⁵

This section looks into foreign military organizations particularly in Southeast Asia for plausible influences on the Philippine military and the predisposition of some of its elements to launch coups. These influences will be categorized into (1) shared regional security perspectives, (2) demonstration effects of the neighbors' military establishments on the AFP, (3) relative deprivation of the Philippine military compared to its foreign counterparts, and (4) doctrinal and logistical influence of a patron military organization.

The shift in Philippine foreign policy that occurred in the late 1960s and 1970s brought the Philippines closer to the region where it belongs. Regional cooperation entailed closer interaction among the military establishments of countries in the region. Interaction occurred in joint short-term training programs, familiarization tours, participation in joint sea and air exercises, conferences, and symposia in the ASEAN, as well as in the broader Asia-Pacific region. These regularly and continuously exposed Filipino military officers to the role of the military in other ASEAN countries, and the nature, benefits, and quality of military careers in neighboring countries.

D.1. Shared Southeast Asian Security Perspectives

Internal security problems in Southeast Asia stem primarily from the contested legitimacy of governments, manifested in insurgency, secessionism, cultural strife, and incessant intra-elite struggles. In addition to subversion, the inherent weakness of societies in meeting the domestic security and welfare requirements of their populations has also encouraged continued foreign involvement in internal affairs. To cope with internal and external security requirements, states have increasingly relied on their instruments of legitimate coercion and violence — the military establishment—to help resolve critical issues of state viability and political independence.

Political institutions and military establishments at present have been fashioned in part by the constant and critical interplay between internal and external security requirements in the ASEAN countries of Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines. These countries in a sense constitute a security community, because none of them considers any other ASEAN member a likely aggressor.¹⁶ Since 1975, they have increased military cooperation among themselves especially in the exchange of intelligence, regularized meetings of military staffs, and combined training exercises. As a result of these interactions, there is an awareness that the military establishments in Southeast Asia share common security problems, and that for a number of them, a more active military role has proved effective in bringing about not only security, but welfare as well.

D.2. Demonstration Effect

The eight coups so far attempted in the Philippines are not uncommon by Third World standards. Of 157 coup attempts and successful *golpes de estado* which occurred during the 1958 – 1977 period, only six took place in Europe, while a vast majority of the coups took place in 55 countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. By 1985, the military controlled governments in 58 of 109 countries in the Third World.¹⁷

The military-dominated governments in Indonesia and Thailand serve as working models of a developmental role for the military. The Philippine military could not be oblivious to the fact that in Indonesia and Thailand (as well as elsewhere in East Asia — Taiwan and South Korea), the military has been active and effective not only in combatting communist aggression, quelling multi-ethnic disturbances, and warding off external threats, but in pursuing national development goals as well. The better benefits and higher level of psychological satisfaction enjoyed by military officers and men in these countries reflect their success in performing a combined defense and welfare role.

D.2.a. Indonesian Model

The armed forces has proven to be an influential instrument in Indonesia's struggle for national independence, political stability, economic development, and legitimization of an authoritarian rule. When civilian supremacy no longer proved to be an effective principle in the conduct of government, Indonesia opted for the political dominance of its military, which has been steeped and disciplined in the traditional values of *Pancha Sila* and the Soldiers' Oath. The Indonesian military has been effective in armed conflict such as the abortive 1965 communist uprising, the East Timor controversy, and external ones such as the 1963 *Konfrontasi* with Malaysia.

The economic development of Indonesia owes a great deal to the active developmental role played by the armed forces under the uninterrupted leadership of President Suharto, the general who brought the military to power in 1965. Working with a team of professional economists, the military gradually re-allocated government resources from defense to socio-economic development, successfully striking a path toward social welfare and national prosperity.

The Indonesian Army has also effectively fashioned itself as an effective arbiter of national issues and problems through the institutionalization of the principles of *Pancha Sila* and *Dua Fungsi*. *Pancha Sila* refers to five principles: belief in one God, humanitarianism, national unity, consultative democracy, and social justice. By guiding the proper conduct of society, *Pancha Sila* is considered above politics. The *Doktrin Dua Fungsi* is the performance by the armed forces of an active social and political role in addition to the military or defense role. The former entails efforts to develop a prosperous and joint social development.

The most potent doctrine that galvanized the Indonesian military since its postwar independence struggle has been its nationalism and its anti-communism. The Indonesian Army has enjoyed immense prestige because it was successful in the struggle for independence from the Dutch and the Japanese, unlike its immediate neighbors, including the Philippines, whose independence was won by civilian leaders.

Indonesia's anti-communism is evident in President Suharto's warning to President Aquino during her state visit to Indonesia in 1986: "If you give [the CPP/NPA] any opportunity to consolidate, form forces, they will use it."¹⁸ To signal their unflagging anti-communism, the Indonesian Army executed nine members of the outlawed Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) in October 1986, some 19 years after their sentencing.

The model that Indonesia presents to coup plotters is not only the developmental role of the military, but also the radical solution to the communist threat. The so-called "Indonesian solution" to the communist problem refers to the physical elimination by the Indonesian Army of more than half a million suspected communists during the period, 1965 – 1969.¹⁹ The Indonesian solution is said to have inspired the anti-communist purge led by the Chilean military in 1973.²⁰ The Indonesian solution appears to appeal to the RAM-Honasan Faction (RAM-HF) and the Young Officers Union (YOU), who consider a "surgical operation" justified to achieve their purpose.

D.2.b. Thai Model

The Thai and the Indonesian military are complementary and mutually reinforcing models for the Philippine military.

A notable feature in the rule of the military in Thailand is reflected in the interlocking relationships between it and the business sector. Through the numerous business and economic connections of the military, much of the economic growth and development of Thailand was spurred. However, this kind of politico-economic relations in at least one instance, disturbed the generally close relationship between the military and the monarchy which is the key factor to Thai stability.²¹

Another feature of the Thai military that may have inspired similar developments in the Philippine military is the formation of the Young Military Officers Group (Young Turks) of the Royal Thai Armed Forces (RTAF). The Group questioned the posture and beliefs and distanced themselves from their elder officers and superiors.²² The populist and democratic sentiments of the Young Turks resulted in the successful overthrow of the civilian government in 1977. After losing power, they tried again in 1981 but they were unsuccessful because of the timely intervention of the royal family. Nevertheless, the young military officers have laid claim to being arbiters of conflict and to being an activist force for social change.

The Thai Young Turks may have inspired a group of junior Filipino military officers who participated in the failed December coup to step out of the shadow of RAM-HF to mount their own opposition to the Aquino government. They call themselves the YOU. According to an AFP document, YOU's earliest manifestations were the statements and press releases issued in 1986 by the so-called Young Lieutenants, Captains and Majors (YLCM) which during that time expressed plans of forming a political party within the military as a counter-force to the CPP/NPA. The document identified the YOU's membership as revolving around PMA batches 1978 to 1988 and reservists who are mostly assigned in the National Capital Region.²³

Unlike the RAM-HF, there seems to be no personality cult in YOU and no traditional political sponsors to compromise the group's principles. According to observers, there was considerable unhappiness within the ranks of military rebels over the macho-like image woven around Honasan. This may explain why the YOU chose to release its statements through a collective fictional spokesman — Capt Carlos Maglalang.²⁴

The YOU believes that "the military institution is not limited to being a mere security force but is an active partner in nation-building." It contends that instead of depoliticizing the military, it should be ideologized into a pro-people army and a law enforcement institution.²⁵

Just like the Thai Young Turks of the 1980s, the YOUs initial grievances focused on its own military hierarchy. The main issues raised were those of low pay, a distorted promotions system, and graft and corruption in the higher echelons. The YOU sought to differentiate itself from the RAM-HF and the Soldiers of the Filipino People (SFP) through their ideology of Filipinism, which it defines as thenon-communist Left alternative to imperialism, fascism, and communism. Similar to the Thai Young Turks, the YOU has also employed leftist rhetorics, e.g., mass democracy, anti-capitalism, anti-elitism.

D.2.c. Limited Applicability of the Models

While the Indonesian and Thai models may have persuasive influences on the Filipino military interventionists, various prerequisites for the apparent success of these models are not found in the Philippines.

The degree of socio-economic development in Indonesia at the time of independence was so low that the Indonesian Army was the modern sector in Indonesia. The communist uprising in 1965 which induced the prominence of the military in society has no parallel in the Philippines. The so-called Indonesian solution where more than half a million were executed based on mere suspicion would be unacceptable to Filipinos.

Other conditions in Indonesia do not apply to the Philippines. For one, oil resources have allowed the military to play a developmental role, earmarking resources for national development, despite the inefficiencies of widespread graft and corruption. Indonesia is also one of the world's largest nations, and like China and the Soviet Union, authoritarian rule and an increased political role for the military have found greater legitimacy and justification. Furthermore, the Indonesian military is also inextricably linked to intense Indonesian nationalism that developed out of the struggle for independence.

On the other hand, the Thais have a stable and powerful political institution in the monarchy, which has served as a moderating, checking, and legitimizing influence on military rule. As the ASEAN frontline state, it has been deeply involved and concerned with the conflict in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Actual penetration of the Thai border has led to the military's engagement of external forces. These are conditions that have necessitated and justified a high-profile political role for the Thai armed forces, conditions which are not present in the Philippine case. The fact that the Thais have no colonial experience may also explain the self-confidence of the Thai military which may not be present in equal measure to the Philippines.

In both the Indonesian and Thai cases, there are also religious and cultural variables that must be considered. The Buddhist religion in Thailand and Islam in Indonesia give these countries a different cultural perspective from the Philippines, which is predominantly Roman Catholic. In fact, studies suggest the Philippines is closer to Latin America in terms of psycho-cultural make-up, rather than to Asia.

On the whole, the military forces of Indonesia and Thailand are able to work within the framework of philosophical ideas, historical factors, and national objectives that had long taken root in their respective indigenous societies.²⁶

D.3. Relative Deprivation

The constant interaction of Filipino military officers with their counterparts from other ASEAN countries conceivably makes the former feel underprivileged, less modern, and less prestigious by comparison, in terms of the overall quality of the armed forces, and the benefits and privileges of individual military officers. For example, the Malaysian government purchased some US\$2 billion worth of new military equipment over the last two years for its army. Indonesia and Singapore have outfitted their air force with F-16 A/B aircrafts.²⁷ By comparison, the AFP suffers as most of its equipment are either surplus or used.

The quality and capability of the AFP can also be gleaned from the levels of military expenditures. The Philippine military spends the least amount, as a percentage of GNP, among the ASEAN countries even though as a percentage of central government appropriations, ranks third. Within ASEAN, the Philippines receives less US Foreign Military Sales (FMS) credits than Thailand, which does not host a US base.

The uniformed services in Malaysia are well-paid, well-cared for upon retirement, and enjoy commercial opportunities when no longer in active duty. There are no glaring grievances to justify exceeding their traditional role. Also, the police balance off the army with their paramilitary activities, manpower, equipment, and control of the intelligence apparatus of the country.

In addition to the formal rewards and benefits provided by the military establishment, Thai military officers have also enjoyed for decades lucrative business affiliations and operations.²⁸ Commercial benefits are likewise enjoyed by Malaysian and Indonesian officers upon retirement.

Not even the martial law years provided a comparable situation for the Philippine military, because of the inequity in the distribution of benefits. Though these years gave the military the biggest share in the national budget (about 24 percent of government expenditures in 1974), equity and distribution among the military men were not fulfilled.²⁹

While the average Filipino soldier remained in a dismal economic state, the favored military officers enjoyed relative comfort due to additional income from government -owned and -controlled enterprises. The drastic reduction in such business-related benefits under the present administration may have led to heightened feelings of relative deprivation among many military officers.

D.4. Doctrinal and Logistical Influence

The persistent influence of American security perspectives and military doctrines primarily stems from the inertia of Philippine-American “special relations”, which has continued to be manifested in the participation of Filipino officers in American military training programs and the continuing logistical dependence of the Philippines on the United States.

These “special relations” most obvious on the area of military relations have for decades predisposed the Philippine military to adopt or be sympathetic to the “security” and “threat” perceptions of the US. In the Cold War era, the Philippine armed forces supported the military campaign of the US against communism in Korea and Vietnam. Presently, the anti-communist struggle in Philippine territory is said to conform to the “low-intensity conflict” strategy favored by the Pentagon. The defeat or containment of communist insurgencies remains one of the pillars of American security policy in Southeast Asia.

The United States tops the other countries in terms of the extent of the training programs it offers Philippine military personnel. Its security assistance to the Philippines under the International Military Education Training Program (IMETP) started in 1950. By 1985 about \$41,529 million had been expended for training of 18,071 Philippine military officers.³⁰ The influence of the program may perhaps be discerned in the training policies of the AFP meant to continue and be directed towards developing highly-trained personnel in small unit operations. The rationale and content of the curriculum reveal an unmistakably US pattern and orientation.

AFP defense capabilities are primarily geared for maintaining internal order, rather than meeting external security needs. This development is a function of the security arrangements between the Philippines and the United States (Military Bases Agreement, Military Assistance Pact, and the Mutual Defense Treaty) since 1947. As already noted in Chapter II, the Philippines has been dependent on the US for its external security, and for its internal security weaponry. This twin dependency provides the US continuing leverage to retain its military facilities in the Philippine bases.

Philippine dependence on a single source of arms (i.e., the United States) seems to have increased as evidenced by the fact that it obtained 82 percent of its weapons from the US for the 1981 – 1985 period, compared to 76 percent during the 1961 – 1965 period. Moreover, without prior American consent, the Philippines cannot purchase weapons from third countries. Thus, Philippine-American security arrangements, coupled with low Philippine economic capabilities, have led to the AFP being the least modern armed forces in ASEAN.

E. Political Orientations in the Philippine Military³¹

This section presents the psychomilieu of selected officers, men, and units of the military. Central to the soldier's psychomilieu are his political orientations — values, beliefs, attitudes, expectations about government and politics. These may or may not correspond to the objective milieu.

To examine the present political orientations in the AFP, a number of private research organizations and individual social scientists were invited by the Commission to present proposals. The Commission evaluated several proposed methods for studying the political orientations of officers and men in the military establishment. Basically, two methods were considered: a random survey of the military, and interviews with purposively selected respondents from military units of particular interest to the Commission. The Commission decided to undertake the latter approach instead of a full random sample survey of the entire military establishment. It was neither feasible nor prudent for the Commission to attempt an AFP-wide sample survey because (1) it could anticipated and manipulated by renegade elements to reflect a biased political orientation, which could then be used to create a bandwagon effect in swinging military and civilian support for the coup plotters; (2) it would involve obtrusive measures, plausibly politicalizing a significant cross-section of the military by exposing them to novel, politically sensitive questions and possibly inducing an “opinion” where there may have been none; (3) a random sample would require interviews of specific officers and men who may be deployed in combat zones, entailing extremely high costs, or an unacceptably large number of substitutions; and (4) such a study would take too long to conduct, process, and analyze.

In adopting the key respondents approach, the Commission settled for an indicative reading of the state of mind of selected strategic military units — most of which were directly involved as coup forces in the December 1989 coup attempt (with some anti-coup forces included for comparative purposes). The results of the study would be useful in suggesting how far reforms and changes undertaken by the government and the military leadership since the last coup may have rendered participation in another coup less likely for officers and men of the selected strategic units.

Since the units which supported the previous coup were already “neutralized” (i.e., confinement, re-assignment or dismissal) of rebel elements in the aftermath of the failed December 1989 coup, the questions that had to be answered were: As they presently stand, what are the political orientations of the officers and men in these selected military units? How conducive are these orientations to unauthorized military actions? Based on their political orientations, what is the likelihood that the selected units would join yet another coup?

The selected military units consisted of company- or battalion-sized formations identified by the Commission as having played a role in the December 1989 coup attempt. A few of the units studied were not exactly the same units which participated in the said coup attempt because the latter had been disbanded and their leaders and men detained. Hence, a few of the study units consisted of reconstituted military units to which participants in the failed December 1989 coup had been re-assigned.

The study plan called for interviews with key respondents from 12 units pre-identified by the Commission to be conducted in June and July 1990. For each unit, the pre-selected key respondents were the unit's Executive Officer (EX-O), one platoon leader, and the company sergeant. Two “opinion leaders” in the unit identified by these pre-selected key respondents were added to the list. At five respondents for each of the 12 units, a total of 60 interviews were to be conducted.

An interview guide was designed to enable eight field researchers to cover uniformly and comprehensively the aspects of political orientation the study was concerned with. The respondents were asked to describe not their personal attitudes, but the attitudes of the members of the unit with regard to the various political subjects broached in the interview. It was part of the intention of the study, however, that in describing the attitudes of the other members of the unit, the informant would actually be “projecting” faithfully his own attitudes. Such projections, from the study's point of view, were acceptable as representations of the orientation of the whole unit, especially where the information and data from the five respondents in the unit cross-validated one another.

The results of the study using this method were meant to be indicative rather than conclusive. The results are applicable only to the selected units taken as a group and should not be extrapolated to the entire AFP. The key respondents were not randomly selected from the members of the units, so the information is not, strictly

speaking, generalizable for the unit. However, validity in this case may not be any less than in a random survey where soldiers are asked about their own opinion, but mask their true predispositions.

The Commission was able to access the tentative results of a survey conducted by the AFP involving 1,519 respondents in November and December 1989 (just before and immediately after the coup attempt). The results of the two surveys seem to validate each other.

The respondents in the June-July 1990 study were asked to describe the political orientations of the officers and men in their respective units towards the following:

1. political issues and problems, personalities and institutions
2. the nature of Philippine government and politics
3. preferred mode of political change in the Philippines (status quo, reform, or radical change)
4. the role of the military in Philippine government and politics, and
5. unauthorized military actions

E.1. Political Orientation

E.1.a. Military Issues and Problems

Within the military, issues relating to their material well-being and that of their families are foremost in the minds of officers and Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs). The main concerns of soldiers in the selected units are their low salaries, allowances, and benefits; the inadequate, inferior, and delayed distribution of equipment; and disparities in pay, promotions, and disciplinary actions. Issues of a non-material nature were the ineffective AFP leadership, the public outcry against the politicization of the military, graft and corruption within the military establishment, and unfair treatment of rebel soldiers compared to communist rebels.

E.1.b. National Issues and Problems

From a national perspective, issues relating to the quality of political leadership and the government are the greatest concern of officers and NCOs. The main ones are graft and corruption in government, weak and ineffective national leadership, poor economic conditions of the people, "too much politics" in government, the continuing growth of insurgency, and the slow justice system.

Officers show much more concern about graft and corruption than NCOs, while NCOs show much more concern about the socio-economic conditions of the people. The officers appear to be more politically-oriented than the NCOs.

E.1.c.	Preferred	Resource	Person
on the National Situation			

Soldiers in the selected military units prefer national leaders and high-ranking military officers to be their resource persons on the national situation. Among the favorites were ex-Secretary of Agrarian Reform Miriam Santiago, President Aquino, Secretary Ramos, Gen Renato de Villa, MGen Rodolfo Biazon, and Senators Jovito Salonga, Ernesto Maceda, Rene Saguisag, and Aquilino Pimentel.

E.1.d. Assessment of Overall Operation of Government

Seven out of ten of all respondents say their units are dissatisfied with the overall operation of government. The main reasons given were (1) government is incompetent and ineffective, (2) government has not been able to provide for the soldiers' basic needs, (3) there are too many politicians and corrupt government personnel, and (4) government is unable to deliver basic services to the people.

Eight out of ten officer respondents are dissatisfied with the overall operation of government compared to six out of ten NCOs.

E.1.e. Perceptions of Threats to Government

The two greatest threats to the stability of government are the communist rebels and politicians and corrupt officials. A majority of officers think the communist rebels are a more serious threat than politicians and corrupt officials; a majority of NCOs believe politicians and corrupt officials are a more serious threat compared to the communist rebels.

E.1.f. Attitude Towards Political Change

Nine out of ten respondents think their units prefer reforms as against radical change or maintenance of the status quo as a solution to the problems of the country. More officers are radical-minded than NCOs; more NCOs are conservative than officers. Interestingly, the respondents almost to a man understood “radical change” to mean a military takeover of government.

E.1.g. Attitude Towards Military Participation in Politics

There is a wide range of opinion among the respondents as to whether the military should have a bigger share in government decision-making or not. These range from (1) the military not sharing in government decision-making, (2) the military participating but only in areas where “it has expertise”, to (3) the military participating because “it has a role to play.”

More officers believe the military should not participate in government decision-making, while more NCOs think the military should participate as “it has a role to play” in politics.

E.1.h. Issue and Problem Areas Salient to the Military

The respondents think that if the military should participate, in decision-making, it should be in the areas of counter-insurgency, the organization of the military, US military bases issue, treatment of coup participants, human rights policy, government’s socio-economic program, and morality and ethical concerns in government, in that order.

E.1.i. Qualities Conducive to Military’s Political Participation

If the military were to help solve the problems of the nation, the respondents believe that the military’s discipline is its most important contribution. They also mentioned sense of service, duty, and self-sacrifice; the military’s first-hand experience with the insurgency problem; and field experiences that render the military better informed of people’s problems than local civilian officials.

E.1.j. Foremost Concerns in Unauthorized Military Action

The respondents agreed that soldiers have no way of knowing in advance whether their unit is about to undertake an unauthorized military action. Family is the foremost concern of a soldier involved in an unauthorized military action. Unit “esprit de corps” is a bigger concern for officers compared to NCOs, while “career” is a bigger concern for NCOs compared to officers.

E.2. Classification of Coup Participants

Based on the description of the respondents, the participants in coups and similar unauthorized military actions may be classified into six categories of awareness and involvement — the deceived, the conformist, the gambler, the agnostic, the believer, and the plotter.

E.2.a. The Deceived

He joins because he thinks he is on some secret mission, or is told it is for some exercise. When fighting starts and he realizes what is happening, he becomes a conformist, as esprit de corps gets the better of him.

E.2.b. The Conformist

He joins the coup because everybody else in his unit does. He figures if he would not be a target of the constitutionalist forces, he would be the target of the rebel forces. As one informant says, "*Magsisisinalang kung tapos na. Nandiyan na yan. Napasubo na.*" (The time to regret is when it's all over. It's already there. We're already in it.)

E.2.c. The Gambler

In the event of a coup, he would initially be on the government side, but ultimately, for whichever is the winning side, because he has to think of his career and his family. He regards brigade- or division-level "unauthorized moves as acceptable as their probability of success is higher compared to company or battalion moves.

E.2.d. The Agnostic

He is generally against a coup d'état or any illegitimate measure to subvert the government. But, in extreme cases, when the government persists to be unresponsive, he will find a coup justifiable.

E.2.e. The Believer

He joins a coup because he believes absolutely in his superior officer. He does not mind risking his personal safety; he does this every day. He is more likely to be a younger than an older officer.

E.2.f. The Plotter

He is convinced that the military holds the solution to the ills of the nation and military intervention is the avenue to personal political power. He justifies his actions through some ingenious interpretation of his "constitutional duty", e.g., to save the President from the politicians who surround and control her or to save the country.

E.3. Predisposition of Selected Units for Political Action

On the whole, seven out of the 12 selected units appear predisposed to participate in future unauthorized military actions against the government (Interventionists), while five units appear predisposed to defend the government and uphold the Constitution (Constitutionalists). A brief political orientation profile of each unit is presented below to provide a sense of this rather serious conclusion. For the moment, the real identity of the units are not disclosed.

E.3.a. Results By Units

Commands. Based on interviews with selected respondents from the unit, Command A shows constitutionalist inclinations. The present Commanding Officer (CO) happens to be the single officer who resisted the orders of the previous CO to join the December 1989 coup attempt. A firm believer in the Constitution, he is widely respected. The respondents are one in saying that the appointment of the CO and the reforms he has instituted are the best and most memorable events in the Command.

Similarly, Command B displays constitutionalist inclinations. Although, the respondents are politicalized and dissatisfied with government, most expressed an aversion to coups as these foster factionalism in the military, apart from their having proved futile in previous attempts.

On balance, Command C shows constitutionalist inclinations. The respondents from the Command are not politicized and their concern is largely the economic welfare of soldiers and their families. They believe the military should be consulted in government decision-making, but that decisions must all be left to officials in government.

Air Force Attack Squadron. There is reason to believe that elements of Attack Squadron D of Strike Wing E of the PAF have interventionist inclinations. The enmity between the Flying School and PMA graduates may again prompt them to take opposite sides in the event of another coup. Both officer and NCO respondents in the unit are also politicized; they consider graft and corruption the root cause of government problems and the major threat to its stability.

Philippine Marines. The members of Company E of Marine Battalion Landing Team (MBLT) F indicate constitutionalist inclinations. This company was only provisionally organized as a counter-coup force and cannot have any participation in a coup unless reconstituted. Nonetheless, its former members are generally committed to democracy, are believers in civilian supremacy over the military, and are strongly anti-coup.

Likewise, Marine Company G shows constitutionalist inclinations. The CO and other officers of the unit hold constitutionalist views and are well-liked by their men. These officers express strong disdain for rebel soldiers. They are most concerned and emotional about the damage the December 1989 coup attempt has wrought on the image of the Marines.

Infantry Units in Luzon. Company H of the Infantry Battalion I operating in Central Luzon would likely be interventionist in the event of another coup. The CO of the unit, who allegedly joined the December 1989 coup attempt, is unrepentant about his involvement in that coup. He remains dissatisfied with government and believes in radical change if no reforms are forthcoming from government.

The same interventionist predisposition is true of Company J of Infantry Battalion K operating in Cagayan Valley. The CO of the unit exhibits sympathies for the RAM-HF/SFP. He has little confidence in government, and feels a visit by President Aquino to their unit would be useless.

Another likely interventionist is Company L of Infantry Battalion M also operating in Central Luzon. Prior to its reorganization as Infantry Battalion M, the company's mother unit was Infantry Battalion N which sided with the RAM-HF during the August 1987 coup attempt. As Infantry Battalion M, they participated in the December 1989 coup attempt on the orders of a well-known renegade lieutenant colonel, their battalion commander at the time.

Infantry Units in Mindanao. Company P of Infantry Battalion Q, operating in Mindanao would be predisposed to join another coup. In fact, the CO of the unit said he would follow an order to join a coup if this were to come from higher levels such as the brigade or division.

Similarly, Company R of Infantry Battalion S, also operating in Mindanao is inclined to be interventionist. The CO and EX-0 are disgruntled with the present government because of its weak and inefficient leadership. This unit is additionally susceptible because its battalion commander is a brother of a renegade officer and the current CO was reportedly a participant in the failed December 1989 coup.

The third Mindanao study unit, Company T belonging to Light Armor Battalion U operating in Mindanao, is also inclined to intervene. The unit's CO complains about the "politicking" in government, and graft and corruption both in the military and in the civilian government. The CO is well-liked by his men and could sway them to his side.

E.3.b. Other Findings

In many ways, the distinction between the Interventionists and the Constitutionals does not lie in whether units are or are not politicized. With the exception of Command C, all of the study units are rather politicized in that they (1) view politicians with disdain; (2) complain about graft and corruption in government; (3) perceive President Aquino as a weak President; (4) are dissatisfied with the present government because it is unable to deliver basic

services to the people; and (5) favor a bigger decision-making role for the military in areas pertinent to it such as counter-insurgency, US bases, human rights, military organization, and trial of rebel soldiers.

What distinguishes the two is the nature and extent of the units' participation in previous coups, particularly the December 1989 attempt. **A unit's participation in earlier coups has tended to heighten its anti-government sentiments along the areas mentioned above, leading the unit to be more convinced of the righteousness of coups.** If the Interventionist units were to find themselves in another coup, they may move with more determination.

E.4. Leadership, Socialization, and Milieu Factors

Apart from the levels of politicalization and dissatisfaction within the military, the data in the study indicate the following factors help to motivate soldiers to join a coup. However, it should be noted that the very same factors can motivate a soldier to resist a coup. These factors are:

E.4.a. Fraternal Ties and Family Relationships

Family ties appear to be extensive, given the tendency of military men to encourage their sons and other relations to pursue a career in soldiering. Similarly, fraternal "batchmate" and "schoolmate" ties endure and have been mobilized to subvert the chain of command through a coup attempt.

E.4.b. In-groups and Out-groups in Military Training

The "in-group, out-group" distinction that is fostered to mold military units into effective combat units also creates the inter-service rivalries (e.g., Army vs PC) and intra-unit factionalization (Marines vs other Navy units, Flying School vs PMA graduates in the same Air Force squadron), that render military units susceptible to manipulation and often places them on opposite sides in a coup attempt.

E.4.c. The Role of COs and Other Ranking Officers

In addition to the hierarchical and authoritarian structure of the military, soldiers tend to idolize their commanding officers, which enable disgruntled officers to persuade entire units to side with anti-government forces. In a case where the commanding officer is disliked by his men, soldiers are prone to take the opposite of whatever stand the CO takes.

E.4.d. Other Personal Factors

The participation of soldiers in unauthorized military actions may also be influenced by other factors, such as religious affiliation. According to one Iglesia ni Kristo soldier, it was the strength of their religious convictions that prevailed on them not to join the coup, even as their fellow soldiers ostracized them for not doing so.

E.5. Summary of the Study

The study shows that two units shifted from their previous predisposition to join a coup to its present anti-coup attitude. This indicates some success in the government's corrective measures. The shifts are attributable to the assignment of respected commanding officers with a constitutionalist orientation. However, other units, in spite of having been neutralized of rebel elements but with the same commander, appear to retain a predisposition towards coups.

As suggested above, participation in previous coup attempts is crucial in explaining the predisposition of military men to participate in succeeding attempts.

The next chapter discusses how the previous coup attempts were preludes to and preparations for the December 1989 attempt, tracing the continuity of the effort to grab power, the involvement of key personalities and military units, and the interaction of military principals with civilian co-conspirators and supporters.

ENDNOTES

(1) This section is based on the background paper prepared for the Fact-Finding Commission by Patricia Licuanan, Cristina Montiel, and Natividad Dayan, "The Socialization of Military Officers," marked as Exh. "HHHHHH-3"-Commission.

(2) This section is based on a paper prepared for the Fact-Finding Commission by Dante B. Canlas, "On Military Interventions: Some Considerations from a Political Economy Model," marked as Exh. "IIIIII-2"-Commission, as well as the paper of Maria Socorro H. Gochoco, "The Overall Macroeconomic Situation," marked as Exh. "IIIIII-1"-Commission.

(3) James Chowning Davies, "Aggression, Violence, Revolution, and War" in Jeanne M. Knutson, general ed., Handbook of Political Psychology (San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers, 1973), p. 247. Ted Robert Gurr in Why Men Rebel (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970) advances a similar theory of relative deprivation which posits that people feel deprived when there is a gap between what they want and what they can get. Comparison is not just over time, but also as between the differing rewards of various social groups.

(4) Ibid.

(5) National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Philippine Statistical Yearbook (Manila: NEDA, 1989); National Statistics Office, National Income Accounts, various issues.

(6) Philippine Statistical Yearbook, Ibid.

(7) This section is based on the background paper prepared for the Fact-Finding Commission by Belinda A. Aquino, "The Political Environment of the 1989 Coup Attempt" and the paper of Segundo E. Romero Jr, "Philippine Domestic Politics and the Foreign Policy Debate," in Robert A. Scalapino, et al, eds., Asia and the Major Powers: Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy (Berkeley: University of California, Institute of East Asian Studies, 1988), pp. 200-229.

(8) Joaquin Bernas, S.J. in Pansol Reflections. The Role of the Military in a Third World Democracy: The Philippine Experience (Manila: Senate Publication and Editorial Division, 20 January 1990), p. 4.

(9) Tony Guidote, "Performance Rating of the Senate, House of Representatives, the Military and the Police," Senate Weather Bulletin, 89-14 (July 1989), p. 2.

(10) Segundo E. Romero, Jr, "Opinion of Selected Filipino Publics Since the Aquino Assassination: Implications for Participatory Democracy in the Philippines" (Doctoral diss., College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, 1990).

(11) Jaime Zobel de Ayala, "Social Justice in Sound Business Practice," Philippines Free Press. 2 December 1989, p. 45.

(12) Ibid. Underscoring in the original.

(13) Fidel V. Ramos, "The DND-AFP Leading the People for Democracy," Fookien Times Philippine Yearbook (Manila: Fookien Times Yearbook Publishing Co., 1987 – 1988).

- (14) Jose V. Abueva, "The December Coup Attempt and the State of the Nation: Some Lessons and Implications," in Belinda A. Aquino, ed., The Failed December Coup Attempt — View from the UP Community (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Office of Public Affairs and Center for Integrative and Development Studies, 1990), p. 15.
- (15) This section is based on the background paper prepared for the Fact-Finding Commission by Natalia M. Morales, Aileen Baviera, Cecilia Hidalgo, Francisco Magno, Eliseo Cubol, and Jorge Tigno, "External Factors and their Possible Influence on the Perceptions, Attitudes, and Behavior of the Philippine Military," marked as Exh. "JJJJJ"-Commission.
- (16) Sheldon Simon, "ASEAN's Strategic Situation in the 1980s," Pacific Affairs, Vol. 60, No. 2 (Spring 1987).
- (17) Edmundo Garcia, "Resolution of Internal Armed Conflict in the Philippines: The Quest for a Just and Lasting Peace," in Edmundo Garcia and Carolina G. Hernandez, eds., Waging Peace in the Philippines (Quezon City: Ateneo Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs and the UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies, 1989), pp. 25-42.
- (18) Asia Yearbook 1987, pp. 24-25.
- (19) This estimate, considered conservative by others, is by Admiral Sudomo, then head of the Indonesian state security agency given in a Dutch television interview in 1976.
- (20) Edmundo Garcia, The Filipino Quest: A Just and Lasting Peace (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1988), pp. 121-151.
- (21) This happened in the 1970s, when Praphat Charusathien, the deputy of Prime Minister Thanom Kittikachorn, owed his power to his allegedly corrupt business connections.
- (22) See Chai-anan Sumudavanija, The Thai Young Turks (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1982).
- (23) Fe Zamora, "YOU: How the Reb Group was Formed," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 11 June 1990.
- (24) John Mcbeth, "Who are YOU?," Far Eastern Economic Review, 7 June 1990, pp. 24-26.
- (25) Capt Carlos Maglalang, Interview by Center for Investigative Journalism and Asahi Shimbun, 8 and 17 February 1990, Metro Manila, Exh. "ZZZ"- Commission.
- (26) "Not Quite a Coup in Thailand," The Economist, 16 June 1990, p. 27.
- (27) Appendix E, ASEAN States: Major Items of Military Equipment on Order or Recently Delivered, Mid-1987, in Chin Kin Wah, ed., Defense Spending in Southeast Asia (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1987), pp. 315-321.
- (28) David Morell, "The Political Dynamics of Military Power in Thailand" in Edward Olsen and Stephen Jurika, Jr eds., The Armed Forces in Contemporary Asian Societies (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1986), p. 139. See also Thak Chaloemtiarana, Thailand: The Politics of Despotic Paternalism (Bangkok: Social Science Association of Thailand, 1979).
- (29) Philippine Daily Inquirer. Series on RAM Boys, 1-12 January 1990.
- (30) Felipe B. Miranda and Ruben F. Ciron, "The Philippines: Defense Expenditures, Threat Perceptions, and the Role of the United States," in Chin Kin Wah, op. cit., p. 155.

(31) This section is based on a background paper prepared for the Fact-Finding Commission by Virginia A. Miralao and Segundo E. Romero, Jr, "Political Orientations in Selected Units of the Philippine Military," marked as Exh. "HHHHHH-1"- Commission.

The Final Report of the Fact-Finding Commission, October 3, 1990

**THE
FINAL
REPORT**

**OF THE
FACT-FINDING
COMMISSION**

(pursuant to R.A. No. 6832)

OCTOBER 1990

I. Coup d'Etat: An Overview

II. Political Change and Military Transformation in the Philippines, 1966 – 1989: From the Barracks to the Corridors of Power

III. The Environment of the Philippine Military

IV. Military Intervention in the Philippines: 1986 – 1987

V. The Failed December 1989 Coup: Pre-Coup Events and Battle Zone Narratives

VI. The Failed December 1989 Coup: Who?

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The Final Report of the Fact-Finding Commission: I: Coup d'Etat: An Overview

I

COUP D'ETAT: AN OVERVIEW

The coup d'etat, or more appropriately, the coup attempt, as a politico-military event is a recent phenomenon in the Philippine political scene. The country experienced its first coup attempt only in February 1986, when members of the Reform the Armed Forces of the Philippines Movement (RAM) tried to stage one against former President Ferdinand E. Marcos. That attempt failed when security forces loyal to President Marcos uncovered the plot. Subsequent events overtook that coup when the people staged the popular People Power Revolt at EDSA and successfully ended Marcos's rule. That popular revolt confirmed the election victory of and installed Corazon C. Aquino as the duly elected seventh President of the Republic of the Philippines. Barely into its fifth month of governance, the Aquino administration faced the first of seven coup attempts.¹ The most recent was the failed coup attempt of December 1989 which the Fact-Finding Commission was tasked to investigate. Even as this Final Report was being written, wild rumors of a possible eighth coup attempt circulated as a spate of bombings upset the peace of metropolitan Manila and sowed fear among its people.

In any event, the coup d'etat has become a hard fact of political life in the Philippines. Gone are the days of a military totally restricted to the barracks or guarding the borders of the State or building roads, bridges and rendering free basic medical and dental services. As will be shown in the succeeding chapters of this Report, notably Chapter II, the Philippine military over the years and particularly under the tutelage of Marcos, developed far beyond those traditional roles.

Local scholarly studies on the subject of military intervention, specifically on coups d'etat, from which the Commission had hoped to draw some ideas for a framework of study, are still relatively few and inadequate. As a phenomenon, however, the coup d'etat has been a recurring experience that has haunted the majority of the states in Southeast Asia, Latin America and Africa since the 1900s. In these countries, the rise of the military to prominence in the political arena became the obvious outcome of a successful coup. Figures with respect to the number of coup attempts, successful or otherwise, vary from one author to the other. One author counted a total of 311 attempted coups d'etat in some 79 different countries during the period 1945 to 1985, 170 of which were successful,² at least initially. Put another way, these figures illustrate that "half of the sovereign states represented at the United Nations have experienced an illegal or unconstitutional overthrow of their existing governments (democratically elected or not) at some point in their recent history."³

Clearly, in global terms, "independent political activity by the armed forces is...frequent, widespread and of long standing."⁴ One author has noted that of the 51 states existing in or before 1917, all but 19 experienced coups since 1917; of the 28 created between 1917 and 1955, all but 15 had a coup.⁵ In subsequent years until 1980, 70 states⁶ faced a total of 179 coups.⁷ Thus, a total of 115 states all over the world experienced coups from early 1900 up to the end of the last decade.

By the end of 1980, the total number of states governed by men installed into power by some form of military action numbered 37,⁸ "representing 25 percent of the world's 150 independent states and comprising some 55 percent of the population of Latin America, nearly two-thirds of the population of the Arab states of North Africa and the Middle East and a like proportion of the population of sub-Saharan Africa."⁹ Notable in these so-called military regimes is the fact that two had chief executives who were civilians, namely: Uruguay, where the military chose to install a certain Dr Apriano Mendez in lieu of President Bordiguerry in 1976, and Iraq, where Saddam Hussein took over from Field Marshall Bakr.¹⁰

In 24 of the 37 aforementioned military regimes, executive power is vested in the military as an institution by way of a supreme military council.¹¹ There are neither parties nor legislatures in 15 of these regimes, while single official parties exist in the nine others. These 24 states are said to be stratocracies or "closed bureaucratic regimes with the military in supreme control."¹² As for the other 13 military regimes, they are said to be either mixed civilian-military

or wholly civilian, where there is military presence in the Cabinet or an all-civilian Cabinet, respectively, under the leadership of a civilian president installed through a coup.

A. The Phenomenon of the Coup d'Etat

A.1. Coup d'Etat Defined

A coup d'etat is a French word which is more or less synonymous to *putsch* in German and *golpe de estado* in Spanish. It is a general term which describes a method of displacing a government or supplanting a regime through the use of military violence.¹³ A coup d'etat is "a direct seizure of political control by members of the armed forces, who may be acting in concert with civilian allies."¹⁴

A coup d'etat is both a political act and a military action.¹⁵ It is the product of a coalition of cliques and groups, usually including both military and civilian elements, who have been preparing for it for a considerable length of time.¹⁶ In this period of preparation, various groups of political actors will have been sounded out and their support assured or their opposition neutralized.

As a political act, it is an unlawful means of seizing power from the duly constituted government,¹⁷ and employed by the military to replace the political incumbents with themselves or their nominees.

As a military operation, the strategy is naturally of utmost importance.¹⁸ Coup plotters need to consider the elements of secrecy, surprise, and the effective tactical neutralization of the possible military and civilian opposition.

Generally, a coup is staged either by the entire armed forces or by a politicized group of military officers who ride on popular grievances among the officer corps against the civilian leadership.¹⁹ Politicization is the process by which military personnel acquire and develop political awareness and inclination to assume functions beyond the sphere of activities normally pertaining to the military role of national defense. Its extreme form is when they use the arms and resources entrusted to them against the very people and the state they solemnly swore to defend and protect. Politicization can occur at the institutional, sectional, or individual level.²⁰ In the case of the Philippines, it never had the experience of a coup staged by the entire armed forces. Chapter IV will show that the series of coup attempts against the administration of President Aquino were staged by a highly politicized segment in the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

A coup has six distinguishing features. One, it is the effort by a political coalition to illegally replace the existing governmental leaders through violence or the threat of it.²¹ Two, the violence employed is usually small.²² Three, the participants already possess an institutional base of power within the political system.²³ Four, a coup does not necessarily need the participation of the masses, or, to a significant degree, the participation of the bulk of the armed forces.²⁴ Five, it does not openly profess any political line or ideology.²⁵ The purpose of this, presumably, is to avoid any form of opposition from any political forces. Six, it does not happen spontaneously.²⁶

A.2. Elements of a Coup

There appears to be five essential elements of a coup, the most important of which are opportunity and motive. As a leading scholar on the military has pointed out, "to intervene the military must have both the occasion and the disposition."²⁷ The other elements are the military's capability to intervene, the strategy of the coup plot, and the leaders of the coup.

A.2.a. Coup Motives

No military is likely to intervene in the political affairs of its country if in the first place it has no disposition to intervene. Disposition here refers to a combination of conscious motives and of a will or desire to act.²⁸ Motive is a driving force behind men and women who are prepared to risk imprisonment and whatever consequences there may be, as a result of an unlawful pursuit of political power.²⁹

Motives for military intervention are varied and complicated. No single factor can be easily pointed out as the sole cause for intervention. It is oftentimes a conjunction of motives which cause the military to intervene in domestic politics. Chapter VII deals with coup factors as they relate to the December 1989 failed coup attempt.

The usual motives of the military for intervention are the “national interests” as perceived and defined by the officer corps, middle-class interests with which the military generally identifies, institutional or corporate interests of the armed forces, regionalistic, ethnic or particularistic interests, and personal interests of some military coup plotters.³⁰ These motives are discussed in the subsequent sections of this chapter under factors affecting military intervention.

A.2.b. Coup Opportunity

Opportunity refers to the precise occasion of launching a coup. It is the product of some kind of rational calculation before the coup is staged.³¹ It includes the presence of necessary conditions for a successful coup. These conditions can either be created or, if they exist naturally, exploited to the advantage of the coup.³²

The conditions which engender opportunities for mutinous military to intervene³³ are war time, when there is civilian dependence on the military, an overt domestic crisis like a civil war, a latent or chronic crisis like a continuing insurgency or prolonged economic distress, and a vacuum in national leadership. Under these conditions, the military is more likely to play a major and highly visible role. Discussion of these conditions in general, is done in the latter part of this chapter, and with respect to the December 1989 coup attempt in particular, in Chapter III.

A.2.c. Capability for Military Intervention

The armed forces have three decidedly overwhelming political advantages over civilian organizations: a marked superiority in organization, highly emotionalized symbols, and a monopoly of the instruments for legal violence.³⁴ These three elements constitute the political strengths of the military, and underscore its capability for intervention in politics. In addition, the military has certain distinct organizational characteristics which make it behave like a machine. These characteristics are discussed in Section B.1.a.

The highly emotionalized symbols generate political strength. The military exacts observance in its rituals and traditions. The newcomers or recruits are indoctrinated to respect the insignia, merit medals, banners, colors, and other physical manifestations of military traditions and rituals. As these traditions are indoctrinated to inculcate a sense of “service to the nation” among soldiers, they become the symbols of their patriotic deeds and ideals. These symbols oftentimes give the military an idea that everything it does is for the interest of the nation. These also tend to enhance military cohesiveness and camaraderie. Thus, in instances where soldiers are caught in conflict with other soldiers, they invoke camaraderie in settling the conflict.

But the most formidable strength of the military which underscores its capability for intervention is its monopoly of the instruments for legal violence. In instances of conflicts and disagreements, the threat or the use of force may determine the outcome.

A.2.d. Coup Strategy

The degree of success of a coup is sometimes measured on the basis of the extent of bloodshed. One author claims that “the more bloodless a coup, the more successful it is.”³⁵ Other scholars measure its degree of success by the number of hours or days that lapsed before the coup leaders took full control of the government. In effect, the least time spent in seizing government control, the more successful a coup. The real barometer of success ultimately lies in the effective capture of political, power by the coup plotters.

Basically, the three prerequisites for success of a coup are secrecy, surprise, and the neutralization in various ways of the bulk of the armed forces.³⁶

To preserve secrecy, the coup conspirators do not seek the complicity of the entire armed forces.³⁷ The ideal size of the coup conspirators is just large enough to be able to undertake the simultaneous seizure of all crucial targets which include infantry and armored assets, military aircraft, power centers, and all types of communication installations.

The element of surprise is observed by the execution of the coup with optimum speed and coordination. Any error in terms of coordination and miscalculation in speed may allow the government to consolidate its forces and mount resistance to the coup forces.

The element of neutralization includes not only neutralizing the police and the military who are not part of the coup plot, but also the various political forces. These political forces such as political parties, non-government organizations, sectional interests, regional, ethnic and religious groupings, may also protect the government against the coup.

In the context of a coup, neutralization does not necessarily mean the annihilation of its opponents but the imposition of a condition of temporary impotence.³⁸ Hence, to effectively neutralize the political forces, two rules are usually observed by the coup plotters. First, the coup propagandists generally exploit issues that do not antagonize or at least minimize opposition from political forces. Second, maximum speed is observed to temporarily force these political forces who will be caught by surprise into passivity. A delay in the carrying out of the coup plot may allow these political forces to consolidate and organize collective opposition to it.

On the other hand, the neutralization of the bulk of the armed forces may well depend on the crucial targets seized. Communication channels are considered of critical importance for the propaganda and psychological warfare of the coup leaders. Air force assets and armored tanks, if effectively seized, can neutralize the movements of other military forces who are not part of the coup plot. Influential military officers are considered crucial targets for their potential in resisting a coup. To neutralize these officers, they should be seized either in order of importance or simultaneously.³⁹

The nature and quality of recruitment of the military coup supporters and the timing of the day the coup is to be carried out are also crucial factors which may determine the outcome of the coup.

The nature of recruitment may pose a risk to the coup in terms of secrecy and security. Any individual targeted to be recruited may either be a supporter of the coup or an informer of the enemies of the coup. To avert any possibility of recruiting an informer, the three considerations which are usually observed by coup recruiters are links of friendship or camaraderie with the planners of the coup, shared political beliefs and convictions, and family, ethnic and clan links with those planning the coup.⁴⁰ Furthermore, the nature of the recruitment may take the form of any of the following: senior military coup plotters will deceive their men as to what exactly they are going to do; appeal their causes to them by citing anomalies and misconduct of some government officials; or, they would simply threaten them.

The quality of recruits has also often been underscored. The plotters usually recruit the active participation of strategically situated middle-level troop commanders — officers who command infantry or armor battalions stationed in or near the capital city. They also recruit pilots of helicopter gunships or other air assets. The credibility of recruited officers is an important factor in convincing others to support or counter the coup.

The timing of the coup is critical to its success. For instance, at a time when the military security measures against coup plots have become lax, coup leaders have the strategic advantage. The coup also has the advantage when it is launched at a time when there is a serious political issue that ignites widespread criticism of the government.⁴¹

A.2.e. Coup Leaders

A coup is staged by a group of politicized military officers who ride on popular grievances against the civilian government. But because they are able to exploit certain military and national issues, the coup plotters secure sympathy and support from some idealist military officers. These politicized military officers, who usually are not at

the helm of military authority and command, are, as in most cases, driven by personal reasons. The idealist officers, on the other hand, believe that whatever they do are in the best interest of the nation.

Aside from politicized military officers, coup conspirators would also often include civilian individuals. The coup-related experiences of many Latin American countries reveal that some civilian politicians, mostly belonging to the opposition parties, also lent “support” to military coup plotters, or had directly participated in the coup. Military coup leaders listen to the advice of these politicians, count on them for assistance in justifying the coup before public opinion, and solicit their support in running the country if the coup succeeds.⁴²

Politicized military officers are usually composed of middle-ranking officers from the level of captain to lieutenant colonels who do not yet participate extensively in the usual channels of decision-making, and others who hold grievances against top military officers and/or political leaders.⁴³ These officers are noted to be more effective in seeking the obedience of their subordinates because of the fact that they exercise the most direct authority over the latter.

It has been noted that the advantage of middle-ranking officers over their senior commanders in seeking the obedience of their soldiers is more pronounced once the military is highly politicized.⁴⁴ In such conditions, these officers attain considerable independence such that their senior commanders usually cannot force them to counter or support a coup.

B. Theoretical Explanations for the Occurrence of Coup d’Etat

The frequency of military seizures of power through coup d’etat all over the world has spawned many divergent interpretations concerning their causes. From among these views, there appear two general perspectives which seem to encapsulate factors affecting the occurrence of a coup. The first comes from those social scientists who theorize that factors attributable to the military organization are the significant causes of a coup. The second perspective comes from those who believe that societal factors which are external to the military more directly affect the likelihood of a coup d’etat than do the organizational attributes of the military.

Some scholars have warned, however, that internal or societal factors should not be emphasized to the exclusion of the other. This warning seems to have enough merit, as the experiences of many Third World countries consistently show an interplay of these factors. Conversely, no single factor, whether societal or attributable to the military organization, can be claimed as the sole cause for the occurrence of a coup.

In view of this, we have here divided the theories explaining the coup into (1) those attributable to the military organization, and (2) those external to the military. A third, the “contagion” theory⁴⁵ is discussed separately.

B.1. Theories Attributing Coup Causes to Factors Internal to the Military Organization

The military has basic attributes which can be transformed into formidable political strengths against any civilian political force, including the civilian leadership. These military attributes include certain characteristics inherent in the military organization, the mission and role perception of the members of the armed forces, and certain military variables affecting the integrity and self-image of the soldiers.

B.1.a. Organizational Characteristics

The armed forces has certain inherent organizational features which are believed to be essential in the pursuit of the accomplishment of the military’s traditional mission of protecting the country from any form of foreign aggression. These organizational features are centralized command, military discipline, hierarchy, formalized internal communication, esprit de corps, and the possession of the means for the legitimate use of violence.⁴⁶

The centralization of command in the entire armed forces is a purposive creation because only through it can the military act as a single unit and hence, achieve its mission with a high degree of efficiency. This centralized

command is evident in the observance of the military chain of command where the lowest or most junior officer is linked to the highest commanding officer in the military.

The hierarchical order of the military organization is also observed as enabling the entire armed forces to act as a single fighting unit. An officer of certain military rank is obliged to render explicit obedience to any officer who has a higher rank.

All members of the armed forces, from the highest to the lowest ranking official, are subject to military discipline. Any violation of, or deviation from, military standard functions has its corresponding punishment in the military. Since the military chain of command is considered as sacrosanct in the organization, and the entire military is oriented to act as a single body, military discipline is oftentimes meant as absolute obedience to the orders of superior officers. This particular trait among many military men prompted numerous scholars to liken the military to a machine which normally behaves in a fairly predictable manner.⁴⁷

Internal communication in the military, such as signal systems and military codes, is also an essential factor in effectively carrying out its functions. Coordination and precision in military operations are greatly enhanced by this internal communication system which is independent of civil authorities.

A distinct characteristic that the military possesses as formidable is its monopoly of the instruments for legal violence. By virtue of its mission, the military alone is given the legal authority to carry, maintain, and use arms and weapons.

However, these characteristics of the military organization can effectively work against the very government which maintains it. This is particularly true in Third World countries, where the military has been assigned another role, that of maintaining internal peace and order. In these countries, the distinctive organizational features of the military can strongly affect its propensity to intervene in the political affairs of the nation.⁴⁸ The machine-like nature of the military, for instance, has often been exploited during coups d'état.

B.1.b. Mission and Role Perception of the Military

In many developed states in the West, the traditional mission of the military has been the protection of the state against foreign military aggression. The external security of the nation has been its sole responsibility. In Third World states, however, the mission of the military has been expanded to include internal security, that is, the maintenance of peace and order threatened by internal insurgencies. In these countries, the involvement of the military in internal pacification inherently and inevitably brings it into political disputes.⁴⁹ In fact, it has often been hypothesized that the likelihood of military intervention in the political affairs of the nation rises should the armed forces become heavily involved in domestic, police-type, or counter-insurgency activities⁵⁰. Furthermore, military interference is likely to occur when the armed forces are ordered, contrary to the advice of the officer corps, to use coercion against domestic opponents of the government, or to enforce unpopular governmental decisions.⁵¹ The military's neutrality and subordination to the civilian government are strained because the military becomes not the defender of the state but an instrument of its political leadership.

Also, in Third World nations, the military has often been used by its government as an arm in national development efforts. Governments of these countries believe that in the absence of actual external threat, the military organization, its efficiency, and manpower can become a formidable support in nation-building. Social scientists have theorized that as civic action projects absorb the attention and expertise of the military, these programs lessen the likelihood of military intervention.⁵² The military becomes too preoccupied with these programs that it does not have the time to plot against the government. On the other hand, there are officers who feel it is not their duty to get involved in some types of development programs.

The possibility of military intervention may also arise when military officers alter their mission — when they think of the military as the ultimate custodian of national interests. They then consider it their duty to arbitrate the political disputes or veto decisions of civilian authorities.⁵³ This was the experience of Thailand, Nigeria, Peru, Egypt, and

many Latin American countries, where coups were mounted by officers who viewed their responsibility as guardians of the state.⁵⁴

In essence, it is not the mission that pushes the military to intervene. Rather, it is how the officer corps defines and interprets the mission of the armed forces which may give rise to the phenomenon of military interference in the political arena.

B.1.c. Military Variables

Military variables are certain characteristics which vary from one soldier to another, from one service command to another, or such characteristics which may differentiate the entire armed forces of a country from the military of another country. The variability of these characteristics, that is, whether they are high or low in degree in a particular military, may directly or indirectly affect the propensity of the military to intervene in or abstain from the political affairs of the nation. Military variables include military cohesion or the unity of military personnel, professionalism, autonomy on certain military policy matters, corporate interests, the level of political awareness of the officer corps and the extent of foreign military assistance.

B.1.c.i. Cohesion

The degree of cohesion or unity among military personnel, whether it is high or low, may pose a threat to the civilian government. A military with a high degree of cohesion has a greater capacity to intervene in domestic politics.⁵⁵ On the other hand, a successful coup by a military with a low degree of cohesion is likely to experience countercoups from other groups within the military. This is validated by studies of numerous coups in self-divided militaries of Syria, Iraq, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Argentina.⁵⁶

It should be noted, however, that the military, or a faction in it, does not intervene or attempt to seize political leadership by reason of military cohesion alone. Besides, cohesion is not a reason for staging a coup. Rather, it is a factor which helps promote the success or likelihood of a coup, or of a countercoup. At most, it is contributory to such occurrence.

B.1.c.ii. Professionalism

Military professionalism exists when “the conduct of warfare is given over to men who have committed themselves to a career of service, men who are recognized for their expertise in the means of warfare.”⁵⁷ Three of its essential ingredients are expertise, social responsibility, and corporateness.⁵⁸ Military men are technicians in the management of legal violence. They feel a deep sense of responsibility to their client, the state, which may be seen in basic military codes like “duty, honor, country.”⁵⁹ They have their own powerful corporate tradition and organization.

Many claim that professionalism in the army is the most decisive factor in keeping the military out of politics. However, there were cases where armed forces with high levels of professionalism became involved in the seizure of political power⁶⁰ such as the German and Japanese cases. Also, the Royal Thai military was relatively high in terms of professionalism but nonetheless, it staged a coup in November 1971.⁶¹

Consequently, some scholars were prompted to include a fourth requisite to military professionalism — adherence to the principle of supremacy of civilian authority over the military at all times. One author even claims that the willingness of the military to submit to civilian authority is a very crucial element of military professionalism.⁶² Another scholar says that respect for the chain of command is a characteristic of military professionalism.⁶³ By this definition, armed forces with a high degree of professionalism would not intervene in domestic politics.

B.1.c.iii. Autonomy

Military institutions always claim the right to exercise autonomy in their internal organization and operations. The sphere of military autonomy includes strategy, tactics, logistics, assignment, and promotion of its men.⁶⁴ This issue of military autonomy should be dealt with care and understanding by the civilian leadership because the military is very jealous of its corporate status and privileges. In fact, anxiety to preserve its autonomy is one of the most powerful motives for military intervention.⁶⁵

A high degree of autonomy may place the military in an aggressive position. It can lead the military to consider itself as the ultimate judge on all matters affecting the armed forces, in which case, it can place the civilian leadership in constant threat of military intervention.⁶⁶ On the other hand, a low degree of autonomy may put the military in a defensive position where it may consider certain policy decisions of the government affecting it as interference in its internal affairs. Abrupt shifts in policies, particularly alterations perceived to threaten its corporate interests, prerogatives, and values may cause tensions in civil-military relations. Thus, changes or intentions to alter the military areas of decision-making against its advice or desires are likely to encourage military intervention.⁶⁷

B.1.c.iv. Corporate Interest

The military is a corporate body with corporate interests.⁶⁸ As used here, “corporate” does not refer to a juridical personality, but to a distinct collective body with rules, interests, and traditions especially peculiar to the group.

Operationally, this corporate interest reflects itself in demands for bigger budgets, better pay, adequate equipment, and other material resources, in intense opposition to the creation of any rival armed forces like workers’ militia or presidential guards, and in a determination to have a say in public policy-making.⁶⁹ The last is particularly marked among militaries which have not fought a war for a long time, and are unlikely to do so in the immediate future. Such militaries actively search for a new role, and find it in a claim to participate in the development of the nation such as in the cases of the Central African Republic in 1966 and Algeria in 1965.⁷⁰

When a government fails to cater to corporate interests of the military, officers will be more inclined to intervene. While it is not always an immediate cause of intervention, government neglect of the military contributes to a general sense of alienation.⁷¹ Military intervention in Indonesia in the mid-1950s and in Thailand in 1976 took place against such a background.

B.1.c.v. Political Awareness

Political awareness is the level of understanding of an individual of the different issues in society, and the self-assessment of this individual’s capability to address or contribute to the solution of these issues. The political awareness of the soldier is greatly affected by the socio-economic-political conditions of the area where he is assigned. This is especially true among Third World countries where the role of the military has been expanded to include security from internal subversion. In these countries, the soldier finds himself directly immersed with the civilian populace, and is thus exposed to their daily problems. Political awareness might lead him to question why he fights his fellow citizens.

The content of military education and training may also affect the political awareness of the soldiers, especially the officer corps. A military education that includes political issues traditionally resolved by politicians would tend to increase the likelihood of military intervention.⁷² Education and training patterned after or influenced by Western models give military personnel a developmental perspective where they see themselves as agents of modernization.⁷³ They begin to believe that modernization is part of their mission.

One author has provided two reasons for this modern outlook among soldiers.⁷⁴ First, officers, especially in the militaries of Third World states, look outside for their models, and are therefore extremely sensitive to the needs of modernization and technical advancement.

Second, militaries are rival institutions. The primary task of the military is to fight wars, and therefore it always wants to be better equipped than the armies of other countries, particularly neighboring ones.

The perception of the military as a modernization catalyst has political consequences for the nation. In fact, in Third World countries, a military with a high level of political awareness that sees itself as an agent of modernization, is more likely to interfere in political affairs. Military domination of the government may, it is argued, have beneficial effects on the economy and improve the prospects of social reform. This appears to have been the experience in Turkey with a military that was modernized by a colonial administration ahead of other sectors. However, this may not be the rule. The extent to which the military becomes an agent of modernization depends on the level of its modernization relative to the other sectors of society. Officers who hold a modern outlook are usually a minority in the armed forces.⁷⁵

A noted scholar on the military has claimed that in terms of modernization, the role of the military changes as society changes.⁷⁶ In an oligarchical society, the soldier is a radical; in a middle-class dominated society, he is a participant and arbiter; and in a mass society, he becomes the conservative guardian of the existing order.⁷⁷ Understandably, the more backward a society, the more progressive its military; the more advanced a society, the more conservative and reactionary its military.

In the Middle East after World War II, the soldiers played a modernizing role after seizing power in Syria in 1949, in Egypt in 1952, and in Iraq in 1958.⁷⁸ In Brazil and Argentina in the 1950s, however, and then in Bolivia, Guatemala, and Honduras in the 1960s, the military played a more conservative role.

A high level of political awareness among soldiers has often been pointed out as a cause “for military intervention in politics. On the surface, it would seem that a high degree of political awareness works against the government and in favor of coup plotters. On closer look, however, a distinction should be made. High ranking officers with a high degree of political awareness may work within the system because they have enough influence to achieve their goals.⁷⁹ Junior and middle-ranking officers with limited access to and influence on the policy-making process are the ones very much vulnerable to the idea of military intervention. In fact, coup plots have more often been initiated by middle-ranking officers.⁸⁰

B.1.c.vi. Foreign Military Assistance

Foreign military assistance, in the form of military training, scholarships abroad, and transfer of military technology, affects the self-image of the military. This may lead the military to view itself as the most modern sector in society and may tempt it to aspire for a broader political role.⁸¹ On the other hand, it can be a source of frustration, given the government’s inability to provide them with resources comparable to their foreign peers. It is also a source of demoralization when the benefits of foreign assistance, particularly training abroad, are perceived to be unfairly distributed.

B.2.Theories Attributing Coup Causes to Factors External to the Military Organization

As noted above, certain societal factors tend to encourage a coup d’etat. Some scholars contend that external factors particularly those attributable to the government, affect the occurrence of a coup more directly than factors internal to the military. One author, stressing the greater significance of societal factors, even claims that “there are no bad soldiers, only bad governments.”⁸² This view of singularly attributing all causes to the government overlooked relevant lessons from other countries. As discussed in this chapter, no single factor may be claimed as the sole cause of a coup, rather, it is an interplay of organizational and societal factors.

B.2.a. Political Factors

A noted scholar on the military has pointed out that “the most important causes of military intervention in politics are not military, but political and reflect not the social and organizational characteristics of the military establishment but the political and institutional structure of the society.”⁸³ When political institutions are weak and fragmented that no group or political faction exercises clear control and leadership, the military usually intervenes. The military mind abhors a vacuum of leadership and feels impelled to fill it. Where such a vacuum exists and there are no “legitimate and authoritative methods for reconciling conflicts,”⁸⁴ a praetorian society emerges. In such a

polity, the coercive power of the military enables it to come out on top. Quoting Thomas Hobbes, one author points out that “when nothing else is turned up, clubs are trumps.”⁸⁵

Indeed, the military had often argued that they only intervene when civilian governments are unable to govern effectively. A failure of governance and consequent political instability may lead to a perceived loss of legitimacy providing coup plotters with both the opportunity and motive for intervention. The coups in South Vietnam in 1963, in Laos in 1959 and 1960, in Burma in 1958, and in Thailand in 1976, all occurred after the civilian governments were perceived to have failed.⁸⁶

The perceived failure of a government to govern effectively is, however, not the only political factor which may affect the military’s attitude to intervene. Other political factors are the historical origins of the military, its level of politicization, government policies affecting the military, influence of the political Left, the popularity of the armed forces, and superpower interest as an international factor.

B.2.b. Economic Factors

In most Third World countries, a coup has been consistently preceded by a deep crisis or deterioration in the economic conditions of the people in general. It is not established, however, that a deep economic crisis would always trigger a coup. What is apparent is that the likelihood of military intervention rises when there is a perceived deterioration of economic conditions, especially if accompanied by a belief that the government cannot resolve, or is responsible for, such deterioration.⁸⁷ The experiences of Latin American countries and many African states tend to validate this claim.

When the economic crisis becomes acute, the country usually experiences high inflation, increasing unemployment and poverty, among others. These conditions create a restive atmosphere among labor unions, farmers, public utility drivers, students, and other political forces. These usually constitute the preconditions of a coup. In Indonesia, the failure of the “guided democracy” under President Sukarno to ensure a stable government and economic growth became one of the factors which caused the 1965 coup. In the abortive coup in Thailand in September 1985, economic issues were advanced as the main justification.⁸⁸ Such was the case also of Argentina, where economic growth and stability was cited as the military’s justification for the coups in 1966 and 1976.⁸⁹ The military is also provided powerful motives by the business community to intervene in domestic politics. When political tensions rise because of unfavorable economic developments, the business community often looks to the military as the only dependable domestic ally capable of protecting their investments and preserving an environment favorable to economic progress. Thus, private investors curry favor with military leaders while foreign capitalist governments provide not only economic aid but also military assistance.⁹⁰

B.2.c. Socio-Cultural Factors

Military officers tend to share the broader interests of the middle class as a whole and to reflect the grievances of that class.⁹¹ Although military officers do not always have middle-class origins, their status as officers puts them into that class. They also usually marry into middle-class families. A government which fails to satisfy middle-class interests can thus often expect to face opposition not only from the middle class in general but from the officer corps of the military in particular. In fact, coups have often taken place after civilian governments have failed to meet the expectations of the educated urban middle class, especially its demand for economic progress.⁹² Some examples of military intervention initially welcomed by the middle class were those in Indonesia in 1965-66, in Kampuchea in 1970, and in Thailand in 1976-77.

Since soldiers are members of society, they have their own social and cultural characteristics which may be different and distinct from other social or cultural aggregations. In times where social conflicts become intense and numerous, the soldiers can in no way be spared. Sometimes, individual elements in the military even become vocal partisans in such issues as ethnic tensions, class divisions, regional differences, and cleavages based on education, language, or religion.⁹³ When a point is reached where violence is resorted to by any of the contending civilian groups, military intervention is very likely to take place.⁹⁴

B.2.d. Psychological and Personal Factors

In general, there are four psychological factors which tend to encourage military intervention in domestic politics. These are the military's self-awareness of its overwhelming power or capacity to intervene, heroic complex which may take concealment in some messianic idealistic mission, morbid obsession with power, and a sense of frustration among soldiers on certain matters affecting the military.

The military's self-awareness of its overwhelming capacity to intervene⁹⁵ can be attributed to the characteristics which the military organization has. This factor alone does not lead to military intervention in politics.

The mission and training of the soldiers usually promote an intense kind of nationalism which turns into a display of military heroism. Military medals are not merely decorative. They carry a message of heroism — the more bemedalled an officer, the more heroic he appears among his peers. This tendency towards a heroic complex becomes more pronounced when they are politicized because they picture themselves as puritanically clean, honest, and sincere in their service to the nation, while perceiving the civilian political leaders as the opposite. Such officers assume a messianic mission to save the nation from the machinations of certain political leaders.

A sense of frustration among soldiers, on the other hand, may arise when the self-esteem of the military has been gravely affected, or when it suffers humiliation on certain issues. Such was the case of Egypt when the pride of the army was gravely wounded and which led to military action in 1948.⁹⁶ In an extreme case, any kind of imagined affront to its pride may spark military intervention.⁹⁷ An illustrative case is the 1943 coup in Argentina where the military displayed contempt for civilian authority. The Argentine military felt "vicarious shame" over the corruption in government, the country's dependence on the United States and the ill-equipped status of the army. The rebel officers felt that because of all these, the army lost face.⁹⁸

Frustration among soldiers can also be attributed to the idealism among officers, especially among the junior level, and a defective promotion system. One author has claimed that some military men who intervened were motivated by high ideals of public service.⁹⁹ During the 1960s and 1970s, for instance, Latin American officers were not only more ambitious for themselves and their nation, but were also more frustrated by repeated economic deterioration and instability.¹⁰⁰ The promotion system is particularly sensitive to the military because of its hierarchical structure and the extreme difficulty of recovering lost seniority. Military officers who find peers whom they believe are inferior being promoted ahead of them are vulnerable to recruitment. They may look to military adventurism as a form of protest or restitution.

There are also personal factors which may prompt soldiers to rebel against the government. Among them is their desire to improve their military career, benefits, and privileges, believing that when the coup succeeds they would receive these improvements. Another is personal grievances against certain leaders in the military or in the government. In Argentina, Bolivia, and a number of African countries, some officers participated in coups due to personal factors.

B.3. The "Contagion" Theory

The "contagion" theory states that a successful coup breeds other coups, either in the same government or in neighboring states. From the definition, it is obvious that the coup may occur either at the inter-governmental or the intra-military levels.

The "contagion" theory claims that a successful seizure of political control in a country may cause a chain reaction in other nations with a similarly dissatisfied military.¹⁰¹ The occurrence of a coup at the inter-governmental level is influenced by at least two factors:¹⁰² the personal links among military officers in different countries that have coup experiences, and the extent of interstate ties. This was the experience of many African states.

The "contagion" theory also claims that the military is not a monolithic unit, but is divided by political allegiance, sectional interest, generational gap, ethnic composition, inter-service rivalry, religion, and recruitment source. In a coup at the intra-military level, the success of one faction in staging a coup may prompt other factions in the military

to counter or emulate those who have succeeded in seizing power. The numerous coups in self-divided armies of Iraq, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Argentina clearly demonstrate this.

In succeeding chapters, we will discuss how the virus of military interventionism infected the AFP.

ENDNOTES

(1) The first coup attempt against the Aquino administration was staged by civilians and military elements loyal to the deposed President Marcos by taking over the Manila Hotel in July 1986. Subsequent attempts were the November 1986 "God Save The Queen" plot, the January 1987 GMA-7 attempt, the April 1987 Black Saturday incident, the July 1987 takeover plot at the Manila International Airport, the August 1987 and the December 1989 attempts.

(2) Gregor Ferguson, Coup d'Etat: A Practical Manual (Dorset: Arms and Armor Press, 1987), p. 11.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Samuel E. Finer, The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988), p. 4.

(5) Ibid., p. 2.

(6) The number includes 22 states that witnessed 27 military interventions in various forms during the period 1958-1962, as discussed by ibid., pp. 1-2.

(7) Ibid., p. 223.

(8) As cited by ibid., the 37 states are Algeria, Argentina, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Burundi, Burma, Chile, Congo Republic, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Indonesia, Iraq, Korea, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Madagascar, Niger, Pakistan, Paraguay, Rwanda, El Salvador, Somalia, Sudan, Surinam, Syria, Thailand, Togo, Turkey, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Yemen Arab Republic and Zaire, p. 257.

(9) Ibid., p. 223.

(10) Ibid., p. 257.

(11) Ibid., p.263.

(12) Ibid.

(13) Ibid., p. 139.

(14) Claude E. Welch, Jr and Arthur K. Smith, Military Role and Rule Perspectives on Civil-Military Relations (North Scituate, MA: Duxbury Press, 1974), pp. 8-32.

(15) Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 218.

(16) Ibid.

(17) Ferguson, op. cit., p. 13.

(18) Huntington, op. cit., p. 219.

(19) National ROTC Alumni Association, Inc. (NARAA), "The Philippine Coup d'Etat and NARAA Resolution No. 7." (Metro Manila: NARAA, 21 February 1989), p. 3.

(20) Viberto Selochan, "Professionalization and Politicization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines," (Doctoral Diss., Australian National University, March 1990), pp. 21-25.

(21) Huntington, op. cit., p. 217.

(22) Ibid.

(23) Ibid.

(24) Edward Luttwak, *Coup d'Etat: A Practical Handbook* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 27.

(25) Ibid.

(26) Ferguson, op. cit., p. 12.

(27) Finer, op. cit., p. 20.

(28) Ibid.

(29) Ferguson, op. cit., p. 12.

(30) Finer, op. cit., pp. 28-53.

(31) Ibid.

(32) Ferguson, op. cit., p. 12.

(33) Finer, op. cit., pp. 64-76.

(34) Ibid., p. 5.

(35) Ibid., p. 226.

(36) Ibid.

(37) Ibid.

(38) Ferguson, op. cit., p. 77.

(39) Ibid., p. 43.

(40) Luttwak, op. cit., p. 75.

(41) FergusonT op. cit., p. 42.

(42) Martin C. Needier, "Political Development and Military Intervention in Latin America," American Political Science Review. Vol. 60, No. 3 (1966), p. 621.

(43) NARAA, op. cit., p. 6.

(44) Ibid., p. 3.

(45) Claude E. Welch, Jr, Soldier and State in Africa (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970), p. 32.

(46) Finer, op. cit., pp. 5-11.

(47) Luttwak, op. cit., p. 21.

(48) Finer, op. cit., p. 5.

(49) Welch, Jr and Smith, op. cit., p. 10.

(50) Ibid., p. 11.

(51) Ibid., p. 10.

(52) Ibid.

(53) Finer, op. cit., p. 31.

(54) Welch, Jr and Smith, op. cit., p. 236.

(55) Ibid., p. 11.

(56) Finer, op. cit., pp. 226-229.

(57) Morris Janowitz, The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1960), p. 6.

(58) Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State: Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations (New York: Vintage Books, 1957), pp. 8-18.

(59) Muthiah Alagappa, "Military Professionalism and the Development Role of the Military in Southeast Asia," in J. Soedjati Djiwandono and Yong Mun Cheong, eds., Soldiers and Stability in Southeast Asia (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1988), p. 16.

(60) Finer, op. cit., pp. 20-22.

(61) Welch, Jr and Smith, op. cit., p. 93.

(62) Alagappa, op. cit., p. 17.

(63) Carolina G. Hernandez, "The Philippine Military in the 21st Century," in F. Sionil Jose, ed., A Filipino Agenda For The 21st Century (Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1987), p. 237.

(64) Carolina G. Hernandez, "Reforming the Military and Police Agencies in the Philippines," Philippine Journal of Public Administration, Vol. 32 (January-April 1988), pp. 153-162.

- (65) Finer, op. cit., p. 41.
- (66) Ibid.
- (67) Welch, Jr and Smith, op. cit., p. 27.
- (68) Alan Wells, "The Coup d'Etat in Theory and Practice: Independent Black Africa in the 1960s," *American Journal of Sociology* (1985), p. 880.
- (69) Finer, op. cit., pp. 237-238.
- (70) Ibid.
- (71) Harold Crouch, "The Military and Politics in Southeast Asia," in Zakaria Haji Ahmad and Harold Crouch, eds., *Military-Civilian Relations in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 290.
- (72) Welch, Jr and Smith, op. cit., p. 21.
- (73) Janowitz, op. cit., p. 81.
- (74) Lucian Pye, "Armies in the Process of Political Modernization," in John J. Johnson, ed., The Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1966), pp. 68-89.
- (75) Crouch, op. cit., p. 306.
- (76) Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies, op. cit., p. 221.
- (77) Ibid.
- (78) Ibid., p. 203.
- (79) Welch, Jr and Smith, op. cit., p. 21.
- (80) NARAA, op. cit., p. 7.
- (81) Welch, Jr and Smith, op. cit., p. 18.
- (82) Ferguson, op. cit., p. 195.
- (83) Huntington. Political Order in Changing Societies, op. cit., p. 194.
- (84) Ibid., p. 196.
- (85) Ibid.
- (86) Ibid., p. 295.
- (87) Welch, Jr and Smith, op. cit., p. 26.
- (88) Alagappa, op. cit., p. 23.

- (89) Wells, op. cit., p. 219
- (90) Ibid., p. 299.
- (91) Ibid., p. 292.
- (92) Ibid.
- (93) Welch, Jr and Smith, op. cit., pp. 24-26.
- (94) Ibid.
- (95) Finer, op. cit., p.54.
- (96) Ibid.
- (97) Ibid., pp. 59-60.
- (98) Ibid., p. 60.
- (99) Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies, op. cit., p. 193.
- (100) Wells, op. cit., p. 240.
- (101) Welch, Jr, Soldier and State in Africa, op. cit., p. 32.
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- (103) Finer, op. cit., pp. 226-229.

The Final Report of the Fact-Finding Commission: VII: Causes, Analysis, and Recommendations

VII

CAUSES, ANALYSIS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Fact-Finding Commission was tasked to inquire into the who (participants), why (causes), and how (events) of the December 1989 coup attempt and to make recommendations to prevent its recurrence. The narration of events is contained in Chapter V and the Commission's findings on participants in Chapter VI. This Chapter completes the Commission's mandated task.

A. The Causes

Invariably, those who openly admitted participating in the coup or are implicated in it offered the following reasons on why the coup occurred, which is another way of expressing why they joined the coup:

1. Failure of the government to deliver basic services especially in the rural areas;¹
2. Graft and corruption;²
3. Too much politics and grandstanding of politicians, and unfair criticism, even humiliation, at the hands of politicians;³
4. Bureaucratic inefficiency which exacerbates the alienation and poverty of the people;⁴
5. Poor and non-responsive military leadership which is manifested by a *tayo-tayo* system, factionalism, and inadequate financial and logistical support for the soldier in the field;⁵
6. Lack of genuine reconciliation;⁶
7. Uneven treatment of human rights violations committed by the military and the CPP-NPA;⁷
8. Absence of good government;⁸
9. Softness on the CPP-NPA and left-leaning elements;⁹ and
10. Failure of the civilian leadership to effectively address economic problems.¹⁰

The implication of their answers is that the governing body or junta to be established by the coup d'état would correct or solve all these deficiencies in the present government.

The rebel witnesses, however, when pressed for a program of government were unable to answer exactly how reforms were going to be achieved or to name the persons who would implement it.

A review of the issues raised by the coup plotters in the previous six attempts against the Aquino administration also reveals an interesting pattern of similar answers with emphasis on the current issues of the day. For example, for the Manila Hotel and the "God Save The Queen" attempts, the emphasis was softness against communists; in the GMA-7 incident, the lack of genuine reconciliation, as exemplified by the government refusal to allow Marcos to come home; in August 1987, the bickerings in the Cabinet; and in December 1989, graft and corruption and congressional shenanigans.

On the other hand, when officers who fought for the government were asked what they thought were the causes of the coup attempt, they repeated many of those advanced by the coup participants¹¹ and, in addition, cited:

1. Obsession with the power which they thought they had won but handed over to Corazon C. Aquino in February 1986;
2. A desire by coup leaders to regain privileges enjoyed during the Marcos administration and the prospect of possible power or financial gain in the process;¹²
3. Personal grievances and perceived “dead end” in career path;
4. Strong fraternal or personal ties, with origins dating back to PMA days;¹³
5. Naive idealism, particularly on the part of younger officers;¹⁴
6. A messianic complex.¹⁵

Despite the attempts of the coup plotters and their sympathizers (wittingly or unwittingly) to project themselves as real reformers, the rebels had their own hidden agenda even as they rode on valid grievances.

Many of the grievances cited by the rebels as their reasons for joining were, unfortunately, objective realities and, hence, real for those who were successfully recruited by reason of their sincere desire, however misguided, to help effect reforms in the military establishment and the government. That the core group of rebels managed to mask their own agenda by invoking these grievances validates the reality of many of the shortcomings in the military and the government, and the need to address them decisively if future coup attempts are to be deterred.

There were also coup participants who were impelled by personal motives, and others by institutional factors. There were, in effect, several levels of motivation. The Commission classifies the rebels according to motives with examples which, however, are not exhaustive:

1. For the inner circle of the RAM splinter group or RAM-HF and its recruits (since the original composition and tendencies have changed) — a continuation of their original plan in 1986 to take power for themselves which evolved from a desire for reform initially within the military (i.e., Honasan, Batac, Kapunan, Turingan, Lucas, Legaspi, Malajacan, Aguinaldo, Purugganan);
2. For the Marcos-Ver Loyalist forces (Loyalist) — to regain the power and privileges enjoyed during the Marcos regime or to repay past favors (*utang na loob*) by honoring a “commitment” to help when called upon (i.e., Zumel, Tecson, Oliveros, Pizarro, Gojo);
3. For high ranking military officials — ambition which cannot be realized within the existing chain of command (i.e., Comendador, Abenina, Calajate);
4. For some senior officers and many junior officers — deference to peers, superiors, or “mistahs”, and pakikisama (de la Pefia, Calimag, Pabelo); the attraction and excitement of a conspiracy that promises windfall gains in power and career opportunities (Fusilero); career “insurance” in the light of the perception after the EDSA Revolt that, regardless of who wins, the military establishment will continue as before with no apparent stake in the form or structure of government. Thus, maintaining the network of camaraderie is more important to a career than taking a definitive stand against the coup; and
5. Misguided idealism or an expression of sympathy for “valid” causes (i.e. Gregory Ramos, Tomas, Ong).

Why did the December 1989 coup attempt happen?

Filipinos want change — some to the extent of “any change” in the belief that it can only be better than the present, at least for themselves. This pervading sentiment in Philippine society can easily be mistaken for support by the impatient or the ambitious. In the case of the military, as discussed in Chapters II and III, crossing the dividing line between being politicalized (awareness of societal problems) and politicized (taking power for themselves) can easily be rationalized, especially by the well-meaning.

This clamor for change is not solely a product of the EDSA Revolt. That would be an incomplete perspective of history. The EDSA Revolt is a convenient point of reference because it was a dramatic event that capsulized a long struggle for a new order of morality, economic progress, social justice, and enlightened leadership.

In this context, the shortcomings of the Aquino government cannot be the root cause of the coup. As pointed out in Chapter III, the political achievements and economic performance of the Aquino government, at least up to the December 1989 attempt, compare favorably with past regimes in the country and those of other countries in the region. However, the Aquino government could be faulted for failing to live up to the promise of its glorious beginnings.

Despite the genuine achievements of the EDSA Revolt and of the three years prior to December 1989, the country continued to experience structural tensions in the social fabric that called for more than piecemeal solutions.

Thus, the December 1989 attempt, as well as the other six attempts against the Aquino administration, happened as a result of a propitious conjuncture of motive, circumstance, and perceived opportunity.

1. There was a group of officers which enjoyed high credibility within the ranks of the military because of their service records and their cultivated reputation as reformists even during the Marcos regime, and the perception within the military that they caused the Aquino government to improve the lot of the soldier.
2. This group of officers, highly politicized by the transformation, in general, of the military over the years (see Chapter II) and the group's special status during the Marcos regime, decided to grab power for themselves, representing that they could do better than civilians in governing the country.
3. They thought that it was a good time to launch the coup because of the declining popularity of the Aquino government and the reality of many of the issues being raised by media and various interest groups, and because the country was undergoing the difficult process of transition to a newly-restored democracy with structural and institutional weaknesses and a complex set of difficult problems.

The question may well be asked, if the clamor for change is so strong and the elements for success appeared to be present, why did the December attempt fail and turn out to be unpopular?

Because the people were not disposed to it, as they were for the EDSA Revolt. The December 1989 coup attempt was perceived as an attack on democracy, the EDSA Revolt as a return to it. Surveys showed that the unpopularity of the December 1989 attempt is not as much a reflection of high satisfaction at the performance of government as a natural aversion against violent and illegitimate means to effect change. The Filipino is essentially conservative and patient, and considers electoral change as a valid democratic exercise despite its imperfections. Furthermore, the motives of the coup participants were suspect. After all, they themselves acknowledged the electoral victory of President Aquino in 1986. The tactical alliance between the RAM-HF and the Loyalists that became public knowledge for the first time during the coup, although traceable to earlier signs of collaboration, contributed to the distrust. Finally, the economic indicators by December 1989 were positive compared to the severe recession prior to February 1986.

However, popular support is not a precondition for the success of a coup, only for the sustainability of the resulting dispensation. Sometimes, not even for that purpose, if the military regime is willing to resort to the indiscriminate use of force and violence to maintain itself. That the December 1989 attempt turned out to be unpopular was not the reason for its failure. Its failure was a combination of genuine heroism on the part of some government forces, tactical mistakes by the coup plotters and the hesitancy of key rebel figures (i.e., Blando), timely intervention of

military-civilian forces particularly at gateway roads to Metro Manila, and failure of the rebels to elicit a bandwagon effect from major military units in the country.

B. Analysis

B.1. The Context

Transitions are never easy. Political transitions from dictatorship to democracy are especially difficult because democratic processes are usually slow, cumbersome and diverted by the noisy. They involve competing interests of diverse groups, unequal in influence, which have to be harmonized for policy to emerge. There is also the resistance, if not deliberate obstruction, by vested interests and well-entrenched power blocs to any change that would reduce their privileged positions in the system.

Favored business elites, political leaders of the old regime, and military groups that propped it up and were handsomely rewarded in exchange are the natural opponents of democratization. Unfortunately, the weakness of political institutions inherent in the transition process limits their capacity to neutralize these opponents of desirable change.

If the dictatorship left a path of plunder and economic devastation, the problems of transition become exacerbated. Inherited economic problems cannot be solved overnight. Democratic space can become an open arena for unbridled, even violent political contestation where government is expected to uphold individual democratic rights, while it fights for its very survival. Among the poor and hungry, democracy provides a weak rallying point for political unity with and support for a political leadership. In the face of perceived government weaknesses, Public alienation, or even indifference, those who wish to recapture their lost positions of privilege may engage in military adventurism.

The series of coup attempts against the Aquino government can be seen in this light.

B.2. Reaping the Whirlwind

The destruction of political institutions and processes during the Marcos dictatorship and the resulting military role expansion beyond defense and security and law and order provided the environment for the Politicization of a significant number of officers in the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). The supremacy of civilian authority over the military, secured by various institutional controls, was transformed into one secured primarily by the person of Marcos.

Even that control was breached and weakened by the political rivalry between the Ver (former Chief of Staff Gen Fabian Ver) and Enrile (former Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile) factions within the military during the last few years of the dictatorship. The failed coup attempt of February 1986 which was overtaken by the EDSA Revolt was the logical consequence of that rivalry. And because civilian control over the military was personal, when Marcos was removed, it exposed the political system to the peril of autonomous military adventurism, since institutionalized civilian control would take time to rebuild.

The ascension of a woman Commander-in-Chief for the first time in the country's history must have required a major adjustment in the operational and psychological world of the military, particularly since her style of leadership is a marked contrast to that of Marcos. The military's perception of a woman leader is graphically portrayed in a remark made by a retired officer when asked by the Commission whether a woman Secretary of National Defense would be acceptable to the AFP. He said the reaction of the military would probably be: "What? Another woman again?"¹⁶ But apart from being a woman, the military only knew her as the wife of Ninoy Aquino, a political prisoner who was later assassinated while under military custody. Perhaps the military could not believe that she could forgive and forget her husband's assassination for which members of the military were under prosecution, some of whom have been recently convicted. Somehow this background must have been a hindrance in forging an easier or more comfortable relationship between the Commander-in-Chief and the military she led.

The institutionalization of non-military functions for the AFP, seriously begun in 1966, facilitated the politicalization of officers as they acquired non-military skills from civilian graduate schools and exposed them to wider civilian public and socio-economic-political situations. In some cases, military officers became wielders of tremendous economic and political power, in addition to their original organized armed power.

The exigencies of dictatorial rule led to the erosion of the professional values of achievement and merit in promotions and assignments. They were replaced by the primary criterion of personal loyalty to the civilian and military leadership especially as popular dissent grew. Initially, this criterion seemed to have been a major consideration in the post-EDSA period for the simple reason that the military President Aquino inherited was the same military that Marcos used in order to maintain his rule and which he coddled in return. Given the persistent coup attempts since July 1986, the officers' loyalty not only to the Constitution but also to the duly constituted authority was necessary if the constitutional order were to have a chance of surviving. Unfortunately, this had been perceived as a return to the old system. Hence, the complaint about the *tayo-tayo* and *bata-bata* systems by rebel military officers.

The persistence of this tendency is part of the Marcos legacy to the military, one that will take time to repair. The failed December 1989 coup indicated that even personal pledges of loyalty given to superior officers are no guarantee against participation in a coup. The case of BGen Marcelo Bandois is one classic example. He pledged loyalty to AFP Chief of Staff Gen Renato de Villa even as the coup attempt was already underway. In the end, his commitment to the coup plotters prevailed, although his hesitation, presumably because of de Villa's repeated calls, might have been a fatal setback for the rebels since several units appeared to have been half-hearted while waiting for him to order or lead them.

The objective socio-economic-political environment was merely an excuse for military adventurism. As noted in Chapter III, the performance of the economy was positive and various indicators suggested some improvements in welfare. Even the soldier's pay and other benefits have been significantly improved since 1986¹⁷ The military also continued to have a significant share in policy-making in areas related to its role. Even if there was a perception of weakness in the political leadership, this was not a sufficient reason for launching a coup. The failed coup attempt in December 1989, and even previous ones, was greatly influenced by the misperception among politicized officers that President Aquino owed her position to the original Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) of which ex-Lt Col Gregorio Honasan's faction (RAM-HF) is a splinter. This misperception was reinforced by media adulation after the EDSA Revolt, painting Honasan and his group as larger-than-life heroes, thereby muting the unseemly aspects of their careers.

The Commission received testimony that during their heyday at the Ministry of National Defense (MND), Honasan would call senior officers to his office, in obvious disregard of seniority and hierarchy norms. The fact that it was people power that installed President Aquino is a reality yet to be accepted by the RAM-HF and their civilian supporters. As former Undersecretary of National Defense Jose M. Crisol said, they have to be disabused of this misperception. Crisol added that "Cory was the soul and spirit of the EDSA Revolution," and that even if Commission on Elections (COMELEC) Chairman Ramon Felipe was right in saying that there was no evidence she won the elections, the overwhelming ratification of the 1987 Constitution legitimized her rule.¹⁸

Supremacy of civilian authority over the military is the overriding principle governing the relations between the civilian government and the military under the new Constitution. The contraction of the military's role aimed at returning the soldiers to the barracks has not been possible after February 1986 because of the persistence of the twin communist and Muslim insurgencies which, though unsolvable through military means, nevertheless require a response with a strong and large military component. In some areas of the countryside, the weakness of the civilian bureaucracy and local governments continues to devolve civilian responsibilities to the military. Thus, the AFP's socio-economic functions continue to be discharged by soldiers, even in the stages of the counter-insurgency program assigned to the civilian government. Young rebel officers decry this situation as it forces them to spread their scarce resources too thinly. It is also unwise to use the military for this purpose as their extended exposure to local conditions tends to politicize them.

From the RAM side, it appears that their misperception about the EDSA Revolt led some of them to assume a role of guardian of the national interest, the country's gatekeeper to Malacañang as it were, in their mistaken belief that

they are the arbiters of issues on legitimacy. This is reflected in their somewhat naive but presumptuous question, “Why was it right then and wrong now?,” referring to the EDSA Revolt and their post-EDSA coup attempts. Because they mistakenly thought that their failed coup attempt against Marcos succeeded in the wake of people power, they expected an equal sharing of power with President Aquino. Thus, they objected to the release of political prisoners, the ceasefire and peace talks with communist and Muslim insurgents, and complained about what they believed were left-leaning members of the Cabinet. Military socialization into the ideology of anti-communism did not help ease their perception that President Aquino was too soft on the communists,

An unfortunate post-EDSA development was the ascendance to power of persons who faced the military across the barricades or who defended victims of political and military repression during the dictatorship. They brought with them anti-military sentiments and biases which, given the factors discussed above, probably foreclosed any possibility of early reconciliation between the new government and specific sectors in the military.

B.3. If At First You Don’t Succeed...

Enrile and the RAM-HF apparently did not give up their original coup intentions even after the EDSA Revolt and President Aquino had assumed office. He formed an elite group, a battalion purportedly organized to counter hijacking and other terrorist activities, in his capacity as chairman of the National Committee on Anti-Hijacking (NACAH). Honasan headed the group. Although it aroused the suspicion of several high-ranking officers, nothing was done about it until after November 1986. He also recommended to the newly-installed President Aquino the designation of his trusted aide, Col Tirso Gador, to head the Presidential Security Command (PSC).

At first glance, the RAM-HF and the Loyalists seemed to be natural enemies whose coming together could materialize only out of desperation. However, contrary to this view, the December 1989 coup attempt may have been simply the culmination of a reconciliation process which started soon after the EDSA Revolt. The Manila Hotel incident of July 1986, perpetrated by Loyalists in and out of the military, was allegedly known to some members of the RAM-HF before it actually took place but the information was not passed on to the government or the AFP leadership. As noted in Chapter IV, Lt Col Eduardo Kapunan Jr reportedly informed a correspondent about it at least six hours before the event. In fact, both President Aquino and the then Chief of Staff, Gen Fidel Ramos flew to Cagayan de Oro City, leaving the Executive Secretary (Joker Arroyo) and the Vice Chief of Staff (Lt Gen Salvador Mison) in charge of Malacañang and the AFP, respectively.

Having known of it in advance, it might be surmised that the RAM-HF intentionally kept the information to itself and could have welcomed it as a barometer of popular sentiment, i.e., if enough people rallied around the incident and a critical mass reached, they would have taken it over, come out on top, and subsequently obtained control of the government. The RAM-HF was also in the thick of negotiations between the Loyalists and the government during the incident. Its two leaders Honasan and Kapunan, extricated loyalist officers like Cols Rolando Abadilla and Dictador Arquiza, and Maj Reynaldo Cabautan from the Manila Hotel on 8 July one hour ahead of the evacuation schedule. Defense Minister Enrile pre-empted both President Aquino and Ramos in negotiating a settlement of the incident with the loyalist rebels even before the two returned from Cagayan de Oro City to Manila. Enrile came out looking good in the eyes of the Loyalists for the leniency with which they were treated.

Such leniency set the tone for government handling of subsequent coup attempts. The rationale that the rebels did not fire a single shot and that there were no casualties from the incident became the standard yardstick for determining the extent of punishment for military adventurism. Leniency, however, tended to encourage, rather than deter, participation in subsequent coup attempts. As the military is socialized into its own system of reward and punishment to instill discipline, leniency only encourages undisciplined behavior among officers. A related question is one of amnesty for the rebel military. The gravity of their act lies in the fact that they are armed by the state and have taken a solemn oath to defend the Constitution and duly constituted authority. A coup attempt is nothing short of treason and the principals involved should not be treated lightly.

The “God Save The Queen” plot of November 1986 was potentially the most dangerous because, as narrated in Chapter IV, it could have been a chain-of-command coup and, in all probability, would have succeeded if Gen Ramos and his major service commanders had agreed to the coup overtures of the RAM-HF and Enrile. Despite the

adroit management of the situation by Gen Ramos and the major service commanders, Army Commanding General Canieso, Air Force Chief Sotelo, Naval Chief Jardiniano, and Constabulary Chief de Villa, and their refusal to join, the RAM-HF nevertheless attempted to launch the “God Save The Queen” plot and to wrest power from President Aquino. Interestingly, Marcos’s KBL (Kilusang Bagong Lipunan) politicians were to have cooperated in the attempt by taking over the Batasang Pambansa and convening a rebel parliament, while RAM-HF took control of strategic targets. The attempt fizzled out without any shot being fired and without any casualty but for Enrile whom President Aquino unequivocally and decisively removed from the Cabinet. Unfortunately, Honasan and company were allowed to go free and none of them was even formally investigated. While subsequent coup attempts after November 1986 and before August 1987 had Loyalist forces as the main plotters and participants, the involvement of Honasan Guardians, who constitute a small segment of the total membership, suggests that a collaboration between the RAM-HF and the Loyalist forces must have already been taking shape. Moreover, Honasan interceded with Gen Ramos on behalf of the loyalist rebels who took over GMA-7 in January 1987 on the pretext that any drastic action would divide the AFP. On hindsight, it is likely that he was even then protecting potential allies. Honasan signed as witness to the Articles of Incorporation of the Guardian Brotherhood, Inc. (GBI) and was the principal incorporator of the Guardian Centre Foundation, Inc. (GCFI). The latter was supposed to be a civilian-military group aimed at supporting the AFP.

In the Black Saturday mutiny of April 1987, both Loyalist forces and the Guardians were again involved. A collaboration may have also been arranged for the August 1987 coup attempt which is generally thought to be a RAM-HF conspiracy. Maj Cabauatan, who was one of the leaders of the Manila Hotel incident, the January 1987, and April 1987 coup attempts, was reportedly at the rebels’ staging point at the Valle Verde Lodge in San Fernando, Pampanga during the attempt.

From the above, it may be concluded that the RAM-HF and the Loyalists, as the two principal military rebel groups continuously plotting against the Aquino government, must have started to develop collaborative ties as early as July 1986 which culminated in their joint launching of the December 1989 coup attempt. The same principals appear again and again as far back as February 1986: Enrile and the RAM-HF, primarily Honasan, Kapunan, Lt Col Victor Batac, ex-Navy Capt Felix Turingan, ex-Lt Col Oscar Legaspi, ex-LCdr Jaime Lucas, among others; and the Loyalists led by Zumel with Cabauatan, Abadilla, and others. The latter two were absent in the December 1989 failed coup. Cabauatan was in jail, while Abadilla had become the Vice Governor of Ilocos Norte.

The December 1989 coup attempt was the biggest as both factions were able to activate old ties and loyalties, as well as draft new recruits from disgruntled or idealistic officers. It appears from data in Chapter VI that the bulk of the rebel officers came from the PMA, in spite of the fact that from 75 to 80 percent of the AFP officer corps are non-PMA sourced. Old ties forged at the PMA appear to have been activated for the December 1989 failed coup. They might also have called in all their “chips” in the process and seriously depleted their resources. Among the disgruntled or idealistic officers could be the Young Officers Union (YOU), which could be a genuine splinter of the RAM-HF. In the same way that generational and leadership gaps gave birth to the CPP/NPA (Communist Party of the Philippines/New Peoples’ Army) within the old communist movement and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) sprang from the original Mindanao Independence Movement (not Canoy’s), controlled by older Muslim politicians, YOU could be an attempt to distance younger generation officers from their elders, many of whom could have been tainted by close association with powerful politicians in the previous regime. Seeking change possibly for reasons different from their elders, these idealistic officers became easy recruits into the plot.

It must also be pointed out that factionalism exists in the AFP. As long as this is denied, it cannot be addressed. As the resources and the time of the Commission are limited, it could not look into this problem as thoroughly as required to recommend remedial measures. Together with grievances like the *bata-bata* system, anomalies in procurement and supplies, graft and corruption of senior officers, inadequate attention to the needs of the soldiers in the field, and others, factionalism must be studied in order to find their solutions. By doing so, the military, especially its politicalized members would realize that government is not insensitive to their grievances, that government cares enough to attend to the legitimate causes of the virus that has led some of them to conspire against the government, and that it is sympathetic to meaningful reforms.

B.4. A Fatal Miscalculation

Some people find what they hope to see in a situation. The rebels saw a psychomilieu they thought favorable to their interventionist enterprise. The polls indicated a decline of government popularity particularly that of President Aquino who started her presidency with an exceptionally high popularity rating. Both the Senate and the House of Representatives, already scoring low, scored even lower in the polls immediately preceding the December 1989 coup attempt. The rebels must have interpreted this as a propitious time to unseat President Aquino, expecting if not the support of the population at least their indifference or neutrality. They failed to understand that popular dissatisfaction is one thing, supporting an unconstitutional means of changing political leaders is another.

The scandals splashed in media involving government officials or institutions such as the much-publicized Garchitorena land scam, car and gun importations by members of Congress, gun smuggling by one Congressman, the “sexcapades” in the Senate, to name a few, were focal points for government critics and the opposition to attack the government. This influenced the perceptions of the rebels. While they often complain about graft and corruption, very few were able to cite specific cases. Instead, they name the media as their source of information.¹⁹ The scandals provided the rebels with an excuse to intervene in political affairs purportedly to put a halt to these perceived anomalies w government. They provided the proverbial fuel for the fires of rebellion already ignited by rebel leaders and recruiters.

Metro Manila’s problems of power outages and inadequate public transport on its congested and pock-marked roads must have been generalized for the entire country and compounded their knowledge of the breakdown of the delivery of basic services in the countryside. The polls also indicated reduced optimism as to the people’s perceptions about their economic prospects.²⁰

In addition, perceived unjustified attacks against some officers by politicians, especially relating to the confirmation of promotions and the PCPNP bill, provided another source of grievance among some members of the military. In Cebu, the December 1989 coup attempt was preceded by discussions against the PC-PNP bill and could have been used as a venue for proselytization by Lt Col Tiburcio Fusilero. It may be recalled that several military officers based there behaved suspiciously before and during the coup attempt. They have been recommended for further investigation by the Commission in its Resolution No. 059 dated 17 April 1990 and are so classified in Chapter VI of this Report.

The plotters must have been hoping to see another EDSA Revolt in subsequent plots. This is evidenced by their attempts to organize a civilian component to shield the military rebels from government troops. The civilian Marcos loyalists provided this function during the Manila Hotel incident and the GMA 7 takeover. They must have seen the potential for mass civilian support against the government in the reduced satisfaction ratings for government, alleged anomalies in government as widely publicized by media, and the reported failure to deliver basic services not only in the countryside but also in Metro Manila. Their miscalculation was fatal as Filipinos overwhelmingly rejected the coup attempt in various polls conducted nationwide after the failed coup. About 82 percent did not approve of the coup even as 30 percent agreed with many of the rebels’ grievances.²¹

In fact, many civilians did more than just condemn the coup in opinion surveys. Despite the generally poor communication between the central and local government,²² civilians coordinated in their communities with the military in Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Muntinlupa, Quezon City, Camarines Sur, and other places to stop rebel troops while allowing those considered friendly to pass through. Special mention must also be made of the management and technicians of ABS-CBN, PTV-4, and GMA-7, who had the presence of mind and the courage to disable the broadcast facilities and thereby prevent the rebels from using TV and radio for propaganda. And, of course, the Philippine Red Cross volunteers wrote their own passages of heroism in the nation’s history. Filipinos unquestionably wanted to give democracy and the Constitution a chance.

B.5. Financing the Coup Attempt

In accordance with Sec (d) of RA No. 6832 and the Commission’s Rules and Regulations (Resolution No. 004), the Commission applied with the Monetary Board of the Central Bank to inspect the bank accounts of several civilian and military persons, including the much publicized US\$ 100,000 allegedly deposited by the wife of a high ranking rebel officer, to determine whether there were any evidence that these individuals either financed or received money

in connection with the failed 1989 December coup. The Commission in the course of its investigation examined accounts in no less than eight commercial banks. In each instance, the Commission found no evidence directly linking the accounts with the attempted coup.

Moreover, Central Bank Governor Jose L. Cuisia, by letter, confirmed to the Commission that there were no unusual withdrawals from foreign currency deposits during the period immediately preceding the coup attempt.

On the other hand, the Commission is not surprised by its findings regarding the possible use of bank accounts in the last attempted coup. It is reasonable to suppose that the conspirators and supporters of the attempted coup would not be so reckless as to use the commercial banking system to funnel funds to the rebels, and thus create an audit trail government prosecutors can trace. Also, it should be noted that the rebels utilized equipment, arms, vehicles, aircrafts, armor and, of course, personnel supplied by and paid for by the government. There is also no conclusive evidence that large amounts of money of the magnitudes initially talked about (up to \$50 million or P1 billion) was a major factor or consideration in launching the coup.

Nevertheless, the Commission is of the opinion that some money was distributed which was generated for the rebels mainly from local sources, particularly from those individuals and firms in whose interest it is to destabilize the government.

There is some evidence of money being held or distributed by the coup plotters. The nocturnal activities of Col Alexander Noble, Lt Col Victor Batac, and ex-Lt Col Billy Bibit in Heroes Hills, Quezon City and in Room 1701 of Holiday Inn, those of Lt Col Tiburcio Fusilero in Cebu City, the undocumented source of some P200,000 deposited by LtCol Arsenio Tecson's wife on 5 December 1989 at a Cubao branch of a bank and the Galido expose on Luis Tabuena and Cherry Cobarrubias indicate that cash may have been provided to the coup conspirators. BGenJose Comendador was reportedly overheard requesting over the telephone a cash donation allegedly from a company in Cebu City, in order to avoid being accosted at the government checkpoints.²³ Customs Commissioner Mison also said that he heard about a high ranking officer's wife supposedly receiving a check for P500,000, some company commanders being offered P20,000 and some generals between P1 million and P2 million if they would join the plot.²⁴ Offers of private contribution, such as the one made to Navy Capt Rex Robles by a Chinese businessman, or solicitation by some Makati-based professionals, must have also been one source of the attempted coup's funding.

Based on the testimonies it received, the Commission also believes that suspected coup plotters had their own "independent" sources of income. Capt Leovic Dioneda's family reportedly controlled *jueteng* operations in Sorsogon. Maj Abraham Purugganan allegedly had an independent source of income from gold-panning operations in Mt Diwalwal in Davao when he was assigned there.²⁵ Col Noble is known to have been in the payroll of loggers. According to businessman Cesar Magsaysay, a friend of Fusilero, Noble receives "allowances" from Agusan loggers. In fact, among the documents recovered from his get-away car at the checkpoint in Sta Rita, Samar was a receipt for P5,000.00 by Noble from one Bernie Manpatila. The latter is a brother of the deceased leader of the Higaonon tribe who was Noble's friend. Magsaysay, however, denies that his own Butuan Logs gives Noble a similar "allowance". Bibit's sources of independent income was the Bureau of Customs whose reputation as a lucrative source of graft money is well-known. However, among the alleged plotters, Rodolfo Aguinaldo's sources of such income are perhaps the biggest — he allegedly controlled illegal logging, illegal gambling, and the Small Town Lottery (STL) in Cagayan. Thus, he was able to buy, it is said, the loyalty of Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Units (CAFGUs) and even military officers based in that province.²⁶

Cash was used to pay for the fishing vessel chartered by the mysterious Artemio Tan who allegedly claimed to be a businessman from Puerto Princesa, Palawan. The vessel, Lady Vi-T-1, brought Lt Col Arsenio Tecson's 68 IB and Maj Alfredo Oliveros's 24 IB from Bataan to Sangley and back. It is owned by Odessa Fishing and Trading Corporation of Navotas, Metro Manila. Curiously, Odessa's Board Chairman, Rufino Tiangco, admitted being a close friend of Romeo (Romy) Rivera and a business associate of Honasan's brother, Don.

Almost from the beginning of the Commission's investigation, this vessel has been a major object of interest for the simple reason that nobody at Bataan, Sangley or Naval District II (NDII) seemed to have been able to either take a

good look at it to be able to describe it, or to have found it after it ferried the rebel troops back to Bataan. Yet it reportedly carried about 800 troops. The Commission's finding the vessel was nothing short of serendipitous. In the process, another possible connection between conspirators was unearthed. The main actors in the charter of this vessel are linked through Honasan.

It will be recalled that Rivera was already implicated in the failed December coup. Arms, ammunition, and communications equipment were found by the military in his house after the coup attempt. Rivera is the incumbent President of the Philippine Rifle and Shotgun Association where Jackie Enrile is chairman. A friend of Honasan's since 1979, Rivera is the godfather of one of Honasan's children. In turn, Honasan is godfather to one of Rivera's children.²⁷ According to Tiangco, Rivera introduced him to Honasan and his brother, Don, at a stag party Rivera tendered in Don's honor three years ago. Since then Tiangco and Don had been engaged in business, with Don supplying Odessa's cement needs.

The suspicious nature of the charter, the equally suspicious behavior of Odessa's owners, and their personal relationship with the Honasans and persons close to them as described in Chapter V, may lead one to conclude that the said charter was fictitious and that the fishing vessel could very well be Tiangco's contribution to Don's brother's adventurism. Don was allegedly also involved in the "God Save the Queen" plot. His car was intercepted in Camp Aguinaldo by Commo Virgilio Marcelo filled with firearms which the latter confiscated. They included (Jalil and Ultimax weapons loaded in three Land Cruisers in addition to Don's car. They were later released presumably to Honasan.²⁸ A person who closely resembles Don Honasan was also seen on television tape among the rebels in the vicinity of the Domestic Airport during the December 1989 coup attempt by a CIS (Constabulary Intelligence Service) agent in the presence of one of the members of the Commission.

Cash was similarly used to pay for another mysterious charter, this time of an aircraft, by one Roberto Huang some ten days before the failed coup of December 1989. Curiously, the aircraft belongs to the Executive and Tourist Aviation owned by Chemical Industries of the Philippine Inc., one of whose owners is known to have had close links with Marcos. The funds were allegedly sent by couriers from one Oliver Ker of Kota Kinabalu to Huang who paid the charter in cash and kept the remainder. Ker was connected with Jayapuri Brunei, Ltd.²⁹

As discussed in Chapter V, this mysterious charter, it seems, was timed to have been in Davao when Eduardo (Danding) Cojuangco, Jr reportedly took off from a private airstrip at Malita, Davao del Sur using another aircraft. Had they wanted to, it would have been possible, according to Capt Adriano Morales, for the chartered aircraft to have flown into Malita from Kota Kinabalu and then proceeded to Davao City Airport to formally record its re-entry into the Philippines with Immigration and Customs authorities.

The use of the aircraft and the fishing vessel could represent contributions of their owners to the coup plotters. One need not contribute funds to support the coup attempt. There were testimonies received by the Commission that civilians sent food to the rebels holed out in various buildings in Makati during the siege there. In fact, the rebels themselves agreed to take food and other supplies from Rustan Commercial Corporation in the Makati Commercial Center allegedly in exchange for sparing the building from being used as a machine gun nest.³⁰

In the end, it is apparent that most of the resources used by the coup plotters were from the government. Arms, ammunition, equipment, and supplies such as those issued to the units that moved against the government, those raided from government armories, and goods from the warehouse of the Bureau of Customs were among the principal resources from the government employed against its duly constituted authority by those who were supposed to defend it. The cash allegedly found on wounded rebels could have been their month's end salary received on 29 November since 30 November was a holiday. Even the initial reports about long lines of soldiers making big deposits in Makati banks turned out to be unsubstantiated.

B.6. Spreading the Coup Virus

In retrospect, the assignment of politicized officers, some of whom were already implicated in previous coup attempts, to sensitive positions like operations, intelligence, training, and logistics, was a serious mistake. This was demonstrated in the August 1987 coup attempt when those implicated in the November 1986 "God Save The

Queen” plot were simply reassigned instead of being tried and, if found guilty, punished. Thus, they were able to spread with impunity the coup virus in critical “nits to which they were sent.

Honasan assumed command over the Special Operations School (SOS) of the PA Training Command (PATRACOM) in Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija. The instructors under him included Lt Edmundo Malabanjot, Capts Dominador Lina, and Fidel Legiralde. These turned against the government on 28 August 1987 bringing with them their trainees. The timing of the coup attempt is significant, not only because of the restive political environment, but also because Honasan was supposed to appear before the AFP Anti-Graft Board on 30 August 1987 to account for a substantive number of firearms, radios, vehicles, and about P2 million for the purchase of equipment charged to him while he was commander of the elite anti-terrorist battalion at the Defense Ministry.

Kapunan was reassigned to the PMA after November 1986. Also at the PMA were Maj Wilhelm Doronal and Capt Gregorio Catapang, RAM members of long-standing. The latter tried to move to Manila with PMA cadets during the August 1987 coup attempt. He was implicated but subsequently cleared. Like Honasan, they were able to influence officers at the PMA into sympathizing with their movement allegedly against anomalies in the military and the government. PMA classes 1988 to 1991 were infected with the virus and stated their support for the rebels during this coup attempt.

Prior to the December 1989 coup attempt, politicized officers were again in control of sensitive positions where they could gather intelligence, order troop mobilization and deployment, train military personnel whom they would bring with them in unauthorized troop movements, or control logistics and supplies. Lt Col Romelino Gojo and Capt Danilo Lim were their units’ operations officers while Cmdr Proceso Maligalig and Commo Domingo Calajate were in logistics and supplies. Purugganan was commandant of the Officers Candidates School (OCS). They were able to operate within their areas of responsibility for the rebel cause without inviting suspicion until the crucial hour of the coup attempt’s launching. Chapter VI discusses the rebel network.

The dispersal of the First Scout Ranger Regiment (FSRR) after the December 1989 coup attempt may not have been a wise decision as it may only spread the coup virus to a wider area. Units that may not be coup prone could be infected by politicized Scout Rangers. It may have been more prudent to have put the regiment under a respected commanding officer who could reorient the men. Their dispersal could even exacerbate anti-government sentiments as Rangers are a very tightly-knit group and take pride in their distinction as an effective elite force. Their dispersal may be perceived as an unacceptable indignity to their unit.

B.7. Recruitment and Mobilization Factors

An important recruitment factor seems to be “old boy” networks in the AFP. Among older generation officers implicated in the failed December 1989 coup, a look at their service records tend to show their previous long association with either former Defense Minister Enrile or General Ver. Many occupied positions in the Jacinto group of companies managed by active-duty officers close to Enrile or were with the Presidential Security Command/National Intelligence Security Agency (PSC/NISA) under Ver. Among the latter are those who were attached to embassies or consulates abroad, either as defense attaches or intelligence officers with innocuous titles not normally found in embassy or consulate lists of personnel. These ties were apparently activated for the December 1989 coup attempt as we saw officers who were not involved in previous coups moving against the government together with well-known “repeaters” such as Honasan, Kapunan, Turingan, Batac, Abenina, and Zumel.

Gojo was described as Ver’s “side-kick,”³¹ having spent more time with Ver at the PSC than with the Marines.³² He is also Honasan’s third cousin. He reportedly held a grudge against the Aquino government for having pulled his younger brother, a pilot, from Manila after the EDSA Revolt. His brother was assigned to Mindanao where his aircraft crashed. His body was never found. Gojo is said to support his deceased brother’s family.³³ In Gojo’s case, both old ties and personal grudge against the government must have led him to join the failed December 1989 coup.

Younger officers, not previously implicated surfaced for the first time. Lt Emil Ong seems to represent the young idealistic officer, indignant over broad social issues like poverty, privileges of the wealthy, and injustice of the

system. He believes in the goals of reform and wished a hastening of the coup plot in order to quickly accomplish the implementation of reforms in the military and in the government.³⁴ Other young officers like Capt Gregory Ramos and Lt Oscar Singson moved out of their barracks to show their sympathy for the rebels.³⁵ Still others who may not have been originally sympathetic to the rebels were indignant for what they perceived to be US intervention in Philippine domestic affairs. These included the 25 officers who dialogued with BGen Mariano Baccay, Jr in Davao City, as well as the 40 who met with BGen Rogelio Villanueva in Cagayan de Oro City (See Chapter V and VI). Disillusionment with the system, affected by what they perceive as continuing problems of poverty and the breakdown of basic services in the countryside, graft and corruption in the corridors of power, insurgencies that do not go away, and foreign dependence, among others, must have been compelling reasons for young idealistic officers either to join the plot or to show sympathy for the plotters.

Among the known recruiters who called on their classmates and friends were Fusilero and Bibit. Fusilero used his motorcycle gang, the Cyclones (short for Cycling Lunatics), as his cover in recruiting allies during their trips throughout the country. Bibit undertook his recruitment in the Visayas where he comes from, with the gun club, and through his Custom's connections. He was reported by BGen Galileo Kintanar of ISAFP (Intelligence Service of the AFP) to Commissioner Salvador Mison, Bibit's superior at the Bureau of Customs. Col Carlos Tanep also called Mison's attention about Bibit's recruitment activities. Unfortunately, Mison did not take a personal interest in the matter, much less attempt to neutralize him, because Mison felt his "primary responsibility is to collect revenues for the government. ". . . I feel that the job of . . . going after these people fighting the government rests solely in the hands of the AFP." Mison did ask his chief of intelligence to watch Bibit.³⁶

Recruitment seems to have been done rather obliquely, as officers said, "*pakiramdaman lang muna.*" This is why it may be difficult for officers to categorically state that they had been approached for recruitment into a conspiracy. Overtures usually begin by talking about the ills of society and when the recruiter senses that the object of recruitment is vulnerable, i.e., dissatisfied with the military and/or civilian government, desires change or is predisposed towards a coup, further discussions are arranged until the object becomes a recruit.

An effective mobilization factor is the political inclination of the units' commanding officer. BGen Blando's units were mobilized in large numbers, i.e., Tecson's 68 IB, Oliveros's 24 IB, Lt Col Levy Zamora's 56 IB, Lt Col Rolan Erasmo's 73 IB, Maj Pedro Gutierrez's 71 IB and the company from the Scout Ranger Training Center under Capt Herbert Avinante. Blando appeared to be the key factor behind these troop movements as their division commander. Although not directly under him, the rebel Rangers such as the FSRRHQ, 4 SRB under Lt Col Galvez, and 3 SRB under Capt Flores, appeared to look up to him for leadership. , Because he was expected to fly by helicopter into Fort Bonifacio by the Scout Rangers who held that camp, he initially appeared not to join the troops of Erasmo, Gutierrez, and Avinante whom he ordered to proceed to Camp Aguinaldo. The Sikorsky helicopter flown by Lt Gregor Mendel Panelo which landed in the vicinity of Fort Magsaysay at about 1:00 p.m. of 1 December must have been the aircraft assigned to bring Blando to Fort Bonifacio. When Gen de Villa once more urged him to bring troops to Camp Aguinaldo to reinforce it from rebel soldiers, Blando was overheard asking if GHQ (General Headquarters) could provide them with air cover. When de Villa answered in the affirmative, Blando must have realized that the rebel air assets had been destroyed and decided to go to Manila with the above-cited troops by land. He led the convoy from Fort Magsaysay not to Camp Aguinaldo but to a "neutral place" — Greenhills Commercial Center—where he established his post contrary to de Villa's orders.

There is reason to believe that Tecson and Zamora moved on Blando's orders. Tecson asked to be allowed to return to Bataan and refused a diversion of his mission to secure Sangley when this was lost to the government troops led by Lt Col Edgar Aglipay, Laguna Provincial Commander and Lt Col Nicetas Katigbak, Cavite Provincial Commander. He said this was the extent of his "commitment" and did not proceed to attack the Headquarters of the Western Police District (HWPD) to which he was allegedly directed.³⁷ Zamora, on the other hand, insisted on moving towards Manila allegedly on Blando's orders. He agreed to return to his post only after learning that Blando had already been compromised. It is also possible that the superior force of his classmate, Lt Col Efren Fernandez, Pampanga Provincial Commander, made him rethink his position.

The participation of officers closely associated with Ver, like Gojo and Navy Capt Danilo Pizarro, seems to have been a function of their long association at the PSC/NISA. To some extent, this may similarly apply to Tecson and Galvez (4 SRB) who were at the PSC during the last 14 years of Marcos's rule, some of which were spent abroad.

The deployment of some 26 prison guards and four civilians at the instance of Rodolfo Morit, Jr, an incorporator of GCFI, to fight on the rebel side is a mobilization through fraternal ties. Guardians have been in nearly each coup attempt since July 1986. Morit and Job Gavino, Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) Police Station Commander, were allegedly the contact persons of this group when it was fetched from the New Bilibid Prisons in the evening of 30 November for Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA).³⁸ Interestingly, Gavino was present at the PPA office when rebel soldiers took it over and enticed GCFI members from Baguio City to join the coup attempt.³⁹ Gavino denied participation in it.

Deception may have also been a mobilization factor. Members of the GCFI led by Baguio Assistant City Prosecutor Elmer Sagsago were told to converge at the North Harbor on 30 November for an alleged GCFI meeting. It turned out that the North Harbor PPA office was used as a rebel recruitment and mobilization post. The GCFI members were invited to join the coup attempt but Sagsago said they instead quietly slipped out of the area in two's and three's to escape rebel detection.⁴⁰

When the MBLT 4 moved out of Fort Bonifacio into Villamor Air Base (VAB), they were told to "follow the tanks" without being told that, the tanks were going to be used against the government. The 221st PC Company under Capt Nestor Bernardino was allegedly brought from Taytay on the pretext of going to a counterinsurgency (COIN) operation in Binangonan but ended up at the vicinity of PTV-4 on the rebel side.⁴¹ A similar claim was made by Pfc Victor Samonte, for the Bravo Company 16 IB based in Mauban, Quezon who was reportedly ordered by Lt Gener del Rosario to go to Magallanes Commercial Center with six others. They ended up at VAB where they found their gear and the rest of their company. There, del Rosario pointed to their uniforms and guns and told them: "*Wala na tayong pangamba dahil nakuha na natin ang Villamor*". They subsequently attacked Camp Aguinaldo.⁴²

In spite of the real possibility that enlisted men and others could have been deceived into joining the coup attempt, the Commission believes that they should have disengaged when they realized the deception, instead of remaining on the rebel side. While it is hard to distinguish between those who were genuinely deceived, of which there were some, and those who claim being deceived, of which there are many, deception could be the easiest excuse for joining a misadventure that failed.

B.8. The State of Government Readiness

The issue of failure of intelligence has been raised in relation to the last failed coup. Gen de Villa appeared on television's late news on 30 November announcing the discovery of the sabotage of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) Repeater Station in Tagaytay City. He said the saboteurs had been taken into custody and while the act was related to a planned coup, the plot had been neutralized. Ironically, however, within the hour the rebel Marines moved out of their cantonment area in Fort Bonifacio and took over VAB.

The Commission received evidence that tends to support the view that one cause of the government troops' apparent unpreparedness may be due to their having become inured to coup rumors and to red alerts which, until 1 December 1989, turned out to be unwarranted. As a consequence, there was a decline in the times the troops went on red alert from 1 September 1987 to 1 December 1989. It is reasonable to assume that their psychological readiness necessarily also declined. Dramatic declines in red alerts as percentage of days in both the headquarters of the Philippine Navy and the Philippine Marines are evidently clear. In the Navy, red alerts were called 70 days out of 131 (53.4 percent) in 1987, 60.04 out of 366 (16.4 percent) in 1988, and only 16.875 out of 333 (5.07 percent) in 1989. The Marines were on red alert 67 days out of 122 (55 percent) in 1987, 70.9 out of 366 (19.4 percent) in 1988, and 45.4 out of 333 (13.6 percent) in 1989. A less dramatic decline is also evident in the PAF Headquarters. They went on red alert 47 days out of 122 (38.5 percent) in 1987, 113 out of 366 (30.9 percent) in 1988, and 70 out of 333 (21 percent) in 1989.

The soldiers could have become alert-fatigued due to continuing, although declining, red alert days. During this time they have to be in camp without exception. This must be very difficult for them and their families. Persistence of coup rumors that remained rumors must have put them in the same psychological state as the victims of "the boy who cried wolf." When the coup plotters finally struck, they appeared unprepared.

There appears to have been failure of intelligence information being passed on to the appropriate commander or unit. This is what happened in the case of the failure of the Chief of Staff of Regional Command (RECOM) 7 to pass on to his superior the information he obtained at around 10:00 a.m. of 30 November about a coup taking place at 2200 H of the same day. The details were not transmitted to the Headquarters of the Philippine Constabulary (HPC) whose highest ranking officer then was BGen Victor Natividad. This must have been the case, too, of the message simul-patched by the Flag Officer in Command (FOIC) that a vessel full of rebel soldiers from Bataan was bound not for Manila as alleged by NDII⁴³ but for Sangley. Lt Cmdr Damian Carlos claimed that the message transmitted by FOIC at 10:30 a.m., 30 November was received by him only at 3:00 p.m. since he was then at his quarters.⁴⁴ If it were simul-patched, the staff intelligence officers of all units should have received and transmitted it to the commanders of NDII, Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Naval Base Cavite (NBC), and Philippine Fleet (PHP). The fact that the vessel reached and left Sangley unmolested indicates the failure to either pass the intelligence on to the appropriate officers or to use the intelligence properly.

The failure to use intelligence information properly is best illustrated by the inaction by the AFP on the report of Maj Alphonsus Crucero of the Negros Island Command (NICOM) about the recruitment activities of Bibit and Fusilero.

It also appears that Malacañang was not being properly informed about intelligence relating to coup attempts. It was left out in the July 1986 Manila Hotel incident; according to testimony received in Executive Session, Malacañang found out about it from a reporter calling in to verify the incident. Malacañang resorted to buying information from those present around Manila Hotel in order to be updated on the incident. In the November 1986 "God Save The Queen" plot, Malacañang obtained information from non-military sources and delicately leaked it to the press in a manner not traceable to Malacañang in order to alert whoever in the AFP and defense leadership may have been part of the plot that Malacañang was aware of it. More than three years after the event, Malacañang continued to be unaware of its details.⁴⁵

Because of the experience in July 1986, the Bengzon investigating committee organized to look into the Manila Hotel incident recommended an independent civilian source of intelligence gathering for the Commander-in-Chief. Unfortunately, the recommendation was not totally acted upon. Little came out of the creation of a Crisis Committee tasked with the responsibility of dealing more effectively with situations like a coup attempt. Such a body, in coordination with the President's own intelligence agency, could have been the appropriate conduit for adequate and accurate information both to the President and the public. In the absence of such information, the public becomes manipulable by misinformation and disinformation unwittingly or deliberately passed on by radio and other media.

The strong camaraderie developed among officers may have been a hindrance in securing credible intelligence on coup attempts. Some soldiers may not be inclined to pass on information regarding their friends or classmates. In fact, some of them testified that it would be very difficult for them to arrest classmates or friends like Honasan. They would rather that the task is assigned to somebody else.⁴⁶ Moreover, their socialization into anti-communism taught them that the enemies are the communists. Consequently, there has been much better intelligence on the CPP/NPA than on the rebel military, according to testimony received in Executive Session. Better military and government preparedness is necessary to deter future coup attempts or reduce further the probability of a successful coup.

B.9. Role of the USAF Phantom Jets

The capability of the AFP to cope with the rebel assault was put to a test when rebel air assets from Sangley attacked Malacañang and government installations in Metro Manila. However, by the time the United States Air Force (USAF) jets flew over Metro Manila at 2:04 p.m. of 1 December, PAF planes flown by Maj Danilo Atienza, Capt Ariel Quijano, and Lt Antonio Avaricio had already destroyed the rebel air assets and the fuel dump at Sangley. The Commission's Interim Report No. 2 dated 12 May 1990 dealt exhaustively with the chronology of events with respect to the USAF jets.

The Commission concluded that the USAF jets did not destroy the rebel air assets nor were they instrumental in keeping the rebel planes on the ground to be destroyed by the PAF jets. That issue being settled, the Commission

also wanted to know the military or political value of the so-called persuasion flights, both from hindsight and from the point of view of those making the military decisions at the time.

Gen de Villa contends that, since the tide of battle had started to turn before noon of 1 December with the arrival of more than sufficient reinforcements at Camp Aguinaldo and since the rebel air assets had already been destroyed, the flight of the Phantoms served no real military value for or against the government forces. This view appears to be supported by evidence that several units which intended to support the rebels were not deterred from still moving, even after wide publicity was given to the flight of the Phantoms, e.g. the 56 IB from Aurora, the column of Blando from Fort Magsaysay, the attack by rebel Marines on Camp Aguinaldo in the early morning of 3 December.

On the other hand, the 68 IB and 24 IB that secured Sangley may have decided to return to Bataan not only because the rebel air assets had already been destroyed but because the persuasion flights were made directly over them.

The Phantoms had a reverse effect on the 25 officers in Davao and the 40 in Cagayan de Oro City. They used the flights to express sympathy for the rebels and faulted the government for allowing foreign interference into a strictly “domestic” affair.

Ramos’ view qualified de Villa’s. He said that hindsight tells us that the persuasion flights did occur after the government had already gained the upper hand. However, at the time of the flight, the AFP command was not fully certain about the capability of the rebels to launch air strikes from Mactan Air Base (MAB) or to bring reinforcements from Mindanao and Palawan to Manila. It was not until afterwards that the government knew about the refusal of all the pilots to go along with Comendador.

The political value of the flights to the government is questionable. The immediate effect to the public was probably one of relief at the thought that the US was firmly on the government side, particularly after the initial reports of rebel gains. On the other hand, the flights served to give the opposition, at least initially, a platform to put the government on the defensive, some young officers an occasion to express support for the rebels, and the US and its press a propaganda leverage for the bases negotiations. On hindsight, the government would have been better off not calling on the persuasion flights. But 20-20 vision was not available when the flights were first agreed upon at about 11:00a.m. of 1 December, when a favorable outcome was not yet clearly in sight and a judgment call had to be made. That judgment, which paid immediate tribute to the US and a belated, but eventually fitting, credit to the PAF pilots, may have been the most rational under the circumstances. But its net after-effect is a political setback for the government. It brings home the lesson that there is no substitute for self-reliance and the removal of all vestiges of overdependence on a foreign patron.

B.10. Outnumbered But Not Outfought

Although an officer testified that Commo Domingo Calajate’s turn to serve as Senior Command Duty Officer at Camp Aguinaldo on 30 November could not have been anticipated,⁴⁷ the coincidence remains rather suspicious. Infiltration from inside Camp Aguinaldo by LOGGOM officers, one of whom was the Duty Officer for the day, worked in the rebels’ favor. The LOGCOM compound occupying two thirds of the camp made it easier for Calajate to position his men and to house a Marine company from the MBLT 1 as well as a Marine guard company to escort supplies for Subic Naval Base from LOGCOM in the evening of 30 November without inviting suspicion.

Inside Camp Aguinaldo, the government side was clearly at a disadvantage during the first several hours of the coup attempt. BGen Rodolfo Biazon, CGNational Capital Region Defense Command (NCRDC) said “there were not many government troops in Aguinaldo” during this time.⁴⁸ The troops normally available to him as a maneuver battalion were the ones that bolted out of their cantonment area at Fort Bonifacio and occupied VAB.

Fort Bonifacio was quickly overrun by Scout Rangers who had filtered earlier into the camp from various points in Northern, Central, and Southern Luzon. They took over strategic targets in the camp as the MBLT 4 quickly took over VAB. With the same ease, rebels led by ex-Lt Col Oscar Legaspi, ex-Navy Capt Felix Turingan, and ex-LCdr Jaime Lucas occupied Sangley, took over the PAF air assets there, neutralized the officers, and operated the aircraft against government targets. Their task was made easier by conspiring with officers already inside Sangley like Navy

Capt Pizarro of the Philippine Fleet and Navy Capt Jesus Durian, the Naval Base Commander. Durian denied being a rebel. Even PTV-4 was easily taken over by the rebels, again because defenders were greatly outnumbered.

The failure of the rebels to launch a massive and sustained attack against the government forces particularly at Camp Aguinaldo during the early hours of the coup enabled reinforcements from the latter side to get themselves organized and to reach the various camps in time to repel the main rebel attacks. Failure to gain success within the day sealed the fate of the rebels.⁴⁹ This was facilitated by the loyalty of officers who refused to use strategic assets on behalf of the rebels. The pilots at VAB as well as those at MAB, who refused to fly any aircraft for BGen Comendador, crippled the rebels' capability to bring reinforcement troops from Mindanao and to attack government targets. Hence, Comendador had the aircraft but could not fly them. Consequently, the troops from Mindanao brought to MAB apparently for transshipment to Manila to reinforce rebels could not be flown out of Mactan.

Perhaps the rebels' failure to mount a serious attack against government troops and installations and the reluctance of government troops to fire at the rebels could have been a function of their strong bonds of friendship and camaraderie. Soldiers detest fighting against fellow soldiers because the organization's unity, so essential to remaining an effective fighting force, would be breached. This could lead to the destruction of the army itself. Thus, as discussed in the Commission's Interim Report No. 2, the government pilots appeared unwilling to shoot at the rebel-controlled Tora-Toras (T-28) and Sikorskys, equipment that make them an effective fighting unit. Instead they fired warning shots at them, strafed the coasts along the Sangley runway, and only hit them when it became absolutely necessary.⁵⁰ This underlines the merit of the suggestion by MGen (Ret) Ramon Montano and BGen Loven Abadia that government troops should be commanded to fire immediately rather than talk to the other side to ensure their commitment.

B.11. The Sorry State of Military Equipment

Another reason for the pilots' hesitance to destroy the rebel aircraft is the inadequacy of equipment available to the AFP. This is the reason given by one of the F-5 pilots from Basa Air Base on why they exercised maximum tolerance when they first engaged the rebel T-28s. The country's long security relationship with the US has not only led to the neglect of its external defense capability but has also hindered it from modernizing its armed forces. The sorry state of its equipment was driven home to the Commission when it found out that intelligence messages could not be readily transmitted, resulting in the escape of rebel forces or in disadvantages to government forces.

There was a marked difference between the arms allegedly used by the coup leaders, their vehicles, and communications equipment, and those available to government forces. Although the rank and file used government-issued firearms and other supplies, the coup leaders had Uzis, Galils, and Ultimax guns, radio and telephone systems superior to those used by government troops. It will be recalled that Honasan remains accountable for arms, ammunition, and communications equipment issued to him as the commander of the MND elite battalion. After the August 1987 coup attempt, four carloads of M-16s, Galils, and Uzis were presumably returned to him by Commo Marcelo.⁵¹ Bibits Customs connections could have given him access to sophisticated arms smuggled into the country. The Armburst anti-tank weapon issued to Noble through Sgt Asterio Dejarne came from a parked van at the South Harbor.

Pajeros, L-300 vans, and Land Cruisers appeared to be standard vehicles used by the coup plotters. In contrast, Col Clemente Mariano had to commandeer private trucks, including fish and fruit vendor's trucks, in order to ferry SOLCOM troops to Manila.⁵²

The lamentable state of military equipment has also been cited by military personnel, both rebel and government, as a source of grievance. Inadequate medical facilities and supplies in the field had led soldiers to describe these facilities as Mona Lisa hospitals where "they just lie there and they die there."⁵³ They also complain about politicians who use the military's scarce helicopters in their provincial sorties thereby competing with military purposes such as evacuating the wounded and transporting troops and critical supplies where and when they are most needed. This practice fans their dissatisfaction with politicians whom they think spend more time "politicking" than doing their job in Congress.

B.12. Will There Be Another Coup?

When asked that question, the military's usual answer is that the rebel groups may have the capability for mischief, de-stabilization, or terroristic activities but they do not have the organic forces, critical mass, or covert network in the military establishment to launch an attempt anywhere near the magnitude of the one of December 1989.

Part of the reason is that the rebels may have committed almost all or most of their resources last December, and need some time to remobilize. Despite the impression that they have a large armory which had its origin as far back as the Marcos regime, they still engage in arms' raids under risky conditions.

Secondly, the measures being taken by the government and the military after the December 1989 are better than those after earlier coup attempts. According to the military, the "cavalier" attitude toward coup participants is no longer practiced, to the extent that detainees are now protesting the "inhuman conditions" in military detention centers. A counter-intelligence unit has been organized directly under the CSAFP to address the problem of military mutinies. Loyalty to the Constitution is a major criterion for promotion and assignment to sensitive and command positions. And the benefits to soldiers continue to be improved despite the budgetary problems of the government, although the difficult economic situation will increasingly be felt by the military and their dependents.

Thirdly, the communication program of the government to mobilize public opinion against coups and any kind of violent change has improved considerably.

The Commission agrees with the military that the likelihood of a successful coup is remote. But, at this difficult economic period with more problems lurking around the corner, even the bombings that happen with disturbing regularity could push the country closer to a crisis, and the logical question is — do the rebels have the capability to make an attempt of sufficient magnitude and international impact, however ultimately unsuccessful, that would bring the country to crisis?

The Commission believes that if the measures recommended in this Report are adopted and the processes are sustained for solidarity and Peace, first among the political parties, and next among all sectors, the rebel groups can be pre-empted from making such an attempt. At the moment, they appear to have lost some momentum in the war of nerves with government forces. If the government continues to press the initiative and manages to capture more of the core group, including Honasan, the pre-emption can be permanent.

What about the possibility of a CPP-NPA tie-up with the RAM-HF or the YOU? As the December 1989 events demonstrated, even forces such as the RAM-HF and Loyalists, which may appear to be "oil and water", may have their own catalyzing element, at least for the short-run, in the overriding quest for power. That they will probably end up fighting among themselves over the "spoils", as indicated by attempts at one-upmanship last December, will not deter them from making tactical linkages. After all, they use a common language in representing themselves as real reformers, are able to rationalize the use of violence to attain their ends, and have very little chance of winning in the electoral process. Thus, the 1992 election is not a feasible alternative to them, only an opportunity to radicalize the people if the process is flawed. Should other opportunities present themselves earlier, such as a severe economic crisis, they could get together as a matter of expediency.

While the possibility exists, the strong anti-communist culture of the military, which the rebels adhere to and publicly espouse, is a strong deterrent against such an alliance. It would represent more of a contradiction than the RAM-HF-Loyalist coalition and could divide the rebel ranks. They must surely also realize that it would alienate whatever sympathy they may have among the disillusioned but law-abiding mainstream of society.

B.13. Conduct Expected of Public Officials

Sec 1, Article XI of the Constitution requires public officers to "be accountable to the people, serve them with utmost responsibility, integrity, loyalty, and . . . act with patriotism and justice" Moreover, elective and appointive officials take a solemn oath not only to "defend" but also to "preserve" the Constitution. Thus, they are duty bound as provided by Article 137 of the Revised Penal Code "to resist a rebellion by all means in their power."

As against these standards of conduct prescribed for all public officials, the Commission makes of record the evidence it received regarding the activities and behavior of several opposition politicians, some of whom are elective officials, during the coup attempt.

Since Vice President Salvador Laurel is the constitutional successor to the President, his actuations during the period of the attempted coup take on added importance. He was abroad when the coup occurred. During his stopover in Hongkong, he gave a telephone interview conducted by John Eidinow on 3 December 1989 for British Broadcasting Corporation(BBC).⁵⁴ He refused at that time to condemn the coup which is all the more puzzling since the government forces were clearly in the ascendancy by then. Portions of the interview are quoted below for the reader's own consideration.

John Eidinow	:	"There has been upheaval too in the Philippines. But it has involved coups and since the people power propelled her into office in 1986. 1 Ramos with early mopping up operations going on. The situation rem while ago, I called Mrs Aquino's Vice-President but also an oppositio attempted coup and to the rebels.
VP Laurel	:	It's something that should not have happened. It's very painful to see l by the intervention of the United States in this affair.
John Eidinow	:	But I don't hear you condemning the rebels. [Emphasis supplied]
VP Laurel	:	Well I don't want to pre-judge them, I condemn the method. But I can How can you be against good government? But I do not believe in the i supplied]
John Eidinow	:	I'm surprised as far as the government's handling of the uprising is con course?
VP Laurel	:	I do not think that that was the right thing to say or do. You do not sa waving a red flag at a bull. So I think she has not taken a more con amicable settlement of the dispute.
John Eidinow	:	So although you condemn the course taken by the rebels, you still think
VP Laurel	:	Well, what are the gripes, what are the issues, what are the grievanc Aquino government. The first is the failure to unite the nation, failu President is the one principally tasked with the responsibility of enfo enforced. Third, is the failure to deliver basic services to the people. A and not fulfilled. Finally, the fourth and the last, is the failure to provid to the last recourse.
John Eidinow	:	And given the answers of the dialogue, do you think Mrs Aquino now s
VP Laurel	:	Well, if it is the only way to avert a bloodshed or to avert a civil war, with her if that is the only way we can avert bloodshed and civil war. [E
John Eidinow	:	But I mentioned you would also be willing to put your self forward if c
VP Laurel	:	Well, that is the constitutional requirement. As Vice-President I am req
John Eidinow	:	Where do you think this leaves the Philippines now assuming that the r
VP Laurel	:	I think it hurts the country very badly. The economy will surely be affe to the Philippines to invest and it will takesometime before we can co resilient people. We are used to adversity and I know we will bounce b
John Eidinow	:	The Vice-President of the Philippines, Salvador Laurel, speaking from l

The opposition Nacionalista Party (NP), as discussed in Chapter V, had a press conference at the Intercon which started at about 3:00 p.m. of 2 December and lasted for an hour. Intercon was not the original venue of this meeting. According to Bias Ople, Executive Vice President of the NP, at about 10:00 a.m. of 1 December, a member of the staff of Sen Juan Ponce Enrile, calling on behalf of the Senator, invited him to drop by the latter's residence at Dasmarinas Village, Makati, to informally discuss the future courses of action for the Party.⁵⁵ He arrived at the Enrile residence at about 1:30 p.m. Present on that occasion were Messrs Rene Espina, Bobby Brillantes, Geronimo Velasco, Ike Gutierrez (as representative of Vice-President Laurel), Dr & Mrs Rebecca Panlilio, and others he did not recognize. During their informal discussion, they saw the need to

convene the Central Committee (CENCOM) of the Party because there were “members all over the country [who] were in the dark, and probably would appreciate some guidance from the Party on what was going on”.

Enrile suggested his residence as the venue for the meeting but Ople pointed out that such a venue is not proper because the meeting ought to be in a public place”. Since the Hotel Intercontinental was a place most familiar to the members of the Central Committee”, Ople suggested it and requested Gutierrez to arrange for the Dasmarinas Room of the Intercon for the meeting on the following day, at 1:30 p.m. to be followed by a Dress conference at 3:00 p.m.⁵⁶

The decision to hold the press conference was made in the afternoon of 1 December. Purugganan, who was apparently the contact person to the RAM-HF command, moved elements of the FSRR to the Makati commercial district in the morning of 2 December after there was apparent agreement with government forces for the rebels to lay down their arms. By the time of the Nacionalista Party press conference, the rebels had full control of the vicinity of the Intercon.

Ople claimed he left the Enrile residence at 4:00 p.m. on 1 December “before the waiters [who were to subsequently execute affidavits that they saw Honasan in the house] could arrive in the residence of Senator Enrile”.⁵⁷

When asked who were present during the CENCOM Meeting *cum* press conference, Ople testified before the Commission

If you want me to help identify to the best of my ability those who were there, I think, I remember that Sen Arturo Tolentino was there, Vic Rabaya, Frisco San Juan, Isidro Rodriguez, Dominador Aytona, Rene Espina, Mabungkay Reonto [Alonto], Atty Regalado Maambong and there is one not listed here who was also there, Speaker, former Speaker Jose P. Laurel, Jr. Those are the names that I recall, who were among those present. And yes, Sen Enrile was there.”⁵⁸

The CENCOM Meeting was characterized by what Ople called “spirited exchanges among members of the Central Committee”. And instead of what was originally intended (i.e., to provide guidance to party members who were in the dark and would have appreciated guidance from the party on what was going on), “primarily the meeting of the Central Committee dealt with a proposed position or statement concerning the emergency that was taking place at the time.”⁵⁹ The proposed statement, which was admitted to have been drafted by Ople, was strongly critical of what the NP then considered “intervention of the United States through the Phantom Jets.”⁶⁰

The Ople draft underwent several changes in the course of the “spirited exchange”. The first involved a change in the object of the statement’s condemnation. Ople narrated

You will note that in the third paragraph, in the fourth paragraph of page two. The statement says ‘The Nacionalista Party does not countenance violence and stands by the Constitution of the Republic’ In the original, it continued: “it deplores the military rebellion and the government’s incapacity to contain it more quickly, more effectively, . . . a situation reflecting directly on the adequacy, competence and sustainability of the highest defense of military leadership’ In the corrected version however, it comes out as: ‘it deplores however the government’s giving causeto the military rebellion and its incapacity to contain it more quickly, more effectively’ . . . etc. So that is an example on how the original draft underwent certain changes in the course of the open deliberation . . .⁶¹

Thus, while the original draft was explicitly against the attempted coup as it “deplore[d] the military rebellion,” the revision made by the CENCOM withdrew said condemnation and instead deplored “the government’s giving cause to the military rebellion.” Both Ople and Maambong, NP Deputy Secretary General in charge of research, agreed that the revision “entirely changed the whole meaning” of the condemnation.⁶²

The only other change in the Ople draft consisted of an amendment of the first sentence of the second paragraph of page 1 of the statement. In its original form, the sentence read as follows

President Aquino, having lost the support of the Armed Forces of the Philippines requested for the US military rescue and President George Bush of the United States ordered that the necessary force be committed.⁶³

As given to the media, the phrase “shamelessly and without regard to national honor and dignity” was inserted on the second line between the words “Philippines” and “requested.”

Unaltered during the discussions were allegations in the Ople draft that the US “fighter craft apparently unmarked to disguise its origin, shot rockets that killed innocent Filipino civilians”; that President Aquino “lost the support of the Armed Forces of the Philippines”; and that the “brazen act of intervention belies President Aquino’s claims that her government is in full control of her military forces and that she enjoys broad popular support.”

When asked about the inconsistency of the above-statements with his own testimony before the Commission deploring the politics of hate and vengeance and espousing reconciliation and unity, and when confronted with the inaccuracy of the statement’s purported factual assertions, Ople asked the Commission to understand the NP statement in the light of “the atmosphere that prevailed at that time.” He admitted that “if there is an opportunity to rewrite this statement, it would sound better and more balanced” and that it was actually “the very strong resentment of the American intervention . . . at the time that strongly colored the language.”⁶⁴

The press statement of the Central Committee of the Nacionalista Party on 2 December with the corrections⁶⁵ is attached to this Report as to Appendix.

During the press conference, individual members of the CENCOM gave statements of their own, among them Enrile, Abdul Khayr Alonto, Espina and Aytona. When asked by the Commission, Ople categorically denied that he made a statement asking President Aquino to resign. Such a statement, said Ople, “would be inappropriate.”⁶⁶

However, the Commission has a videotape⁶⁷ of portions of the press conference in which Ople said

There is a preponderant feeling which this statement has not captured in the ranks of the opposition that the constitutional legitimacy of President Aquino has been impaired by her own reckless renunciation of the sovereignty of the nation in order to, well, by seeking American support in order to prop herself up in power and this can constitute a very serious impairment of their own constitutional legitimacy. That is the reason there is a sentiment that she should consider stepping down and giving way to a government of national unity. But as I said, the text of this statement does not capture that sentiment and I’m saying this on my individual behalf rather than on behalf of the Central Committee of the Nacionalista Party. [Emphasis supplied]

The press conference ended by 4:00 p.m. Ople proceeded to the Peninsula Coffee Shop since he “wanted some privacy with my (his) coffee.”

Senator Juan Ponce Enrile’s personal comments during the press conference are equally revealing. He took pains to characterize the rebels as “antagonistic forces,” “contending forces,” or “challenging military elements,” and when referring to the coup, he used such terms as “the situation,” “this problem,” or “military action against the Aquino government.”

His assessment of the ongoing coup attempt indicated a bias in favor of the rebels as he recounted, “I was told over the radio” that Camp Aguinaldo was surrounded by “the group challenging the government. . . in a perimeter around Greenhills, . . . at the back of Camp Aguinaldo and . . . at the White Plains side of Aguinaldo.” [Emphasis supplied] He, moreover, said that based on “what I hear over the radio and what I have read in the papers,” [Emphasis supplied] the rebels controlled Legaspi Airport and they had reinforcement troops presumably coming from Negros Occidental and Iloilo, troops which were intercepted in Camarines Norte, and those coming from SOLCOM although in the case of the latter, it was not clear if

they are with the side of the government or on the side of the challenging military elements. They claim that they are here for a peacekeeping purpose to serve as a neutral element. If this is the situation, then this presents to you a spectacle of a government that has no command over the bulk of its own forces.⁶⁸

After collating testimonies and after-battle reports, the Commission found Enrile's information about rebel troop movements accurate. His assessment of the action of government forces must have been based on his own perception of the events of February 1986, which he appears to continue to think was a successful coup against Marcos, instead of the triumph of people power. He said

If they have 5,000 troops at their disposal at this point, then they should by now be able to mount a counter-attack and the longer this thing will last, I think it will become more difficult for the government to contain it. You see, from my own experience, one of the main errors of the former regime was to give us time in our favor. Had they taken the initiative at the outset of the conflict, that was on Saturday, 22nd of February, especially during the night of Saturday and on Sunday morning, then maybe the situation would have been different . . .⁶⁹ [Emphasis supplied].

The above assessment indicates Enrile's optimism about the rebels' chances of succeeding in their attempt. Ople, on the other hand, testified to a contrary view. When asked what the evaluation of the Nacionalista Party was of the rebellion at the time of its CENCOM meeting, particularly on which side was winning, he said

. . . there are those like myself who thought that the issue of this confrontation had become clear, that the rebellion has been lost. Now, I'm sure there were others who wanted to stretch the boundaries of their optimism.⁷⁰ [Emphasis supplied]

Insofar as the portions of the videotape with the Commission shows, not only did Enrile blame the government for the coup attempt, but like Laurel, he failed to condemn the coup participants or call upon them to lay down their arms.

Laurel and Ople even suggested that President Aquino consider stepping down. Rather than close ranks to defend the Constitution and the duly constituted authority, as required of public officers, both Laurel and Enrile took turns heckling the beleaguered government and thus contributed to the instability of the situation. They sounded as if President Aquino, and not the rebels, was the lawbreaker.

B.14 The Role of Media in Crisis Situations

The December 1989 coup attempt served to highlight the issues of the role of media in a newly-restored democracy with weak political institutions in a Third World setting, and a well-developed media sector along the lines of First World countries. The result is a continuous dilemma within media itself and tension between government regulatory agencies and media which are all heightened in times of crisis, such as an attempted coup.

The role of media is the dissemination of information.⁷¹ It is an indispensable institution in a free society based on the fundamental right of the people to relevant, adequate, and accurate information.⁷² When there is an ongoing coup, media play a difficult balancing act, more so for radio and television which have the capacity for live coverage. Media have to contend not only with physical danger, while grappling with the demands of their code of ethics on specific unfolding events, but also with regulatory officials with strong protective instincts for a government in real danger of being overthrown.⁷³

This dilemma was present in the "play-by-play" radio broadcast of DZRH during the critical hours of the coup when the outcome was in doubt, the attempt by rebel leaders to appear on television and radio to propagandize their cause, and the inclusion in news reports of the gore and violence of the fighting.

How is the dilemma to be resolved? During a coup attempt, as the media have the duty to inform the citizens, so has a government under siege the duty and the right to protect itself. Where the government leaves a vacuum, as it did in December, and the people need to be informed, media step into that vacuum. It is, therefore, part of the

responsibility of government in reconciling the respective roles of government and media, to provide fast and accurate information during crisis, to use, if necessary, the government's own media resources to advance its interests, and, according to some communications practitioners and experts, even place embargoes on certain information or close down media establishments in situations of extreme danger.⁷⁴ On the other hand, it is the right of media to protest and question such moves at the earliest opportunity and thereby enable society, through judicial or administrative rulings, to build up the jurisprudence and traditions that it considers appropriate.⁷⁵

Ultimately, the most effective deterrent against inaccurate reporting that can amount to irresponsibility under extreme circumstances, is the self-discipline of a profession and its refusal to compromise itself with conflict of interest situations.

An obvious conflict of interest situation arises when a journalist also engages in public relations. Then, the public may become the victim of inaccurate or baseless information for which nobody really takes responsibility. During the December 1989 events, several press releases of the rebels found their way into media through a person, Joan Orendain, who claimed that she was doing it as a journalist, but at the same admitted that she did not verify its authenticity before passing them on to her editor. She alleged that the releases were delivered to her apartment by unknown persons and she surmised that the rebels may have sought her out because she was a friend of a former RAM member (Robles) for which she was doing a personal favor because the person was being unjustly incriminated in the coup. In her testimony, Orendain constantly changed hats, between journalist and public relations, to explain her actions. The most charitable assessment for journalists of that genre is that they are confused about their responsibilities and their constituencies and should resolve their confusion for the sake of the entire profession.

The issue of accurate reporting has its own solutions. According to the members of media, accuracy can be developed through adequate training and preparation, a system of apprenticeship, the inculcation of a culture of thoroughness, and the realization that a media person is first and foremost a citizen with a social responsibility.⁷⁶ It is better to rely on the self-discipline of the profession and err on the side of accommodation than to engage in repression, since drastic measures do not necessarily lead to improved professionalism and ethical standards, but perhaps even to the opposite, as the martial law era demonstrated.⁷⁷

C. Recommendations

Pursuant to its mandate under Republic Act No. 6832, and recognizing that the ultimate responsibility for preventing coups rests with all the citizens, the Commission adopted Resolution No. 066 which sought from various organizations and/or sectors their suggestions towards this objective and the role they should play in attaining it.

A number of organizations and individuals submitted position papers to the Commission, the names of which are listed in Appendix L to this report. The Commission is grateful for the cooperation of those who responded and acknowledges the suggestions which have been incorporated in its report. However, the Commission takes full responsibility for its recommendations in compliance with the requirement of RA No. 6832.

The recommendations of the Commission are based on its analysis of the events, causes, environment, and lessons of the December 1989 coup attempt. As previously explained, however, the Commission also examined the previous coup attempts since they are all inextricably linked, in order to fully understand the context and dynamics of the December 1989 events.

The recommendations are divided into three parts:

1. "damage control" and short-term prescriptions to address the immediate problem of another coup attempt;
2. an agenda for the remaining term of the Aquino administration; and
3. recommendations over the long-term.

The recommendations are further classified, where appropriate, by sector or area of responsibility. The principal theme of these recommendations is justice — firmly, fairly, and consistently administered— as a basic principle of governance. People can bear poverty, but they cannot bear injustice. In fact, the accumulation of injustices, personally experienced or generally perceived, was the principal factor in the people's alienation from the Marcos administration, and to the eventual loss of its legitimacy.

However, it should also be pointed out that if there is failure in the administration of justice in a society, government alone is not usually to blame. It is because there is a breakdown in the norms of conduct in the society itself. Thus, some recommendations are directed towards other sectors, e.g., the legal opposition, the business sector, educational institutions, and media.

In the final analysis, the guarantee against coups, as well as other aberrant behavior, is the creation of a just, humane, and progressive society, the elements of which are set out in the Constitution.

C.1. “Damage Control” and Short-Term Prescriptions to Address the Immediate Problem of Preventing Another Coup Attempt

Since a coup d'état is primarily a military operation which does not depend on mass civilian support for its success, immediate prescriptions should be directed at immobilizing, isolating, and capturing military rebels, both known or covert, before they can plan, recruit, or launch a coup.

Addressing the immediate problem of another coup requires a set of prescriptions that fully recognizes the complex interaction of internal factors and external factors and the different degrees of participation and motive, and hence culpability.

The Commission reiterates its recommendations in Interim Reports No. 1 (system of military justice) and No. 3 (needed legislation), and further recommends:

a. Administering a justice and rehabilitation program to military participants as follows:

i. Continuous trial for those already charged.

ii. Speedy process for those under investigation as well as those recommended for prosecution, investigation, or reinvestigation by the Commission in Chapter VI, e.g., some members of the Cebu PC and Air Force commands, members of the Guardian Centre Foundation Inc involved in the Bibit operation at the North and South Harbors and at the Domestic Airport.

iii. Dishonorable discharge, forfeiture of all benefits, in valid instances allowing the attachment of their properties, and punishment to the full extent of the law for those found guilty as principals. Those with lesser offenses should be meted graduated punishment.

iv. Strict enforcement of AW 68 for failure to report contacts, solicitations, and attempted recruitment to participate in coups.

v. Immediate release of those against whom there is insufficient evidence for prosecution, without prejudice to a reopening of the cases, if warranted.

vi. The restoration to the lineal roster of all those already cleared as well as those released for insufficient evidence.

vii. An amnesty program for young officers (majors and below) who are not principals and who have exceptional service records, provided they sincerely renounce all coups, pledge not to have any kind of involvement in any recruitment or planning for any coup, and agree to resign from the armed forces. This is without prejudice to their re-commissioning after two-three years without loss of seniority for those who express such intention at the time

they apply for amnesty and engage in community and/or public service approved by the government during the “rehabilitation” period.

viii. An early retirement program which is available to all but primarily directed at those lagging behind in the promotional ladder for reasons of non-performance, those who believe they are being discriminated upon for being identified with the Marcos-Ver or Enrile groups, and those implicated with or suspected to be sympathetic to the rebels but against whom evidence may not be sufficient to prove guilt beyond reasonable doubt. The objective is not to invite the retirement of those officers the AFP wants to retain, but to give reasonable benefits to those who cannot meet the rigid requirements of a smaller officer corps and to provide an exit opportunity to those who believe that their careers have been impaired by their associations. It is the condition of such benefits that they not be found guilty subsequently of any crime against national security and public order. Otherwise, they are liable for the return of all the benefits plus interest.

In the Commission’s view, the amnesty and retirement programs are necessary to allow officers, whose opportunities in the military may be limited, to leave without any stigma. It will also totally purge the AFP of officers vulnerable to using their position to recruit for or participate in a coup, without driving them to desperate behavior for lack of livelihood. The dilemma of the military is how to handle the loyal but dishonest or ineffective officer, or the honest and loyal but ineffective, or the effective and loyal but dishonest. While this is obviously a difficult decision, there is really only one answer if the military is to be restored to an honest, loyal, and effective force. Anyone who does not possess all three qualifications should be removed. But, they should be encouraged and helped to find a useful career in civilian life. By depriving coup-prone officers of an institutional base, the program would reduce considerably the risk of another coup. It would constitute the first stage in the strengthening of a post-insurgency military that is smaller, more professional, and fully modernized. The program would also offer a second chance to young officers genuinely interested in resuming their military careers but who need to be totally expunged of any coup “virus” and to have the cloud over them permanently removed. Finally, the program would answer the military rebels’ accusation of selective justice by the government, with the case of former NPA Victor Corpus as well as the amnesty program for NPA insurgents being mentioned as examples.

However, the granting of amnesty should be only one component of a calibrated response and should be judiciously applied. The government should not allow itself to be stampeded into a generalized program to “start with a clean slate”, since that argument was used as a ploy in past coup attempts to merely preempt prosecution of incorrigible rebels. It should be emphasized that an amnesty may cure the symptom but not the disease (i.e., injustice, poverty).

In conducting a “peace dialogue” with rightist rebels, the government should exercise utmost caution in choosing who to talk to. The government is advised not to start with the hardcore RAM-HF officers who have been involved in several coup attempts and are likely to exploit the process to advance their own agenda.

b. The strengthening of security measures on those under detention, especially where there may be sympathetic guards, i.e., Muntinlupa.

The escapes of Honasan and Bibit who successfully co-opted or outwitted their guards should not be forgotten by the government. Nothing hurts the government’s image more or frustrates those who made the capture, than to see maximum security suspects escape with ease and impunity.

c. The intensification of efforts to capture key renegade soldiers with a special unit of trusted officers directly responsible to the CSAFP.

Honasan, Kapunan, Turingan, Batac, Bibit, Purugganan, and other central figures in the coup attempts should be specially targeted for capture. Despite the wide publicity given to the YOU and other military renegades as the potential source of new coups, the rebel cause would be set back considerably by the capture of the RAM-HF leaders. Furthermore, the public perception is that these renegades cannot be captured because they are protected by elements within the military itself. Their capture would be a clear signal that the military is unequivocally committed to enforce the law, as repeatedly stated by the Commander-in-Chief herself after each coup attempt. While several key rebels have been captured, the ability of the core group to elude capture after such tough talk

tends to demoralize those who abide by the law and undermines the system of reward and punishment in the larger society itself.

d. A reinvestigation of the “God Save The Queen” plot and prosecution of all those implicated in it.

There appears to be sufficient basis for the military to conduct a formal investigation of the incident, and for the government to cause the prosecution of everyone found to have been involved. The original excuses for not conducting an investigation are not, nor were they ever, valid, i.e., no overt action, the risk of dividing the military, the independent character of the DND security force from the normal chain of command, the hope that those implicated can still be reformed, if not prosecuted. If there is to be a total approach to the problem of coups, it is important to close the book on the incident.

e. A review of the subsequent actuations of those involved in the Manila Hotel incident, both military and civilian, who pledged never to engage in similar adventurism again, if spared from prosecution.

Those who are implicated or suspected with respect to the December 1989 or any other coup attempts and are found to have violated their pledge should also be prosecuted for the Manila Hotel incident.

f. An intensive follow-up investigation by government police agencies and the Justice Department of civilians implicated in the December 1989 attempt.

If the renegade soldiers are to be cut off from their support systems, the message to actual or potential civilian supporters must be clearly spelled out — there is no margin for tolerance when the survival of democracy is at stake. The Commission believes, based on selective cases (i.e., identifying the vessel that ferried the rebel troops from Bataan to Sangley, identifying the civilian network of Fusilero, examining the connection of the coup plotters with personalities in the Mindanao Freedom Movement, fund-raising activities from business, the Hawaii connection of certain civilians) that the investigation of civilians tends to concentrate on national figures. Thus, it is likely that the lower profile civilian support network for the rebels is still intact. This could include persons on which the Commission’s investigation has not been completed because, in its judgment, the incremental information that might be secured would not be justified by the cost. The investigation could be done by the DOJ in the course of its normal activities. This matter is covered by a formal resolution of the Commission to the DOJ.

g. Speedy action on appeals over decisions of AFPCourts-martial.

This has already been mentioned in the Commission’s Interim Report No. 1. Related to this are the cases which are not being acted upon or are suffering undue delays. Actions on decisions on courts-martial which are subject to mandatory appellate review or which may eventually reach the President for confirmation should be speedily resolved.

h. The early passage of a comprehensive law on the establishment of the National Police.

Implementing the Constitutional provision would remove the anxiety and insecurity of those likely to be affected by the new law. Furthermore, the sooner such a law is enacted, the earlier could programs be implemented to separately strengthen the police and military organizations and resolve the confusion of overlapping jurisdictions.

i. The immediate implementation of a comprehensive program to provide timely rescue and medical assistance to troops wounded in combat.

The rebels have tried to claim credit for improving the benefits of soldiers. Unfortunately, the timing of such improvements (many have been instituted after coup attempts) have lent some credibility to these claims. The government is aware of the complaints about the inadequacy of medical and hospitalization benefits particularly of soldiers in combat. A comprehensive initiative of the government to help wounded soldiers would highlight its continuing concern, lift troop morale, and direct credit to where it belongs.

j. A review by the military of its decision to disband the Scout Ranger Regiment.

While the coup culture may have been implanted by Honasan and his group in some officers of the FSRR, it is not clear that it is Permanently ingrained in the troops. It is also true that the military hierarchy may have unwittingly allowed it to happen and are, therefore, Perceived to be arbitrary and unduly harsh. The FSRR may be one of the most effective units against the communist insurgency and should not end up being bitter and ineffective. Besides, attaching the Rangers to other units without first making sure they are rid of the coup “virus” would only facilitate the spread of the affliction. What makes the Rogers an elite unit, other than their training, is the spirit of oneness and collective pride. It is a spirit that must be harnessed rather than dispersed. The solution should be the assignment of officers who command the respect of the soldiers and who are themselves absolutely committed to democracy.

k. An immediate audit of the value formation program of the military and, with the help of civilian experts, the formulation of an intensive program (essentially constructive indoctrination), and the training of field commanders to carry it out.

The Commission received conflicting testimony on the effectiveness of the present program and noted that the military is reluctant to extensively use civilian expertise presumably in the belief that civilians cannot fully understand the military mind. The result, as played up also by newspaper reports, is a traditional, repetitive, and unimaginative approach such as that used with and ridiculed by some of the Scout Rangers. Thus, the results of the program in specific units is quite uneven, depending on the individual skill of its commander.

l. The immediate removal or reassignment of officers of less than 100 percent loyalty from sensitive positions in the military hierarchy, i.e.. intelligence, operations, logistics, functions.

Consistent with the policy of not taking any risks at this time, and of forging a military with unquestioning loyalty to the Constitution, those with any taint of the coup should first be tested in less sensitive positions (assuming they do not retire early) before being given choice assignments.

m. The immediate dishandment of GCFI and all other organizations not authorized by the military.

Such organizations encourage factionalism and give opportunities for those with hidden agendas to exploit and manipulate them.

n. The observance of a systematic selection process for the new Chief of Staff that generates the least controversy about the choice.

The possibility of deep selection should not be foreclosed. An important criteria should be an impeccable record and reputation for non-partisanship, since the 1992 elections will be a critical test for democratic and peaceful change.

o. Just as in the civilian government, a crackdown by the military on some “big fish” corrupt officers.

There are apparently officers known within the military establishment to be corrupt and are perceived to be protected for personal or political reasons. The value of example cannot be underestimated to restore the confidence of those alienated by reason of their own knowledge or experience of corruption in the military. In particular, those in “syndicates” engaged in illegal gambling should be dealt with uncompromisingly.

p. An immediate stop to unfair and/or humiliating treatment and criticism of military officers by Congress and other public officials, especially those before the Commission on Appointments.

Political “grandstanding” is especially grating to the troops in the field, who feel that they are risking their lives for the wrong people.

q. Speedy and firm disciplinary action and/or prosecution against members of the military involved in human rights violations as well as of civilian law enforcement personnel involved in victimizing military personnel.

There should be no “sacred cows” when it comes to dispensation of justice.

r. The purchase or charter by Congress of its own transportation facilities and a prohibition on their use of military aircraft.

Another common complaint of both rebel and government military officers is the use by members of Congress of military equipment, particularly aircraft, for their own purposes. On the one hand, such assets are perceived to be badly needed to support the troops in the field. On the other hand, the legitimate function of the legislature to appropriate funds, monitor the use of public money, and enact measures, would not be fully served if it did not have access to field observations and dialogues with such an important sector as the military. The Commission, therefore, suggests that Congress be allowed to purchase or charter a pool of transportation equipment, including airplanes, that can be utilized for official purposes, such as field inspections of military operations, provincial consultations, monitoring of the use of funds in emergency operations and calamities, and other similar purposes. In the long run, such arrangements will prove to be the most economical, efficient, and practical way of dealing with the issue.

s. The expansion of the government’s public information program which has considerably and commendably improved since December 1989, with more participation by local government officials.

One of the most common complaints of the rebel soldiers is the absence of local officials particularly in insurgency areas. The local officials are the frontliners in the delivery of government services. They should be required to be in the field and their activities duly recorded for dissemination through the government’s public information program. Systematizing the flow of information between the executive and local government officials should also prove useful for other purposes, i.e., calamities, rebel troop movements.

t. The provision of sufficient resources and support to the Deputy Ombudsman for the Military

The filling up of this position is consistent with the findings of the Commission. He must be given the resources to do his job since the appointment has raised expectations within the military that their grievances will be heard. In organizing the staff of the office, care should be taken not to appoint those with “scores to settle” and worn-out ideas. It is time for young blood with fresh ideas, if the problems of the military are to be resolved.

C.2. An Agenda for the Remaining Twenty-One Months of the Aquino Administration

The constitutional term of the present administration is 76 months. There are only 21 months left of that term to complete the successful transition of the country from a dictatorship to a full-fledged democracy. That task is not that of the President alone, or of the government, but of the entire society itself.

Despite the installation of the formal structures and the advances in democratic processes, the EDSA Revolt that installed Corazon C. Aquino as President did not result in the far-reaching revolution many people had hoped for. Most of these expectations were embodied in the new Constitution, but have largely remained unfulfilled. Therefore, stated simply, the job to be done in the next 21 months is to galvanize the people behind a national vision based on the agenda ratified by the people.

a. On the part of the Executive Department, a review of key policies and programs in the light of results, an acceptance of shortcomings where these exist, and a performance review of appointive officials.

Chapter III of this report describes how the “rainbow coalition” of 1986 quickly unraveled because there was no organic unity in the first place, only a common goal of removing a dictator. Yet, the disunity is not necessarily an affliction of the grassroots. All the social surveys indicate a discernible consensus of the people on major issues, some of them considered as controversial, i.e., agrarian reform, foreign debt, US military facilities, coup d’etat.

Unfortunately, these are often obscured by the posturings of politicians and extremist groups, and the indecision of the Executive Department.

The first step, therefore, in putting the country back on track is to galvanize national unity.

As part of the process of self-reflection, the Executive Department must review existing policies and programs and establish clear directions for the next 21 months, particularly in the area of basic services. Government officials who have not performed or are responsible for failed programs have to be replaced. The economic situation and shortfalls in performance relative to targets cannot all be blamed on external factors and inherited problems. Furthermore, much can still be accomplished in 21 months. That is approximately the difference between the first term of a reelectable president under the 1935 Constitution and the six-year term of a non-reelectable president under the new Constitution. The expectation is a president will act as a statesman during that period rather than as a politician seeking another term. However, the appointment of new people would only make sense if the correct policies and programs are in place. Two major revamps occurred after coup attempts and were perceived to have been a reaction to the coups rather than a genuine effort to address issues of substance. Subsequent events tended to validate this perception. What is being asked of the Executive Department is to enforce the same principle of accountability being required of the military.

While there is understandably a reluctance by President Aquino to exercise power in a manner that might be compared with former President Marcos, a democracy in a crisis of transition calls for a firmer and more direct hand at the helm. People understand that a ship is never always on course. But the ship that arrives safely at its destination is the one which constantly checks its bearings, corrects itself on time, and accelerates its speed when it is firmly on course.

The leader who transcends himself will be followed by his crew, even those who may believe that there is a shorter and safer route. It is the vision and the decisiveness that count.

b. On the part of the President, a categorical declaration of her position with respect to the issue of re-election.

In view of the unsettled constitutional issue of her right to seek reelection in 1992 and the continuing speculation on her intent to run despite her past pronouncements to the contrary, an unambiguous declaration on her part would be timely and would be perceived as an act of statesmanship rather than a politician's ploy.

c. On the part of the President, the immediate convening of the National Security Council and an initiative to political parties to enter into a compact, to which peoples organizations and citizen groups would also subscribe, and preserve our democracy, abiure the use of force and violence, to effect change, commit, to the holding of free, orderly, honest, peaceful, and credible elections in 1992, and arrive at solutions to our national problems through an honest and open debate of issues and programs;

and

on the part, of the political opposition, a positive response to the call for a united front against unconstitutional means to change the government and for upholding democratic processes.

The ruling coalition and the opposition must agree on a constructive relationship to save and strengthen democracy. Both must learn the distinction between political debate on the basis of issues and the exigencies of political maneuvering to take or keep power. The climate of distrust, extra-constitutional tendencies, and the politics of personalities must somehow be changed. In the case of Vice President Laurel, the government must decide either to file charges or carry out an initiative to provide him with a role befitting an official elected by the people to the second highest position of government.

The President can take the initiative in creating a new climate of “unity in diversity” by immediately convening the National Security Council. Then, she can issue a call for all political parties to sign a solemn compact before the people to uphold democracy, to resist with all the resources at their command any attempt to subvert or destroy it, and to participate fully in the elections in 1992.

The political opposition must be willing to respond positively to this initiative, following the example of their counterparts in such countries as Venezuela and Argentina where they actualized a vow to set aside their differences when democracy is threatened by military adventurism. One does not have to be in power to contribute to nation-building.

The Nacionalista Party led by Bias Ople and Senator Enrile missed a historic opportunity to put into practice what it preaches by way of reconciliation and commitment to democracy. Its press conference on 2 December 1989 turned out to be an opportunistic attempt to play up to the rebels and gain political points at a time of great peril for democracy. Vice President Laurel likewise fumbled his own opportunity for statesmanship while in Hongkong at the time. There is, however, no reason, given the shifting tide of politics, why the opposition cannot recover from the widespread disapproval of the people of its behavior during the December 1989 coup attempt, if it is perceived to be unequivocal about its commitment to democratic processes.

The solidarity of the political leadership is a giant step in addressing the issue of a military that is isolated from the society it is supposed to protect.

d. On the part, of the Legislative Department, and the President, the establishment of a special full-time commission to implement a post-insurgency program for the military that will modernize, professionalize, and bring it within the mainstream of national life.

Since the insurgency problem appears to be close to a solution, the government must design a post-insurgency program for the military, within the framework of the Constitution. The establishment of a commission of respected civilian and military experts appointed by the President, with full powers and a budget to carry out its task, would deliver a strong message to the military that the government cares about their future, recognizes the existence of deep-seated and complex Problems, and is determined to solve them. The program itself should evoke a resolve in the military to perform better in the field and thus hasten the victory over both the communist and Muslim insurgencies. A total component of the program is its thorough modernization and the termination of its dependency on the US for its weaponry. Another component is a reformulation of the education system and training of officers. This would include a review of the program at the PMA and the establishment of other service academies. Although no direct correlation has been established between the PMA curriculum and the disposition of officers to engage in coups, testimonies of senior military officers call attention to the need to:

- i. Intensively inculcate civilian values among the military;
- ii. Cultivate a peer relationship between officers and civilians starting at the college level by examining the desirability of making the military academies the last two years of a college degree or of requiring the cadet to spend his junior year in a civilian university;
- iii. Institute measures to further democratize access to military academies and to discourage the emergence of an elitist military class that isolates the officers from the rest of society and negates the constitutional concept of a citizen army. Related to this is the problem of factionalism that is exacerbated by the dominance of PMA graduates in leadership and key positions in the military;
- iv. Upgrade the status of the teaching function in military academies to the level of combat command with financial incentives, performance credits, and promotional advantages, and invite more civilian instructors to handle non-military subjects,⁷⁸ and
- v. Temper the overly idealistic orientation at the PMA, and emphasize love of country as the most desirable value in an officer.⁷⁹

The Commission considered other options than the appointment of a new independent body in order to avoid any incremental burden on the budget. Among the alternatives considered were (a) a task force under the Department of Defense, (b) a special unit under the Deputy Ombudsman for the Military, (c) a composite committee under the Office of the President to be supervised by the Executive Secretary, (d) the National Security Council, and (e) a special commission under the Office of the Vice-President.

A special commission under the DND, the NSC, or the Executive Secretary would have the handicap of having to use people who have other responsibilities and who might not be able to impart the sense of importance and urgency to the task at hand. In any case, the core of a new staff has to be appointed. With respect to the Office of the Vice President, the same staffing requirement would apply with the additional handicap that the office is an elective one and the task of the special commission is unlikely to be finished by mid-1992. The Deputy Ombudsman has a fixed tenure. However, his office would also need to recruit new staff. In the ultimate analysis, the same incremental cost for staffing would be incurred for all the alternatives, with the only difference being the additional cost of the commissioners who will oversee the program on a full-time basis, with respect to this Report's recommendations.

More importantly, a new task-oriented commission, possibly with a fixed term, would provide the necessary continuity, urgency, and sense of priority, that may well prove to be more economical than the cost in lives, money, and lost opportunities of military adventurism.

For having made this suggestion, members of the Fact-Finding Commission should not be considered for appointment to this commission.

e. On the part of the Legislative Department, the immediate enactment of laws to ensure the democratization of the electoral process and the validity and public acceptance of its results, with particular reference to the critical 1992 synchronized election.

The 1992 elections will be a critical test of democracy since the electoral process is often perceived as a way to legitimize the continued political domination of a few.

Both the Executive and the Legislative Departments should make urgent decisions regarding the synchronization in 1992 of elections as mandated by the Constitution. A lead time of two years is necessary for planning and for the procedures, equipment, selective computerization, and organization to be firmly in place on time. The legislation and budget for such preparations should already be enacted. Since elections is a Process, procedures partake of the substance of the right to vote.

In addition, legislation to implement the constitutional mandate to democratize political power, as part of the social justice program, should be enacted before the elections in 1992 to pre-empt the rationalization of rebel soldiers and the CPP/NPA for political intervention because of what they will describe as elitist and, therefore, meaningless results of elections.

Specifically, Congress should enact laws on the empowerment of independent people's organizations, the party-list system of representation, anti-dynasty, equal access to media time and space, subsidy program for poor but deserving candidates or their watchers, and procedures to enable the disabled and the illiterate to participate fully in the process.

f. The supremacy of civilian authority over the military should be established by the appointment, as soon as practicable, of civilians with the capability, integrity, and leadership to head the Department of National Defense (DND), the National Security Council (NSC), and the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA). The NICA should have its own intelligence capability that can complement as well as validate military intelligence information.

This recommendation does not detract from the outstanding and loyal service of Secretary Fidel Ramos in defending the government against attacks from both leftist and rightist extremists. The policy of appointing a civilian as head of DND should be adopted not only by this government but subsequent ones in compliance with the spirit, if not the

letter, of the constitutional principle of the supremacy of civilian authority. Establishing the policy would integrate the military into the civilian government and induce a continuous supply of knowledgeable career civilians with the authority of expertise in military affairs. Eventually, military resentment about alleged “interference” of civilians would be muted.

The need for an independent and civilian-controlled intelligence network responsible directly to the President is highlighted by the fact that the Office of the President is totally dependent on the military for intelligence and in several instances appeared to be less than fully informed of developments. No matter how well-meaning the military intelligence community may be, the idea of sharing “top secret” information with a civilian does not appear to be accepted practice, even if that civilian happens to carry the title of Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C).

Secondly, J2 or the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence (AFP) reports to the Chief of Staff who, in practice, does not really function as “staff” to the C-in-C. The common perception within the military and, for that matter, among the public, is that the responsibility for military decisions ends at the desk of the CSAFP. This has less to do with the fact that the present C-in-C is a woman than the presumption that the man in uniform knows best on such matters, and the culture of enduring fraternal ties within the military.

g. The institutionalization of necessary improvements in the military in the areas of promotion and assignments, purchasing and auditing, educational benefits abroad, and compulsory attendance at military command schools.

The Commission’s recommendations cannot be exhaustive. These improvements would be part of the terms of reference of the proposed special full-time commission to define the role of the military in the post-insurgency period. Examples, however, would be a review of the policy of merely rotating incompetent officers rather than weeding them out, instituting measures to decongest the “bunching” of middle level officers as a result of the accelerated expansion of the military in the mid-1970’s on the one hand and the relative shortage of junior field officers on the other, the laxity in allowing Lt Cols to avoid going to the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) where their fitness for promotion or separation from the service is determined.

With respect to purchasing and audit procedures, the military and the Commission on Audit (COA) must work out a practical solution to the problem of “conversion”, i.e., spending the money for other than the budgeted purpose not necessarily because of graft and corruption but because of the needs in the field and the bureaucratic tape involved in complying with all the technicalities of disbursement. The Commission suggests that the military and the COA agree on a standard method by which the principle of transparency is practiced all the way down to the smallest unit by providing all the information about its budget to the soldiers. Although this is already being practiced in many units, much still needs to be done particularly in the matter of “conversion”. The philosophy should be to challenge the military to perform better through a system of decentralization, transparency, and an appeal to the traditional military values of integrity and discipline, and relying on formal and informal sanctions for enforcement.

With respect to availments of educational benefits and rotational assignments abroad, special efforts must be made to eliminate the *tayo-tayo* system and to use the reward system to broaden the linkages of the military and reduce its dependence on the US, and recognize performance and loyalty to the Constitution.

h. The President and the Commission on Appointments must work out a system by which recommendations for promotions can be categorized in practice to avoid the exploitation of the confirmation process for political purposes.

The appointments to the Chief of Staff position and the top positions in the major service commands have a political dimension which requires the exhaustive inquiry of the Commission on Appointments in the proper exercise of the principle of checks and balances. However, other appointments might merit a progressively different treatment based on institutional courtesy.

i. If justice is going to be a living principle of governance, the budgets of the Judiciary and the Department of Justice (DOJ) must be increased in order to upgrade the physical facilities, recording, investigative and prosecutive capability, and staffing of the system.

The budget of the Judiciary amounts to 1.08 % of the 1990 national budget. It is a grossly inadequate amount and should be increased in view of its critical role and the national scale of its responsibility as the conscience of the nation.

The Commission recommends the same approach with respect to the budget of the DOJ. The existence of honest judges and efficient courts would not result in a better administration of justice without a corresponding improvement in the investigative and prosecutorial capability of the DOJ. The courts can only decide on the evidence before it. If that evidence is inadequate and its presentation flawed and incompetent, the wheels of justice will not turn efficiently. The DOJ's budget for 1990 is only .5% (one-half of 1%) of the national budget. A significant increase in its budget should be considered to modernize facilities and equipment, provide funding for proper investigation and preparation of cases, and keep and attract the best people for the job.

j. The business sector as the engine of growth of the economy, is the key sector, in addition to the government in avoiding a severe economic crisis that could invite military adventurism. This is the time to stake its resources for democracy as the only political system under which it can survive and thrive, and thereby help others overcome their poverty.

The business sector is not a homogeneous group — a set of economic policies that favors one industry can hurt another — and engages in a broad range of partisan political activity. But its long-term interest is in strengthening democracy regardless of partisan politics or of any temporary advantage to business that authoritarianism may appear to offer. Authoritarianism in the Philippine experience eventually means arbitrary interference in private business, and lack of progress. This is the painful lesson we have learned, the same lesson which is being validated by the experience of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe today. Therefore, business should act as one—to help restore confidence in the economy by keeping and investing its resources in the country, to deny support to military rebels, to resist the temptation to subvert the electoral process to advance business interests, to pay correct taxes, and to keep honest rather than corrupt the bureaucracy. Beyond that, business must be willing to transcend itself by supporting rather than obstructing policies that dismantle the economic privileges of a few and diffuse the fruits of progress to the greatest number. In an economic slowdown, its social responsibility is to protect the jobs of its employees and to relieve them, as much as possible, from the burden of adjustment to adverse business conditions.

k. The non-governmental and peoples organizations are intermediating institutions which can help unify a factionalized society. By mobilizing communities and resources to improve the lives of the poor, they help the grassroots create a stake in democracy.

The task of such organizations in deterring coups is to strengthen the bond of nationhood and propagate by deeds the values of *pagkakaisa at pagmamalasakit*, self-reliance, and participation in fair and clean electoral exercises.⁸⁰ The role of peoples organizations is spelled out in the Constitution, and should be exercised by the people themselves without waiting for the formality of legislation. On the other hand, while the NGOs have a role to play in people empowerment, they should take care not to become the bureaucracy of the private sector by accumulating power rather than facilitating its transfer to the basic sectors. In a truly participatory democracy, these sectors must speak with their own voice in the formation of national consensus.

l. The church occupies a unique position in Philippine society, acting as an arbitrator on moral issues even in the realm of politics., the condemnation of the election fraud by the Marcos administration in February 1986, although inhibited by the constitutional mandate of separation of church and state, the boundaries of which may shift from time to time.

The biblical passages condemning rebellion, the exhortation against contributing to it, the moral duty to uphold duly-constituted authority, provide the church with a strong moral suasion to deter rebels and to unite people behind democracy. Its influence should also be brought to bear on solving the problems of gambling, graft and corruption,

and structural poverty. In the more immediate future, the role of the church is to catalyze the peace process and to progressively expand it, regardless of the obstacles placed in its path. The success of the peace process would heal the festering wounds of the nation and also pave the way to a meaningful electoral process and democratic change in 1992.

m. The resolution of the dilemma faced by media in crisis reporting lies more in the media itself rather than government regulations.

While government should take whatever measures it considers appropriate to defend itself, such measures, when perceived to impair press freedom, should be immediately questioned, until a body of jurisprudence and tradition is accumulated. Because the preferred option is self-regulation and self-discipline, media should proceed with their initiatives in formalizing their own ethical standards, strictly enforce them, and inform the public of such efforts. It is also incumbent on media to define the boundaries of their profession not only during crisis but also in conflict of interest situations. Media should accept the responsibility to discipline erring members, to provide training and guidance to its apprentices, and to establish linkages with responsible counterparts abroad to broaden their experience and perspective.

C.3 Recommendations Over the Long-Term

A crisis does not develop overnight. It passes through symptomatic, acute, and chronic stages with progressive indicators on the severity of the situation. The task of leadership is to read the signals early enough so that the acute and chronic stages are bypassed and the problems resolved even before the crisis is reached.⁸¹

A coup d'état does not happen overnight. Neither does a revolution or popular uprising of the citizenry itself. The responsibility of the political leadership is to build a national consensus on what must be done to address the underlying problems indicated by the symptoms. Since many of the problems of the country are structural in character, there are no quick solutions, although one can resort to "damage control" and short-term alleviation to buy time. The longer-term solutions, however, must start today.

C.3 a. Love of Country as the Highest Value.

On the premise that the soldier is first a citizen before he becomes a military man and officers do not enter military school until after high school, it follows that our system of education has not been successful in transmitting the proper values to our students. The extent of the overhaul of the educational system is a matter for legislation, but the greater responsibility is in the entire education sector, public and private, for it does appear that it must do a better job at value formation, with love of country as the highest value. This will take time and will need to be reinforced by the family and the church. In addition, something must be done about public school teachers. How can they impart correct values when they themselves are demoralized, badly trained, and lack dedication and discipline? The Executive and the Legislative Departments have a joint responsibility to formulate a long-term and properly funded program to improve the educational system.

C.3.b. Social Justice

The full implementation of the social justice provisions of the Constitution. Until the gross inequalities of wealth and power are corrected, the ferment for change and the vulnerability of the men-at-arms to political intervention will continue. For the great majority of the military belong to the underprivileged class as well.

C.3.c. Citizen Army

The full implementation of the citizen army concept and the designated role of a small, modernized, and professional military in a democratic society. The de-linking of the military from the US on weaponry, its assumption of the external defense responsibility, and the immediate phaseout of the US facilities in Philippine

bases and removal of all the vestiges of its colonialism would constitute the basic military-related steps toward becoming a truly sovereign and independent nation.

C.3.d. Decentralization

The decentralization of the national government as a precondition for the efficient delivery of government services. The devolution of power to local communities would bring the government closer to the people and reduce the isolation of rural communities whose poverty tends to politicize officers in the field.

C3.e. The Constitution

After an appropriate period, to give the present Constitution an opportunity to be tested, formal consultations should be conducted at the grassroots on the desirability of constitutional amendments and of the specific proposals advanced by the different sectors. A rush to amend the Constitution, including the basic structure of government, to suit contemporary problems is not always the answer. The people must be prepared to make amendments if it is clear that the fundamental law has proven to be irrelevant or inapplicable to the times. But the best way to test the relevance of the Constitution is not by speculative theories but the implementation of its key provisions, particularly on the diffusion of wealth and political power (social justice), and on economic progress with equity.

D. Choosing Democracy

If a coup d'état starts in the minds of men, then it is the collective will of a unified people that can prevent and overcome it.

The people must choose democracy.

To flourish, democracy must become the living mortar that binds us. To work, it must come from a people that have willed their own liberation from poverty, dependency, and disunity. For it has truly been said that “democracy is based upon the conviction that there are extraordinary possibilities in ordinary people.”⁸²

When there are forces that would destroy democracy, only the strength that comes from such a people can protect and uphold it. And the irreducible minimum to peaceful and orderly change, both societal and political, is for all the contenders in the political arena to agree to use the ballot and forego the bullet—for the path of peace is the path to progress, social justice, and nationhood.

THE FACT-FINDING COMMISSION

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 6832

Makati, Metro Manila

(Sgd.) HILARIO G. FAVIDE, JR. Chairman	
(Sgd.) RICARDO J. ROMULO Commissioner	
(Sgd.) CAROLINA G. HERNANDEZ Commissioner	

ENDNOTES

(1) Sworn Testimonies before the Fact-Finding Commission (FFC) of Lt Col Arsenio Tecson, 1 March 1990; f Lt Col Ericson Aurelio, 10 March 1990; Lt Col Oscar Legaspi, 12 March 1990; and BGen Edgardo Abenina, 5 March 1990. Tecson, Aurelio and Abenina recounted their experiences in the field where they saw the lack of basic

service's even in areas near Manila. For Legaspi, the government's non-delivery of basic services, in spite of the tax raise, is one of the causes not only of the December 1989 coup attempt, but also that of August 1987.

(2) See the Sworn Testimonies before the FFC of Lt Jose Rene Jarque, 22 March 1990; Lt Rolando Cal, 21 March 1990; Lt Augusto Marquez, Jr, 28 March 1990; Maj Rolando Irizari, 29 March 1990; Capt Gregory Ramos, 27 March 1990; Capt Proceso Maligalig, 12 March 1990; BGen Edgardo Abenina, op. cit.; and BGen Jose Comendador, 5 February 1990. According to these officers, graft and corruption is one of the alleged major causes of the coup. It exists not only in the civilian government but also in the military establishment as well. According to Lt Cal, even officers with fine records joined the coup because of discontent over widespread graft and corruption. For Maj Irizari, it is the number one problem in the country. In the military, according to Cmdr Maligalig, corruption exists in the form of the over-pricing of military uniforms and supplies, "conversion deals", and usurious loans. "Conversion deals" are those which involve the creation of artificial allocations in the budget for the purpose of circumventing the rules and regulations of the Commission on Audit Corruption also exists in the administration of benefits. Lt Cal testifies that junior officers do not complain even if they have knowledge of the corrupt practices because when they confront senior officers about them, they are just brushed aside.

(3) Sworn Testimonies before the FFC of Tecson, op. cit.; Col Rafael Galvez, 27 February 1990; and Inzari, op. cit. Tecson suggests that Congress should act more and talk less.

(4) Sworn Testimonies before the FFC of Tecson, op. cit.; Marquez, and Comendador, 27 December 1989. Tecson distinguishes between the law and its implementation. Oftentimes, there is a proposal but it never gets to be implemented. As a result, poverty, especially in the countryside, is appalling, he said. Marquez comments that poverty and the sufferings of the people are the battlecries of the coup plotters. For Comendador, poverty is one of the causes not only of coups but of the communist insurgency as well.

(5) Sworn Testimonies before the FFC of Cal, op. cit.; Capt Ramos, op. cit.; Capt Danilo Pizarro, 7 March 1990; Legaspi, op. cit.; Maligalig, 17 April 1990; Lt Col Levy Zamora, 20 March 1990; and Col Renato Motus, 1 March 1990. The tayo-tayo system was brought about by factionalism in the military. Maligalig says that any superior officer appointed to a key position almost always brings in his team. Although this is natural, what is perceived as wrong is that preferential treatment results out of this practice, especially in housing, promotions, and schooling. The military leadership was also considered as unresponsive particularly when it comes to financial and logistical support for soldiers in the field. Legaspi laments the fact that while the military leadership procures expensive jets, soldiers in the field remain barefoot. Cal says that the men in the field are given supplies and equipment of inferior quality. They also complain that the pay and allowances that soldiers get are not commensurate with the responsibility given to them.

(6) Legaspi Testimony, op. cit. For Legaspi, the government's reconciliation policy is selective. He views it as pro-Left.

(7) Ibid. He said that justice is unequally dispensed. In terms of investigating human rights violations, the AFP is the only target. He also said that while the CPP/NPA are charged with simple rebellion, rightists and some members of the AFP are charged with rebellion complexed with murder.

(8) Abenina and Tecson Testimonies, op. cit.

9) Cal and Tecson Testimonies, op. cit. They cite their experiences during counter-insurgency campaigns. After clearing the area of NPA influence, they try to provide livelihood for the people. But in their experience, there has been no corresponding support from the government especially in terms of the provision of basic services.

(10) Sworn Testimony of Lt Jose Rene Jarque before the FFC, 22 March 1990; See also Abenina, Tecson, and Cal Testimonies, op. cit.

(11) Sworn Testimonies before the FFC of BGen Rodolfo Biazon, 20 December 1989; BGen Tereso Isleta, 29 January 1990; Col Hector Tarrazona, 12 March 1990; BGen Alexander Aguirre, 15 January 1990; MGen Rodolfo

Canieso, 24 February 1990; Cmdr Bernardo Patino, 15 June 1990; BGen Artemio Tadiar, 15 June 1990; and Lt Col Salvador Limsiaco, 13 February 1990.

(12) See Sworn Testimonies before the FFC of BGen Aguirre, op. cit.; BGen Mariano Baccay, Jr, 29 March 1990; and Lt Gen Antonio Sotelo, 19 June 1990. BGen Aguirre believes that the coup plotters have vested personal interests. He cited the examples of Honasan and the RAM-HF core officers, who once enjoyed power under MND but lost it under the present dispensation.

(13) Isleta and Biazon Testimonies, op. cit. BGen Isleta implied the existence of factions among the officer corps belonging to the PMA alumni, integrees and reservists. BGen Biazon considers the RAM, the loyalists, and the Young Officers Union (YOU) as the factions in the military.

(14) Aguirre Testimony, op. cit.

(15) Ibid.

(16) Sworn Testimony of Rear Admiral Tagumpay Jardiniano (Ret) before the FFC, 27 June 1990.

(17) See the financial improvements currently enjoyed by the military in Vittorio Hernandez, "Low Pay No Reason to Go Up in Arms, Businessworld, 27 July 1990, pp. 25-26.

(18) Sworn Testimony of BGen Jose M. Crisol (Ret) before the FFC, 24 August 1990.

(19) Abenina, Maligalig, 12 March 1990, Legaspi and Aurelio Testimonies, op. cit., Sworn Testimonies before the FFC of ex-LCdr Jaime Lucas and Lt Col Crucero Sua, 14 June 1990.

(20) Dennis Arroyo, "Self-Rated Poverty and Poverty Threshold", Social Weather Stations Bulletin, 89-3 (February 1989).

(21) Social Weather Stations, Survey of Public Opinion on the December 1, 1989 Coup Attempt.

(22) Sworn Testimony of Gov Luis Villafuerte of Camarines Sur before the FFC, 24 April 1990.

(23) Sworn Testimony of AM Luis Manalo given before the FFC 16 March 1990.

(24) Sworn Testimony of Customs Commissioner Salvador Mison before the FFC, 22 February 1990.

(25) Sworn Testimony of Col Voltaire Gazmin before the FFC, 17 February 1990.

(26) Sworn Testimony of Gov Melvin Vargas of Cagayan Valley before the FFC, 17 April 1990.

(27) Sworn Testimony of Romeo Rivera before the FFC, 24 April 1990.

(28) Sworn Testimony of Commo Virgilio Marcelo before the FFC, 4 May 1990.

(29) Sworn Testimonies before the FFC of Capt Adriano Morales, 10 August 1990; Capt Loreto Vergeire, 22 August 1990; and Roberto Huang, 7 August 1990.

(30) Sworn Testimony of Col Virgilio G. Poblete before the FFC, 13 June 1990.

(31) Biazon Testimony, op. cit.

- (32) Sworn Testimony of BGen Eduardo Cabanlig before the FFC, 20 December 1989.
- (33) Ibid.
- (34) Sworn Testimony of Lt Emil Ong before the FFC, 22 March 1990.
- (35) Gregory Ramos Testimony, op. cit.
- (36) Mison Testimony, op. cit.
- (37) Sworn Testimony of 2Lt Siegfred Mison before the FFC, 16 March 1990.
- (38) Sworn Testimony of Director Meliton Goyena, Bureau of Corrections, before the FFC, 25 June 1990.
- (39) Sworn Testimonies before the FFC of of Atty Galilul Salialam, 21 May 1990 and P/Capt Job Gavino, 31 May 1990.
- (40) Sworn Testimony of Assistant City Prosecutor Elmer Sagsago, Baguio City before the FFC, 5 May 1990.
- (41) Sworn Testimony of C1C Elpidio Lazaga before the FFC, 5 January 1990.
- (42) Sworn Testimony of Pfc Victor Samonte before the FFC, 2January 1990.
- (43) Sworn Testimony of Commo Antonio Empedrad before the FFC, 26 March 1990.
- (44) Sworn Testimony of LCdr Damian Carlos before the FFC 27 March 1990.
- (45) Testimony received in Executive Session.
- (46) Sworn Testimonies before the FFC of Navy Capt Rex Robles, 7 March 1990; and Lt Col Teodorico Viduya, 23 March 1990.
- (47) Maligalig Testimony, 17 April 1990, op. cit.
- (48) Sworn Testimony of BGen Rodolfo Biazon before the FFC, 21 December 1990.
- (49) Gregor Ferguson in his book COUP D'ETAT; A Practical Manual (Dorset: Arms and Armour Press Limited, 1987), pp. 88-89, describes a coup d'etat as having three phases: Assault, Continuation, and Consolidation. The most critical stage of the operation within two to six hours will spell doom for the attempt.
- (50) Sworn Testimony of Lt Antonio Avaricio before the FFC, 19 March 1990.
- (51) Marcelo Testimony, op. cit.
- (52) Sworn Testimony of Col Clemente Mariano before the FFC, 22 December 1989.
- (53) Sworn Testimony of BGen Rogelio Villanueva before the FFC, 26 February 1990.
- (54) Transcription of the taped telephone interview of Vice President Salvador Laurel by John Eidinow on 3 December 1989 and broadcast over BBC World Service, Exh-"KKKKKK-2"-Commission.

(55) Sworn Testimony of Bias Ople, Member, 1986 Constitutional Commission, before the FFC, 7 May 1990.

(56) Ibid.

(57) Ibid.

(58) Ibid.

(59) Ibid.

(60) Ibid.

(61) Ibid.

(62) Sworn Testimony of Atty Regalado Maambong before the FFC, 30 April 1990.

(63) Copy of the Statement of the Nacionalista Party (NP) allegedly drafted by NP Vice President Bias Ople at the meeting of the Party officials on 2 December 1989 at the Intercontinental Manila, Exh. "C-Maambong", hereinafter referred to as NP Statement.

(64) Ople Testimony, op. cit.

(65) NP Statement, on. cit.

(66) Ople Testimony, op. cit.

(67) Video Recording of the Press Conference of the Nacionalista Party on 2 December 1989 at Hotel Intercontinental Manila dubbed by Cable News Network, Exh. "YYYYYYY"-Commission.

(68) Transcription of the CNN video recording of the Press Conference of the Nacionalista Party held on 2 December 1989. Exh. YYYYYYY-2"-Commission.

(69) Ibid.

(70) Ople Testimony, op. cit.

(71) Sworn Testimony of Melinda Quintos de Jesus before the FFC, 9 July 1990.

(72) Perfecto Fernandez, "Safeguarding the Public Rightin Broadcast Media," Philippine Journalism Review (April 1990), p. 7.

(73) See Testimony Monzon Palma before the FFC, 9 July 1990.

(74) Sworn Testimony of Dr. Florangel R. Braid, before the FFC, 11 July 1990; Monzon Palma, op. cit.

(75) Quintos de Jesus Testimony, op. cit.

(76) Monzon Palma Testimony, op. cit.

(77) Sworn Testimony of Georgina Encanto, Dean, University of the Philippines College of Mass Communications, before the FFC, 11 July 1990.

(78) Sworn Testimony of BGen Arturo Enrile, Superintendent, Philippine Military Academy before the FFC, 5 March 1990.

(79) Jardiniano Testimony, op. cit.

(80) Ricardo J. Romulo, "Let Us Make This Land Safe for Democracy." Speech delivered at the graduation exercises of the De La Salle University, 2 June 1990. Published in Business World, 11 June 1990, pp. 4 and 5.

(81) Kilusan ng mga Nagmamahal ng Bayan, "The Coup Crisis and the Future," Kilusan Paper No. 5, December 1989.

(82) Quoted from Harry Emerson Fosdick.

The Final Report of the Fact-Finding Commission: V: The Failed December 1989 Coup: Pre-Coup Events and Battle Zone Narratives

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October 3, 1990

Tags: Corazon C. Aquino

V

THE FAILED DECEMBER 1989 COUP: PRE-COUP EVENTS AND BATTLE ZONE NARRATIVES

A. Overview

This chapter deals with the events associated with the failed December 1989 coup attempt in great detail. This overview gives the reader the broad picture, like a road map in a manner of speaking. The illustrations on page 259 show the battle sites during the December 1989 coup. The Commission hopes this will help him link one event with the others which occurred in different places at the same time.

A.1. Strategy and Planning of the Coup d'Etat

The basic assumption behind the launching of a coup is that a concerted attack conducted with speed, surprise, and surgical precision against key facilities of a government in crisis, actual or perceived, will cause its immediate collapse. Such a strategy, however, calls for the total commitment of all the coup forces at one time.

As pointed out in Chapter I, in a coup there is no opportunity to change strategy and tactics, replace weapons and men, or correct errors and omissions. The planning stage of a coup is thus of crucial importance. The strategy, the propaganda, the recruitment, the logistics, and every move necessary for the success of the coup must be set beforehand.

A.2. Pre-Coup Activities

The Commission has, therefore, included in this chapter a report on Pre-coup activities (both the rebels' and the government's) as gathered "rough direct testimonies, sworn statements, affidavits, exhibits, and intelligence reports. These sources indicate that by at least the first quarter of 1989, an extensive conspiracy amongst the coup plotters was in motion.

The major players, ex-Lt Col Gregorio Honasan, BGen Edgardo Abenina, ex-BGen Jose Ma Zumel,¹ and others, met frequently with BGen Alejandro Galido, who was reportedly then acting as a deep penetration agent for Gen Renato de Villa, Chief of Staff Armed Forces of the Philippines (CSAFP). Galido also had meetings during this period with, among others, Cherry Cobarrubias, Enrique Cojuangco, and Luis Tabuena. An alliance between the RAM-HF (Honasan Faction) and the Loyalists (Zumel Group) was forged at this time. Individual efforts at recruitment, such as those conducted by Lt Col Tiburcio Fusilero in Cebu and other parts in the south, were taking place in various units of the Armed Forces. The activities of the government, on the other hand, consisted of monitoring the various moves of the conspirators and of taking such preventive action as was possible under the circumstances.

A.3. Execution of the Coup

A.3.a. 29 November – Tagaytay Incident

The failed December 1989 coup began inauspiciously on 29 November 1989, when a Scout Ranger team prematurely destroyed the AFP communications station in Tagaytay. This mission was not supposed to take place until 30 November, since it was meant to signal D-Day for the 1 December coup.

Nonetheless, despite this false start, rebel ground and air forces commenced hostilities against their pre-chosen targets almost simultaneously in the late evening of 30 November and in the very early morning of 1 December. These targets, picked in accordance with the aforementioned strategic principles, were: Fort Bonifacio, Villamor Air Base (VAB) together with the Domestic and International Airports, Camp Aguinaldo, Channels 2 and 4, Sangley Point, Mactan Air Base (MAB), Malacañang, and North and South Harbors. The Makati business district appears to have been outside the initial plan.

A.3.b. 30 November and 1 December – Fort Bonifacio and Villamor Air Base

At about the same time that two rebel Marine companies, supported by three LVTs and two V-150s, launched an attack on VAB, three companies of the First Scout Ranger Regiment (FSRR) occupied the FSRR Headquarters (HQ), surrounded and secured the Army Operations Center (AOC), almost capturing the Commanding General of the Philippine Army (CG PA) in the process, and thereafter took over the rest of Fort Bonifacio without encountering any significant resistance.

However, the rebels were unable to use the armor of the Light Armor Brigade (LABde), nor the artillery pieces of the Philippine Army Light Armor Regiment (PALAR), whose range is capable of reaching Camp Aguinaldo and Malacañang, because these units remained loyal to the government.

Meanwhile, rebel Marines succeeded in entering VAB, neutralizing the 205th Helicopter Wing (205 HW) and its assets, sealing off the Commanding General of the Philippine Air Force (CG PAF) on the third floor of his HQ, damaging the 205 HW HQ Building, and the Bachelor Officers' Quarters, as well as disabling the helicopters and taking over the entire base.

A.3.c. 1 December

Domestic and International Airports

At the Manila Domestic Airport, gunfire erupted early in the morning as Philippine Air Force Security Command (PAFSECOM) soldiers engaged rebel troops in defending the airport terminal. However, shortly after 5:00 a.m., the PAFSECOM personnel at the Domestic Airport were overpowered. A rebel force of about 100 men took over the Baggage Area near Terminal No. 2. Another group led by ex-Maj Lyle Tugbang and Maj Jose Gamos, composed mainly of civilians and Guardians, occupied the main Terminal Building where defending PAFSECOM personnel were herded into a room inside the Terminal Building.

At the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA), a PAFSECOM Battle Staff was established which ordered Runways 06-24 and 13-31 barricaded with firetrucks and baggage containers to prevent their use. However, rebel forces made no attempt to capture it. By 2:30 p.m., rebel forces led by Gamos and Tugbang left the Domestic Airport and moved to the vicinity of Quirino Avenue and Coastal Road.

Coastal Road

The Gamos-Tugbang-led rebel troops were blocked by a unit of the South Sector Capital Command (CAPCOM) who were deployed at the vicinity of Coastal Road corner MIA Road. A firefight ensued when the Wackieforce refused to join the rebels. At around 5:00 p.m., troops from the Metropolitan Police Field Force (MPFF) arrived to assist the blocking force, causing the group of Gamos-Tugbang to withdraw shortly after.

Camp Aguinaldo

At Camp Aguinaldo, the AFP Logistics Command (LOGCOM) under Commo Domingo Calajate declared their open support for the rebels at about 8:00 a.m., occupying the Joint Operations Center (JOC) Building by force. The LOGCOM rebels backed off, however, and returned to their compound when confronted by BGen Lisandro Abadia, AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, who was supported by the 72nd Infantry Battalion (72 IB) under Lt Col Alejandro Lasan. Thereafter, the 2nd Infantry Division (2 ID) under the command of BGen Javier Carbonell, supported by five armor vehicles, launched an attack against LOGCOM. After a firefight, LOGCOM surrendered.

The following reinforcements arrived to defend Camp Aguinaldo:

1. 72 IB at 7:40 a.m.;
2. 701st Infantry Brigade (701 Bde) of 7 ID at 8:10 a.m., along with other elements of the 72 IB, a total of 260 men;
3. 2 ID at 11:30 a.m., a strength of 826 men;
4. AFP Training Command (TRACOM) at 11:46 a.m., a strength of 345 men;
5. RECOM 3 at 5:27 p.m.;
6. 1st Marine Brigade (1 MBde) of NCRDC at 7:05 p.m.; and
7. On the following morning at 3:30 a.m., the 202 Bde and the 203 Bde.

ABS-CBN and PTV-4

Before dawn, some of the rebel Marines, who took over VAB, proceeded to ABS-CBN and PTV-4 compounds in Quezon City and easily occupied the government television station PTV-4, since the security platoon assigned there withdrew in the face of superior forces. At around 2:00 p.m., a group of civilians, led by Rafael Recto, arrived and entered the PTV-4 premises ostensibly to look for his daughter Plinky who works at ABS-CBN. However, Recto was overheard to say that he was thereto attend a press conference. Lito Gorospe, who was inside the ABS-CBN area at that time, allegedly intended to air some messages, but since the management of ABS-CBN and PTV-4 had disabled the transmitters, none of these events took place.

Mactan Air Base

BGen Jose Comendador, the Commander of the 2nd Air Division, took parallel action in MAB by assuming control of the base, and while initially not declaring his position, he later took the rebel side. Army troops from Mindanao composed of elements from the 23 IB and 30 IB joined Comendador later that day, and secured MAB for the rebels.

Sangley Point

With the use of minimal force, the rebels took control of Sangley Point. At 12:30 a.m., two 6 x 6 trucks loaded with rebel soldiers in full battle gear disarmed the guards manning the main gate. The rebels then successively took over the flight line and the government air assets, then isolated the Wing Commander of the 15th Strike Wing (15 SW) in his HQ. The same action was taking place on the naval side of the base. The rebels equally restricted the Commander of the Philippine Fleet to his HQ, after failing to convince him to join them, and then proceeded to occupy several units of the Philippine Fleet Headquarters.

However, by around 1:00 p.m., the rebel air assets were destroyed by the government F-5s. By mid-afternoon, combined elements of Cavite, Laguna, and Batangas Philippine Constabulary/Integrated National Police (PC/INP) Commands launched an attack which eventually resulted in the retaking of Sangley. Also, the two rebel battalions of the 68 IB and 24 IB which had earlier arrived from Bataan aboard a fishing vessel were permitted to return to their home base. Thus, by early evening of 1 December, Sangley Point was back in government hands.

Malacañang and Sta Mesa

At around 6:25 a.m., three T-28s (Tora-Tora), manned by rebel pilots and assisted by a British Norman Islander acting as a forward air controller, took off from Sangley Air Base. They conducted bombing and strafing runs over the Malacañang complex. Although two F-5 fighter jets from Basa Air Base were scrambled to intercept the Tora-Toras, no dogfight occurred.

Meanwhile, rebel soldiers mostly in civilian clothes, blocked certain approaches leading to Malacañang to prevent it from being reinforced. However, a Task Force composed of the Presidential Security Group (PSG) and Manila police personnel, augmented by seven armor infantry fighting vehicles, assaulted rebel positions in and around the Sta Mesa district. At about 7:00 p.m., this area was cleared of rebel soldiers by the Task Force.

North and South Harbors

By 3:00 a.m. RAM-HF forces with some Customs personnel, led by ex-Lt Col Billy Bibit, had control of the main entrances and exits of the North and South Harbors, and occupied key buildings in both areas.

The Zaragoza Gate (Gate 1) and Moriones Gate (Gate 2) of North Harbor were barricaded with container vans and cargo trucks by heavily armed rebels. The same thing happened at Gate 3 of the South Harbor. Personnel at the Coast Guard Station located at the North Harbor were disarmed and the Philippine Port Authority (PPA) office there was made the headquarters of the rebels. At the South Harbor, the rebels occupied the Customs Police Station and raided the Enforcement and Security Services (ESS) HQ, while disarming the personnel on duty, and carting away guns and goods of various sorts.

However, in the late afternoon, RAM-HF soldiers around the PPA Police Station area started dispersing and leaving. By early evening, the Coast Guard had cleared the North Harbor of some more rebel soldiers.

A.3.d. 2 December

North and South Harbors

Early in the morning, rebel troopers abandoned the area around the ESS HQ and regrouped by the building where the Office of the Commissioner of Customs is located. Elements of the CAPCOM and Western Police District (WPD) were poised to attack the rebels, waiting only for reinforcements, when two CAPCOM cars unexpectedly entered Port Area through Gate 1 with full sirens blaring. Alerted, rebel soldiers withdrew through Gate 6. By early afternoon, the North and South Harbors were clear of rebel soldiers.

Fort Bonifacio and Makati

By midmorning, Scout Rangers began abandoning their strong holds in Fort Bonifacio and brought their firearms, mortar tubes and Howitzer guns to Gates 1 and 2. The Philippine Army Communications Center (PACOMCEN) and AOC were abandoned by rebel troops as they started consolidating near Gate 2 and the Headquarters Philippine Army (HPA) Grandstand. An attempt to negotiate the surrender of the Scout Rangers occurred at this point but when it failed, most of the rebel forces moved out of Fort Bonifacio for the Makati business district.

Upon reaching Makati, the rebel Scout Rangers occupied some 22 high-rise buildings in the Ayala business area. Snipers were deployed at the rooftops of strategically located buildings, supported by maneuvering forces on the ground. In response, the government organized a Task Force Makati, composed initially of elements from CAPCOM and the PC from Laguna and Batangas, to block off escape routes and eventually to retake Makati.

At this time and for some days thereafter, intermittent encounters took place and sniper shots were exchanged between the rebels and government forces.

ABS-CBN and PTV-4

Government forces attacked in the early morning, and after a two-hour resistance, rebel soldiers withdrew from the PTV-4 station and joined their comrades near Camp Aguinaldo.

Camp Aguinaldo and BGen Blando

The rebel Marine forces, which came from VAB and PTV-4, utilizing LVTs and V-150s, commenced their attack on Camp Aguinaldo, alternating between Gates 1, 2, and 3. However, government troops held on to their defensive positions. Meanwhile, the rebels situated by the Mormon Church at White Plains were being subjected to frequent air strikes. No significant inroads were made by the rebels on this day.

In the morning, BGen Marcelo Blando's forces, composed of two infantry battalions of the 7 ID plus one Scout Ranger company from Fort Magsaysay, Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, reached Metro Manila and, instead of proceeding to Camp Aguinaldo, positioned themselves at the Greenhills Commercial Center in front of Unimart. After pretending all the while to be on the government side, Blando finally declared himself for the rebels. Fortunately, his two infantry battalions refused to commit outright and to fight the government forces in Camp Aguinaldo, eventually causing Blando to surrender the following day, 3 December. However, the company of Scout Rangers detached themselves and attacked Camp Aguinaldo through Gate 4.

Mactan Air Base

The pilots in MAB, under the leadership of Lt Col Antonio Anciano, Commander, 208th Tactical Helicopter Squadron, escaped from the base and proceeded to the Visayas Command (VISCOP) HQ in Cebu City. Thus, BGen Comendador was left with airplanes but no pilots to fly them. Both BGen Renato Palma, Commander VISCOP, and BGen Cesar Go contacted Comendador and tried to convince him to give up. The latter refused to surrender, and threatened that should government forces attack Mactan, he would blow up the aircrafts in the base, particularly the two 747s belonging to Philippine Airlines (PAL).

A.3.e. 3 December – Camp Aguinaldo

From 1:30 a.m. to 6:00 a.m., the battle of Camp Aguinaldo raged in earnest.

Rebel forces, coming from the White Plains area, initiated combined artillery and mortar attacks. Backed by Marine LVTs and other armor vehicles, ground assaults were launched in the northern vicinity (Gate 1 of Camp Aguinaldo and Main Gate of LOGCOM), as well as the eastern vicinity (LOGCOM perimeter). But loyal troops repulsed the attacks using artillery, mortar, and recoilless rifles, which disabled the enemy's armor. A rebel V-150 was destroyed, while an LVT was totally burned and partially blocked Gate 1.

Meanwhile, some rebel Marines led by Maj Cesar de la Pefia infiltrated Camp Aguinaldo but government defenders were able to isolate them at the General Headquarters (GHQ) Dispensary and St Ignatius Chapel. After a brief firefight, the rebels surrendered.

Later, at about 6:30 a.m., the rest of the attacking rebel forces under Lt Col Romelino Gojo PN, Operations Officer, Philippine Marines, withdrew towards White Plains but were subjected to continuous air strikes by PAF F-5 jets and Sikorsky helicopter gunships. Enemy forces then dispersed and finally withdrew from the camp's vicinity. At 7:00 a.m., rebel remnants and their armor located near the Mormon Church at Katipunan Avenue were bombed by government jets. Elements of the 2 ID then cleared the area of all rebel resistance and secured it against possible counter-attacks.

A.3.f. 4 to 9 December – Makati and Mactan Air Base

In Makati and Mactan, the period between 4 to 9 December was spent with both sides intermittently threatening, posturing, fighting or negotiating. Finally, by 2:30 a.m. of 6 December as a result of the negotiations led by BGen Arturo Enrile, Superintendent of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), with the rebels, a ceasefire was declared, culminating later in the morning in the departure of foreign tourists and apartment dwellers from the rebel-occupied Makati area. On 7 December, at around 9:00 a.m., the rebels ended their occupation of the commercial district of Makati and marched back to their barracks at Fort Bonifacio. Mactan followed suit on 9 December when the rebels, headed by BGen Comendador, formally surrendered to BGen Palma in the middle of Mandaue Bridge.

A.3.g. 1 to 2 December – Air Strikes

Rebel Air Strikes

In the morning of 1 December, the rebels, using air assets captured at Sangley, conducted the following sorties:

1. 6:25 a.m.: Three Tora-Toras bombed and strafed Malacanang complex;
2. 7:00 a.m.: Two Tora-Toras strafed government troops in the vicinity of PTV-4;
3. 8:00 a.m.: A Sikorsky strafed government forces around PTV-4;
4. 9:00 a.m.: Two Tora-Tora planes augmented a Sikorsky in bombing Camp Crame resulting in the burning of the PC HQ;
5. 9:45 a.m.: Tora-Tora planes dropped four bombs hitting Gen de Villa's quarters; and
6. 10:00 a.m.: A Sikorsky hit Camp Aguinaldo twice.

Government Air Strikes

On the other hand, government aircraft made the following strikes:

1. 7:00 a.m., 1 December: Two F-5s scrambled to intercept three Tora-Toras but no dogfight occurred;
2. 7:30 a.m., 1 December: An F-5 took off to intercept two Tora-Toras;
3. 9:45 a.m., 1 December: A Sikorsky fired at rebel forces at LOGCOM;
4. 10:00 a.m., 1 December: Three F-5s fired rockets at the sea waters adjacent to the runway at Sangley;
5. 11:45 a.m., 1 December: A Sikorsky struck at rebel positions at LOGCOM;
6. 12:45 p.m., 1 December: An F-5 piloted by Maj Danilo Atienza took off to attack Sangley, and destroyed the rebel planes and the fuel dump;
7. 12:49 p.m., 1 December: Two F-5s took off to attack Sangley and fired cannons, strafed the airfield, and bombed the hangar;
8. 1:00 p.m., 1 December: A Sikorsky made three air strikes at rebel positions in White Plains;
9. 3:20 p.m., 1 December: Two Sikorskys struck at White Plains;

10. 6:00 a.m., 2 December: A Sikorsky and an F-5 struck at White Plains;
11. 6:15 a.m., 2 December: A Sikorsky made three air strikes at White Plains;
12. 6:45 a.m., 2 December: Two F-5s made two air strikes at the Katipunan-White Plains area and the 202 Bde was hit by mistake;
13. 7:00 a.m./7:15a.m., 2 December: Two F-5s dropped bombs over Libis area;
14. 10:00 a.m., 2 December: Two Sikorsky helicopters made two air strikes each over the next seven hours at White Plains; and
15. 3:00 p.m., 2 December: A Sikorsky struck at White Plains. Other air missions after 2 December are no longer listed.

A.3.h. 1 to 7 December – Other Hostile Acts In the Provinces

While Metro Manila was under siege by various rebel forces, the following incidents took place in Regions I, II, IV, V, VI, X, and XI.

1 December

1. Twelve soldiers in the Cordillera region entered a local radio station and insisted in broadcasting their support for the rebels.
2. Rebel Scout Rangers took over Legaspi City Domestic Airport. However, after lengthy negotiations, they ended their occupation of the airport and were escorted back to Camp Bagong Ibalon.
3. Elements of 253rd PC Company left Sorsogon in two buses for Manila but were stopped in Camarines Norte where the Provincial Commander convinced them to return to Camp Escudero, Sorsogon.
4. Two hundred men from 339th PC Company gathered at Bacolod Airport waiting for a PAF C-130 to fly them to Manila. When the airplane did not arrive and subsequent efforts to use a shipping vessel at a nearby wharf failed, they were persuaded by the PC Provincial Commander of Negros Occidental to return to their camp.
5. Lt Emil Ong, Team Leader, 7th Riverine Assault Company, wrote BGen Raymundo Jarque, Commander Negros Island Command, offering to resign because he was disappointed with the AFP. Later, Ong with four men from his company attempted to use the Pulpandan Port but was refused entrance by the security guard at the gate.
6. A group of junior pilots at Fernando Air Base wanted to fly an SP-260 aircraft and conduct persuasion flights over Manila in support of the coup. Col Hector Tarazona, Director for Operations, 100th Training Wing, was instructed by Wing Commander Col Felipe Abando to persuade the pilots not to do so. While the meeting was going on, Col Abando ordered the maintenance officer of the 443rd Field Depot and Maintenance Squadron to disable the aircrafts.
7. Cagayan Gov Rodolfo Aguinaldo went on the air over DZRH in the morning, declaring support for the coup. Five hundred of his men attempted to reach Manila but were blocked in Nueva Ecija.

2 December

1. An officer of the HQ Service Company, PC TRACOM, at Silang, Cavite displayed a banner expressing support for the RAM-HF.

2. Lt Col Teodorico Viduya, Davao del Norte PC/INP Provincial Commander, with a group of 30 officers sought guidance from BGen Mariano Baccay, Jr, RECOM 11 Commander. They wanted to issue a manifesto in favor of the rebels. He dissuaded them from doing so; but an unsigned manifesto was circulated just the same.

3 December

1. Elements of the 56 IB based in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija left for Manila but were stopped in Pampanga.
2. Before an assembly of officers and men of PC TRACOM, Superintendent Col Renato Motus issued a manifesto expressing support for the rebel cause.
3. Capt Gregory Ramos, Commanding Officer (CO), Alpha Coy, 2nd Light Armor Battalion (2 LAB) LABde, with 20 of his men and five armor vehicles left his station at Tuburan, Mawab, Davao del Norte to secure the Davao City Airport in a show of sympathy for the rebel cause. They encountered a roadblock at Barangay Sasa, Davao City. They were eventually brought to BGen Baccay by Col Danilo Olay, and after a lengthy dialogue, Capt Ramos and his men returned to their camp.
4. Six truckloads of rebel soldiers from 30 IB led by Lt Generoso Bolina boarded MV Nasipit Princess in Nasipit, Agusan del Norte bound for Cebu. However, the vessel was unable to depart due to the absence of the ship's captain.

7 December

Forty officers of the 4 ID at Camp Evangelista, Cagayan de Oro, led by Lt Col Reynaldo Rivera, sought a meeting with their Commanding General to air their grievances, among which seems to have been their objection to the participation of the US Phantom jets. However, they were made to resign before their Commanding General would dialogue with them. It appears that their resignations were not accepted.

With the foregoing overview as a background, a detailed narrative of significant pre-coup events and of each battle zone follows.

B. Pre-Coup Events

B.1. Activities of Major Coup Plotters

The conspiracy and planning which took place prior to the coup is best unraveled by recounting the activities, as gathered by the Commission, of some of the major coup plotters and their supporters and sympathizers. Some of their activities were made public for the first time in the now famous "Galido Expose" which disclosed the alliance between the forces of Honasan and Zumel through the efforts of Abenina, as well as the role which the military coup plotters wanted to give some civilian political leaders of the opposition.

B.1.a. Honasan, Abenina, Zumel

Playing his role as a "deep penetration agent" for the CSAFP,² BGen Alejandro Galido,³ CG Southern Luzon Command (SOLCOM), instructed his security officer, Capt Oscarlito Mapalo, to find a way to get in touch with the group of Honasan. Honasan escaped from detention on board BRP Andres Bonifacio while it anchored off Manila Bay on 2 April 1988.⁴

Initially, Mapalo could not establish the desired contact, despite his getting in touch with his former classmates, Capt Ed Oban and LtSG Alex Pama. However, after meeting Lt Col Marcelino Malajacan, Mapalo was able to attend a meeting somewhere in Cavalier's Village, Antipolo, Rizal. This meeting was attended by Col Anselmo Avenido, Lt Col Rodolfo Tor, Lt Col Malajacan, ex-Lt Col Billy Bibit, Cmdr Bernardo Patino, and others who Mapalo could not identify. On this occasion arrangements were discussed for a future meeting between Galido and

Abenina. Also, Mapalo was apprised of the objective of the movement which was purportedly for reform and to establish a civilian-military junta to consist of Abenina, Zumel, Honasan, and Galido (if he joined the movement), together with some civilians who are non-traditional politicians.⁵

In January 1989, Enrique “Henry” Cojuangco, younger brother of Eduardo “Danding” Cojuangco, Jr, picked up Galido in Greenhills, Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, and brought the latter to a parking place in the Makati Commercial Center where Galido met Honasan in a van. They (Galido and Honasan) talked while the van cruised along the South Expressway. Honasan asked Galido’s support for a planned destabilization to be launched in March 1989.⁶ Later, Galido confided to BGen Raul Aquino, CG 2 ID, the fact of the meeting without disclosing its subject matter. Galido also revealed that during the August 1987 failed coup attempt, he had an overseas phone conversation with ex-President Marcos, and kept the latter informed about the progress of the attempt.⁷

Meanwhile, on 5 June 1989, the office of the AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence (J2) received information on an alliance forged between the Zumel and Honasan groups for a destabilization attempt to be staged during the first or second week of June 1989.

In July 1989, Galido had a meeting at the Manila Garden Hotel, Makati, Metro Manila — arranged by one Cesar Lopez — with a certain Harold Magleo (or Maglio, as in some news reports), who claimed he was a colonel with the US Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA).⁸ Magleo informed Galido that the DIA favors the overthrow of President Corazon C. Aquino and the return of the Marcoses to the Philippines. According to Col Juan Mamorno, Chief of Staff and Operations Officer SOLCOM, Galido commented after the meeting that he doubted that Magleo was a colonel because he did not behave in a military manner.⁹

In a press statement issued on 3 April 1990, the US Embassy in Manila confirmed that Magleo met Galido once, sometime in April 1989 (not July 1989 as Mapalo testified), but denied that Magleo was ever a colonel in the US Air Force or that he was in any way connected with the DIA. The Embassy also said Magleo is employed at the Norton Air Base in California and was vacationing in the Philippines as a private individual.¹⁰

On 2 August 1989, Galido, Abenina, and Malajacan met at a house in Kamuning, Quezon City.¹¹ Abenina tried to convince Galido to join the group planning the coup¹² and suggested that destabilization activities be undertaken, citing Malacanang and VAB as targets, and President Aquino, Defense Secretary Fidel Ramos, and Gen de Villa as persons to be assassinated.¹³

Abenina also gave Galido a series of documents regarding the creation of a new Government Council to be composed of military officers, namely, BGens Abenina, Artemio Tadiar, and Zumel, as well as Honasan, and three unnamed civilians. Abenina then tried to convince Galido that he should be the seventh man in the Council, in lieu of Honasan who was viewed as “so junior”.¹⁴ In his testimony before the Commission, BGen Tadiar, Deputy Commander, Subic Naval Base Command (SUBCOM), denied any knowledge about his proposed membership in the Council.¹⁵

In the same meeting, Abenina briefed Galido on the military officers joining the coup, namely: Col Avenido, Secretary, Head-quarters, Philippine Constabulary Staff; Lt Col Gojo, Cmdr Patino of SUBCOM, reportedly representing BGen Tadiar; Col Mamorno, Maj Artemio Gamayo of 16 IB in Magdalena, Laguna; Lt Col Renato Jamora of 42 IB in Catamayan, Quezon; Lt Col Ramon Garcia in Pamplona, Camarines Sur; Col Victor Mayo of 49 IB; and Col Edgardo Espinosa PN (M). Abenina further claims that BGen Blando, CG 7 ID, and BGen Eduardo Cabanlig, Commandant, Philippine Marines (PMAR), were supporters of the planned coup.¹⁶ It is possible that these officers mentioned were not necessarily supporters of the coup, but dropping names of “credible” officers is a classic strategy in planning for a coup, as mentioned in Chapter I.

Galido asserted that, according to Abenina, the following officers had been assigned to make destabilization tactical plans: Lt Cols Avenido, Gojo, and Malajacan, Cmdr Patino, and Col. Mamorno.¹⁷

Abenina also informed Galido that, for the planned coup, funds and logistics would be provided by Cesar Lopez and Cherry Cobarrubias. Tadiar testified that Cobarrubias was a close friend of the Marcoses.¹⁸ According to Patino, she

regularly dealt with the Navy, selling various Appliances.¹⁹ Lopez's role was supposedly to extend support in terms of transportation. Cobarrubias, on the other hand, promised to give between P2 million and P4 million once the final plan for execution was completed. She is also supposed to have relayed the promise of Imelda Marcos to give Galido "ten million" pesos within 24 hours after the "rival of Mrs Marcos and her family in the Philippines."²⁰

In his testimony before the Commission on 15 June 1990, Luis Tabuena, manager of the Manila International Airport during the Marcos regime, confirmed that Cobarrubias is close to the Marcoses. She arranged his meeting with Galido at a room at the Mandarin Hotel on 6 September 1989; she likewise arranged for the long distance conversation between Galido and Imelda Marcos the day before.

Tadiar, meanwhile, testified before the Commission that at a meeting with Galido in June or July 1989²¹ or July or August 1989 at a house in Times St, Quezon City, he (Tadiar) was surprised to see Cobarrubias whom he last met in Malacanang in 1986. She was with a man who was introduced to Tadiar as one Mr Lopez. Actually, this Lopez is Cesar Lopez, another close associate of former President Marcos and the "Liaison of Marcos with the loyalist forces."²²

In a letter received by the Commission on 10 August 1990,²³ Cobarrubias is described as a coup operator or coup financier tied to the Zaldivia-Aguas front whose dealings link Mrs Marcos to the coup plotters. Diane Aguas admitted that Cobarrubias is a friend of her former live-in partner, who originally introduced himself to her as Kit Santiago. Santiago later became known as Capt Francisco de la Pefla, and later still, when he "died" on 5 August 1989, as Franco Sanchijo.²⁴ Sanchijo's "death" is surrounded by suspicious circumstances.

Evidence obtained by the Commission further discloses that on 29 November 1989, Cherry Cobarrubias (under the name Serafia C. Cobarrubias) checked in at the Philippine Village Hotel.²⁵ She checked out on 2 December 1989.

In his sworn statement dated 19 January 1990,²⁶ Galido stated that Col Avenido, according to Abenina, was a member of the planning group; that Col Espinosa had promised to support the coup with two Marine battalions assigned in Bulacan; and that Lt Col Gojo would take care of getting all the Marines in Fort Bonifacio to join the rebel forces. Galido further said that he ordered Col Mamorno to join the planning group as his (Galido's) means to monitor the group's plans.

On 12 August 1989, Rico Mendoza, representing himself as a close friend of exiled Danding Cojuangco, met Galido in the Quezon City residence of a certain Rafael Ayoste, a businessman from Lucena City. Mendoza purportedly relayed Cojuangco's wish to return to the Philippines and support a takeover of the government.²⁷

From August to October 1989, on Galido's verbal instructions, Mamorno attended four meetings of a certain group. The first two of these meetings were held in Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, in the residence of a certain Medardo Pestano, reportedly an uncommissioned PMA '72 graduate. The latter fetched Mamorno at the parking area of the Manila Peninsula Hotel in Makati for these meetings. Present in the first meeting were Avenido, Pestano, Tor and a PAF officer whose name Mamorno could not recall.²⁸ In attendance during the second meeting were Avenido, Pestano, Tor and one Col "Joe" Espinosa of the Philippine Marines (Mamorno knows Espinosa by his nickname "Joe" but was uncertain if "Jose" is the former's correct first name. He is sure, however, that Espinosa belongs to the Marines).²⁹

The next two meetings were held in the residence, either in Marikina or Antipolo, of a certain "Tor", introduced to Mamorno as a PC officer. On those meetings, Malajacan, Tor, Avenido and Pestano were present. The group asked Mamorno to commit SOLCOM forces for the coup; however, he consistently replied that he would refer the matter to his commander.³⁰

Galido further said in his affidavit that Luis Tabuena received P5 million, evidently from the Marcoses, of which P2 million would be for Zumel and P3 million for Galido. It was BGen Luther Custodio who informed him (Galido) about the money during a family reunion on 2 September 1989 at the residence of Rico Mendoza in San Fernando, Pampanga. This affair was also attended by Henry Cojuangco and Baby Asistio. Galido then asked Capt Mapalo to

contact Cobarrubias to inform Tabuena that he would like to talk to him. His meeting with Tabuena eventually took place in a room at the Mandarin Hotel in Makati on 6 September.³¹

According to Tabuena, he was contacted by Cobarrubias at the 365 Club of Hotel Intercontinental, informing him that Galido would like to see him. It was Cobarrubias who arranged the 6 September meeting at the Mandarin and when he arrived there at 2:00 p.m., Cobarrubias and Galido were already there. In the presence of Cobarrubias, Galido asked Tabuena about the delivery of the money to Zumel. Tabuena denied having known about it, while Cobarrubias did not say anything. According to Tabuena, Zumel was the Military Supervisor of the Manila International Airport for two years when Tabuena was its General Manager.³²

Gahdo and Cobarrubias had been at the Mandarin Hotel since 5 September. According to Galido, in the evening of said date, Cobarrubias arranged a long distance call for him with Imelda Marcos who asked him (Galido) to hasten the plan to destabilize the government through a coup that the Marcoses could return to the Philippines and help the new Government. Mrs Marcos further expressed her willingness to support the activity financially, however, at that moment she was hard up. She promised to provide support within 24 hours following her arrival in the Philippines.³³

Tabuena admitted that he had known Mrs Marcos since college days when he played basketball and she used to watch the NCAA games. A year after the Marcoses left the Philippines, Mrs Marcos used to call him once or twice every two weeks; as a matter of fact, two weeks before he gave his testimony to the Commission, Mrs Marcos had called him. She also called him before the December coup to ask what was going on and also after the coup to inquire how many were killed.

Ten days after that Mandarin Hotel meeting, he met Cobarrubias at the Intercontinental Hotel and confronted her: “*O iyon lang pala ang tatanungin mo sa akin, eh, hindi mo pa sinasabi sa akin?*” She answered that she did not know what Galido wanted to take up with him. Tabuena, however, admitted that he was of the impression that what Galido wanted to take up with him was secret, but that Cobarrubias knew what it was about. He did not confront Galido as to why the latter insinuated that he (Tabuena) may have misappropriated the money nor did he inquire as to the source of the money. When he obtained a copy of Galido’s affidavit implicating him, it did not occur to him to communicate with Galido or to try to see Cobarrubias.³⁴

Tabuena confirmed that Cobarrubias resides abroad and travels a lot to the Philippines, often passing through Honolulu where she has a travel agency. She told him that she visited the Marcoses in Honolulu. He used to see Cobarrubias at least twice a month; however, since after the December 1989 coup when she was implicated, he has not seen her.

Other Meetings of BGen Galido

On 14 November 1989, Galido, Zumel, Abenina and Honasan met to discuss a coup slated to be staged before Christmas. On the way to the meeting, Galido rode in a car with Abenina and Atty Homobono Adaza.³⁵ Also present at the meeting were Avenido and Tor, both of whom were implicated in the 28 August 1987 failed coup. This meeting was allegedly held either in San Francisco del Monte,³⁶ or Tierra Pura, Tandang Sora³⁷, both in Quezon City.

In Camp Aguinaldo at about 2:00 p.m., 30 November, Galido received a note from Abenina stating that H-Hour for the coup would be at 3:00 a.m. of 1 December, and for Galido to bring all his SOLCOM forces to support the rebel forces in the National Capital Region (NCR). Galido said he was annoyed at this unexpected change of date for launching the coup, since the original date mentioned by Abenina was 8 December. Upon being contacted by Galido for an explanation, Abenina said that he was just notified of the change by Honasan and that he (Abenina) had no control over the matter, since RAM-HF was calling the shots.³⁸

That evening, during the Command Conference called by Gen de Villa at Camp Aguinaldo, Galido briefed the officers on the different coup countersigns (white-day 1, pink-day 2, red-day 3, and again, white-day 4, pink-day 5, red-day 6, they had plans for six days) as disclosed to him by Abenina.³⁹ After the Command Conference, Galido met Abenina somewhere in the Araneta complex in Cubao during which time Abenina kept urging Galido to support

the coup despite the change of date and time, or at least to remain neutral. Galido claimed he turned down both propositions.⁴⁰ On the following day, Abenina telephoned Galido almost everyhour trying to convince him to support the coup. As an inducement, he allegedly offered Galido the initial position of Commanding General of the Philippine Army and eventually that of Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, if the coup succeeded.⁴¹

Other coup leaders played the following roles during this period: Commo Domingo Calajate at the LOGCOM; Col Alexander Noble in Agusan del Sur and Metro Manila; ex-Lt Col Bibit and Lt Col Victor Batac, in Quezon City and Holiday Inn, Manila; Lt Rasco in Quezon Province, and Lt Col Tiburcio Fusilero in Cebu City.

B.1.b. Calajate

On 26 November, after the flag ceremony in Camp Aguinaldo, a conference was held at the AFP LOGCOM at which all officers were informed that there might be a coup sometime during the second week of December. Commo Calajate, Commander LOGCOM, instructed all officers to proceed to camp immediately once they hear about it over the radio. According to him, this information came from a conference at GHQ on 24 November.⁴² Three days later, Calajate sent his family out of their residence at Camp Aguinaldo to some place outside the camp.⁴³

In breach of the code of honor of an officer and a gentleman, all the time aware of his participation and role in the unfolding coup, and knowing the exact hour it would be staged, Calajate had the temerity to attend the Command Conference at 5:30 p.m. of November 30 called by CSAFP on which occasion government defense plans were discussed.

Afew days before the coup, Lt Col Jerry Albano was a frequent visitor of Cmdr Proceso Maligalig, Deputy Commander AFP LOGCOM. On 1 December, Albano joined Calajate at the LOGCOM, Camp Aguinaldo.⁴⁴

B.1.C. Noble

From October up to the second week of November 1989, at the latest, Col Noble had been going around Mindanao. He sought to establish links with the Mindanao Independence Movement (MIM) of Reuben Canoy.⁴⁵

He also tried to establish links with landowners who opposed the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law, and who organized themselves into the Mindanao Freedom Movement (MFM).

As testified to by former Bukidnon governor, Carlos Fortich, Noble attended conferences of the Mindanao Freedom Movement. In one of these, which was either held in Cagayan de Oro City or Bukidnon, either early or in the second week of November, both Noble and Canoy attended. This is further evidenced by pictures taken on that occasion.⁴⁶ Others present were Atty Romeo Montalban (brother-in-law of Fortich) and Atty Odilon Mallari of Davao City, an organizer of the MFM.

In said meeting, Noble read a paper in which he mentioned secession. Canoy read the MIM's proclamation of independence. The subject of a coup d'état was also discussed. The stand of the MFM was that if a coup succeeded, Mindanao should secede. Noble assured the Movement of protection.

On 26 November, while in Esperanza, Agusan del Sur, Noble told Sgt Asterio Dejarne of the 401 IBde, 4 ID based in Camp Evangelista, Patag, Cagayan de Oro City, that they would go to Manila to get instructions from the RAM-HF command control, and that they would return to Mindanao to set up the Federal Republic of Mindanao.⁴⁷ That same day, at 6:00 p.m., Noble and Dejarne arrived at the Manila Domestic Airport aboard a PAL flight from Butuan City. They proceeded to Noble's house at 135 MacArthur Avenue, Fort Bonifacio. There, Dejarne was tasked to operate Noble's radio and to handle communication with contacts in Agusan del Sur. Dejarne learned that codes 949 and 375 referred to Noble and Honasan, respectively.⁴⁸

On 27 November, Sgt Romeo Evangelio, Noble's close-in bodyguard, joined Noble and Dejarne in Fort Bonifacio. At 10:00 a.m., Evangelio and Noble left the latter's residence in Fort Bonifacio for an unknown destination, returning at 7:00 p.m.⁴⁹

On 28 November, Evangelio left Noble's house, returning later with one Galil, one machine pistol cal 9 mm, and one Zig assault rifle.⁵⁰

At noon of the same day, on Noble's instructions, Dejarne went to the South Harbor on a red Land Cruiser. At the gate, the driver of the Land Cruiser approached the security guard who directed the former to a van located just outside the gate. Without asking for pertinent papers, the guard unloaded from the van a wooden box which he turned over to the driver and Dejarne. The latter noted that there were four other similar boxes left inside the van. The driver told Dejarne that the items in the box were financed by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Later, when Noble opened the box at his Fort Bonifacio residence, Dejarne saw that it contained an Armburst anti-tank weapon. Earlier in the morning, Noble revealed to Dejarne that there would be a coup.⁵¹

B.1.d Noble/Batac

On 29 November, around 9:00 p.m., a driver on board a Pajero came and fetched Noble and Dejarne in Fort Bonifacio.⁵² They were brought to a house in Gen Segundo St, Quezon City where Noble stayed for almost one hour⁵³ while Dejarne stayed in the Pajero.⁵⁴ In Dejarne's supplemental statement of 3 January 1990, Dejarne pointed to this house near Maalikaya. It turned out to be No. 62 Gen Segundo St.⁵⁵

Other evidence obtained by the Commission disclosed that the address of Crismel Verano, who was mentioned in the Galido affidavit, is No. 60 Segundo St, Heroes Hill, Quezon City, just adjacent to No 62.⁵⁶

According to Emmanuel Lao, owner of the lot where House No. 56, Gen Segundo St is located, a certain Verano is the owner of the two lots where houses No. 58 and 60 stand.⁵⁷

Around 10:00 p.m., Noble, with two companions — one of whom was identified by the Pajero's driver as Lt Col Vic Batac and who was "served by Dejarne to be carrying a bulging brown envelope"—emerged from the house and boarded the Pajero.⁵⁸

The group proceeded to Holiday Inn Hotel where Noble, Batac and their unidentified companion alighted and went inside, leaving Dejarne and the driver behind. The brown envelope was left in the Pajero; because it was open, Dejarne could see that it contained money which the driver estimated at P1 million.⁵⁹ Thirty minutes later, Batac called through the handheld radio and instructed the driver to bring the brown envelope into the hotel. The driver complied. Upon returning to the Pajero with the envelope ("*parang bawa na iyong laman*" [it seems some of its contents were taken] because it was no longer bulging, according to Dejarne), the driver told Dejarne that there were around 30 persons in the room with Batac and Noble.⁶⁰

Noble and Batac stayed inside the hotel for approximately two hours. Later, Noble and Dejarne were brought back to the former's residence in Fort Bonifacio at around 2:00 a.m., 30 November.⁶¹

As shown in the discussion below, Bibit had already checked in at Room 1701 of Holiday Inn by 29 November.

In his testimony before the Commission, Dejarne confirmed the foregoing.⁶² He declared further that he and driver Alex Callada, on board a Mitsubishi car together with Noble and Evangelio, were intercepted at a checkpoint in Sta Rita, Samar on 5 December 1989. Noble and Evangelio subsequently managed to escape. Found and seized from the car were P70,000 in crisp P500 bills, sophisticated weapons including one Armburst anti-tank weapon, a rifle with a laser sight, and documents tending to show the tie-up of the RAM-HF and troops which Noble referred to as the "Armed Forces of Mindanao", and which he was to lead in the last coup attempt.

Also found from the car were several documents, among which are:

1. A letter dated 28 November 1989 of one Vic addressed to Sir Alex. The latter was told to contact or see Sonny, Andy Gauran, MJ Mendoza, or to relay his messages through their base (code 581); after making all these contacts, Alex was to meet “TF Diamond” at Room 1701 of the Holiday Inn. Alex was also to call Billy or Jake, or Abe. The codes for them were 757 for Billy, 507 for Jake and 711 for Abe.
2. A draft of a press release/public statement addressed to the “Soldiers of Mindanao.”
3. Alert codes for broadcast which read “The roses that lately bloom in November will surely warm cool hearts by December” and “Dear Pare, comadre Rose will give birth anytime after 29 November 1989. Please contact other Maninoyos for the grand binyag.”
4. Instructions on the countersigns to be used and attached to uniforms/clothes and vehicles of coup participants.
5. Codes for pick-up points, like (a) New Library for McDonalds, Quezon Blvd, (b) Library for McDonalds, Paseo de Roxas, (c) Dennis for McDonalds, Greenhills, (d) Adamson for Shakey’s along Katipunan Road, (e) Palace for Tropical Hut, corner EDSA and Ortigas Avenue, and (f) HI for Holiday Inn.
6. Papers regarding the establishment of the Armed Forces of Mindanao under the Federal Republic of Mindanao.
7. List of confirmed radio frequencies of various military units, base stations, and group operations centers.
8. Code numbers relating to Malacañang, such as the President’s car; cars and drivers of Presidential kin Noynoy, Viel, Eldon, Ballsy, Pinky, Kris and Manolo and their individual code numbers; those of the PSG and its officers; and other operational codes.
9. Handwritten notes containing entries about an apparent bank heist.
10. A handwritten note referring to the radio network of the rebels containing the telephone number 810-1701. The Commission traced this number to someone answering on behalf of Royal Match, Inc, and when asked about his location answered that he was in Ayala Avenue.

MGen Flores believes that Vic referred to Victor Batac, Alex to Alexander Noble, Billy to Billy Bibit, Jake to Marcelino Malajacan, and Abe to Abraham Purugganan.⁶³

B.1.e. Bibit

Bibit had earlier been appointed by Customs Commissioner Wigberto Tafiada to serve in the Customs intelligence service. Commissioner Mison subsequently appointed him as Assistant Chief, Operations Division of the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service (CIIS).⁶⁴

In August 1989, Bibit had been seen in Bacolod City with an unidentified companion.

The Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP) had earlier warned Mison of the recruitment activities of Bibit in the Visayas in September 1989. Mison assigned Atty Jereos, CIIS Chief, to watch Bibit. However, Mison later admitted he had not given the matter his personal attention, explaining that his business was to raise revenues for the government.⁶⁵

On 28 November, Bibit checked in at Room 1701, a suite at Holiday Inn, Manila, accompanied by another man. The room reservation was made in his behalf by his sister-in-law, Fe de los Reyes, secretary of the Chief Engineer of the hotel.⁶⁶

During Bibit's stay, de los Reyes went to his room twice for merienda-dinner at his invitation. On the first occasion, de los Reyes overheard Bibit making a telephone call; on the second occasion, the phone rang twice and she heard Bibit talking to the caller(s).⁶⁷

Records of Holiday Inn show that during this period, long-distance telephone calls from Room 1701 were purportedly made by one Boy Fuentes to telephone number 22376 in Bacolod City. This is a private PLDT line subscribed to the residence of one George Yap, a former member of the PC-Regional Security Unit 6 operating in Bacolod City.⁶⁸ Yap went into hiding after the December 1989 failed coup attempt and remains at large.⁶⁹

On 29 November, at 3:11 p.m., four persons, with one transceiver, entered Room 1701.⁷⁰

At about 7:30 a.m., the following day, Bibit telephoned P/Capt Job Gavino, Station Commander, North Harbor Port Police, and told the latter that he (Bibit) would be sending over his representatives for some important business. At 11:00 a.m., 20 men in civilian clothes arrived at the North Harbor Police Station looking for Gavino, supposedly on Bibit's orders. They tried to convince Gavino to join the rebel forces but he allegedly refused.⁷¹

In the early morning of 1 December, Bibit's room was discovered vacant. Because Bibit did not check out properly, de los Reyes had to pay his bill since she was the one who made Bibit's hotel reservation. De los Reyes was later reimbursed by her sister, Mrs Bibit.⁷² Evidence received by the Commission discloses that at 2:00 a.m. of 1 December, rebel soldiers in full battle gear equipped with high-powered weapons arrived and deployed themselves all over the area of Gate 3, South Harbor, Manila. The soldiers numbered approximately 200 and were commanded by Bibit.

B.1.f. Rasco

At 1:00 p.m., 28 November, in Sariaya, Quezon, a Philippine Army officer approached and informed 2Lt Eliseo Rasco PC, CO of the 1st Special Action Company, RSAF Battalion, RECOM 4, of a coup d'etat, and asked him to bring his troops to Sangley Point, Cavite City.⁷³ Two days later, or on the night of 30 November, a BLTB bus was found parked inside Camp Nakar, Lucena City. Subsequent investigation showed that this bus was originally contracted by Rasco to transport soldiers to Sangley but mistakenly, was sent to Camp Nakar instead of to Barangay Sto Cristo, Sariaya, Quezon. Rasco and his group got another bus and eventually reached Sangley.⁷⁴ Rasco used to be under Lt Col Marcelino Malajacan when the latter was Battalion Commander of 16 IB.⁷⁵

B.1.g. Fusilero

Lt Col Fusilero played a leading role in Cebu, particularly in Mactan during the December 1989 coup attempt. He was the PC Provincial Commander of Negros Oriental for sometime until his relief for having assaulted a human rights lawyer in Dumaguete City on 4 September 1986.⁷⁶ Recalled to the RECOM 7 Headquarters in Cebu City, he was accused together with Abenina, then RECOM 7 Regional Commander, and PAF ex-Lt Col Neon Ebuena, then manager of the AFPSLAI Office in Cebu City, of joining the 28 August 1987 coup attempt. The three were charged with violation of Articles of War 67, 68, 96, and 97 before General Court Martial (GCM) No 8. Fusilero was placed under house arrest under the custody of the commander who took over from Abenina, BGen Mariano Baccay, Jr. Baccay was later transferred to Davao and replaced by BGen Benjamin Dizon who retired shortly before 30 November 1989. Dizon allowed Fusilero to roam around freely.⁷⁷ BGen Raul Imperial took over RECOM 7 a few days before the coup.

During the months of September and October 1989, Fusilero was sighted in Negros Occidental in the company of Bibit, a former PMA classmate, courting the support of military officers and enlisted men for a coup attempt. Intelligence reports were submitted by NICOM Intelligence Officer, Maj Alphonsus Crucero, on the recruitment activities of Fusilero and Bibit as early as September.⁷⁸ No pre-emptive action was made by higher headquarters and thus recruitment of coup supporters appeared to continue.

Although Fusilero was facing charges before GCM No 8 for his role in the 28 August 1987 coup attempt, he was not prevented from going to Leyte, certain parts of Mindanao, and Luzon. With his motorcycle buddies called the

Cyclones, he went to Agusan del Norte and contacted logging concessionaire Cesar Magsaysay, in whose company a brother of Fusilero has been employed.⁷⁹ A book entitled “A Path of the Masters”, bearing Cesar Magsaysay’s name, was among the things found in Noble’s attache case when the latter’s car was intercepted at a checkpoint in Sta Rita, Samar on 5 December 1989.⁸⁰ Apparently, Fusilero made these motorcycle caravan trips with the Cyclones as a good cover to make contacts with his military and civilian friends in various areas, including Bicol and the islands of Leyte and Samar.⁸¹ The Cyclones also visited Aparri, Cagayan, bailiwick of former Governor Rodolfo Aguinaldo, another one of Fusilero’s classmates.

Sometime before 1 December, Fusilero was also seen at the Alavar’s Seafood Restaurant in Cebu City, dining with Atty Homobono Adaza, an opposition leader from Mindanao, and BGen Comendador.⁸²

In the morning of 29 November, Fusilero instructed Lt Augusto Marquez, Chief, Regional Operations and Plans Branch of the R3 Division, RECOM 7, to contact Maj Anacleto Chagas, CO of the 347th PC Company based in Toledo City, and to tell Chagas to go to Roy Khan Station Restaurant located at Osmena Boulevard, Cebu City at around 8:00 p.m. that day.⁸³ Chagas went directly to the office of the Operations Officer of R3, RECOM 7, thinking that it was Lt Col Alphonso Uranza, Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations, RECOM 7, who called for him. Upon reaching the R3 Division office and before he could go into the office of Uranza, Marquez told him that there would be a meeting at Roy Khan Station Restaurant at 7:00 p.m.⁸⁴ While in Cebu City on official business, Capt Cecil Ezra Sandalo, former Aide-de-camp of Abenina and CO of the 342nd PC Company based in Bogo, Cebu, also received a message in his residence from Fusilero for him to proceed to the restaurant.⁸⁵ Marquez, who was at the quarters of Uranza that evening with his future bride and in-laws, also received a call from Fusilero for him to proceed to said restaurant himself.⁸⁶

During this meeting at Roy Khan Station Restaurant, Fusilero informed those in attendance, namely, Chagas, Sandalo, Marquez, Ebuena and others, who were all in civilian clothes, that the coup they have been waiting for, would be staged at 10:00 p.m. of the following day, 30 November.⁸⁷ Fusilero then gave Chagas the amount of P10,000 in P100 bills in the presence of the conferees, and told Chagas to send troops to Mactan at 2:00 a.m. on 1 December.⁸⁸ Fusilero also requested Sandalo for his support, promising logistics and a handheld radio.⁸⁹ Fusilero told Marquez that the coup would not really affect Cebu as troops nationwide would converge in Manila.⁹⁰

After the meeting, Chagas followed Marquez to the quarters of Uranza where they revealed to him the disclosure made by Fusilero.⁹¹ The three had a drinking session which lasted until 2:30 a.m. of 30 November.⁹² None of them saw it fit at that time to inform either BGen Imperial, the Regional Commander, Col Andres Superable, the Chief of Staff, or Lt Col Enrique Cuadra, the Provincial Commander, of what transpired at the restaurant.⁹³

At around 6:30 a.m. of 30 November, Chagas left Toledo City and went directly to the quarters of his immediate superior, Lt Col Cuadra, informing him about what had taken place at the Roy Khan Station Restaurant the previous night.⁹⁴ Sandalo was also there to report the same matter. Cuadra instructed the two not to allow any troop movement, and to adhere to the chain of command.⁹⁵

At about the same time, Marquez, who barely had four hours of sleep, reported to his office and advised Superable that a coup would be staged in Manila that evening.⁹⁶ Superable then instructed Marquez to gather more information.⁹⁷ It seems that Superable did not elicit anymore information from Marquez, nor did Marquez, who was briefed by Fusilero the previous evening, appear to have volunteered much information.

After advising Lt Col Cuadra, Maj Chagas reported to Col Superable the incident at restaurant. Superable was surprised and got mad upon learning that Fusilero had asked Chagas to send troops to Mactan. Chagas was then instructed not to make any troop movement and to follow the chain of command. Chagas said that he later went to see Marquez and gave back the P10,000 to be returned to Fusilero.⁹⁸ Marquez confirmed that he received the amount from Chagas and alleged that he had returned it to Fusilero the same day at the RECOM 7 HQ, right after Chagas told Superable that the coup would be staged at 10:00 p.m. that day.⁹⁹ It was only upon learning about the planned coup from Fusilero that Superable informed BGen Imperial that there were strong indications that a coup would be staged that day, prompting Imperial to call PC Chief MGen Ramon Montano. As Montano was not around at that time, Imperial called up BGen Victor Natividad, then PC/INP Deputy Chief, and inquired about the

developments in Manila. Imperial asked Natividad: “*Sir, may mga bali-balita dito na may mangyayari ngayon. Mayroon ba kayong balita riyan?*” (Sir, we have news here that something is going to happen. What’s the news on your side?) To which query Natividad retorted: “*Anong ibig mong sabihin na may mangyayari ngayon* (What are you referring to), can you give me more details? Imperial answered thus: “*Wala nga Sir, kaya nagtatanong ako kung mayroon kayong balita riyan*”¹⁰⁰ (We have none, Sir, that’s why I’m asking if you yourself have news). Imperial said that Superable did not convey to him the information given by Fusilero that the coup would occur at 10 p.m. on 30 November, although, he admitted that Superable mentioned to him of troop movements scheduled for 2:00 a.m. the following day.

B.1.h. Purugganan and Lim

Maj Abraham Purugganan and Capt Danilo Lim held meetings in Fort Bonifacio in October and November respectively. The first meeting was reportedly held at the office of Purugganan. In attendance were Col Luisito Sanchez, Capt Rogelio Bonifacio, Capt Lim, Capt Nestor Flordeliza, Capt Joe Cruz, Lt Stephen Flores, Lt Charles Galvez and enlisted personnel including MSgt Demabildo. It was mentioned that an “activity” may happen sometime.¹⁰¹

The second was held at the FSRR office and was also led by Purugganan and Lim. Other officers who attended were Capt Felix Calimag, Capt Roberto Rusio, Capt Jose Barao, Capt Pablo Casalme, Lt Allen Capuyan, Lt Samuel Bactad, and 2Lt Napoleon Mabalot. Each was asked for his particular field of interest and function in office.¹⁰²

B.2. Related Activities

B.2.a. Davao del Sur

The 19-25 January 1990 issue of the Philippine Muslim Times reported that certain Army authorities based in General Santos City were behind the alleged arrival of Irwin Ver and Eduardo Cojuangco, Jr at the latter’s farm in Malita, Davao del Sur, on 23 November 1989. An intelligence report of a senior NBI agent in Davao City dated 22 January 1990 further revealed flights of two private aircrafts during the week of 20 November in the vicinity of Malita at a private airstrip owned by a company controlled by the Cojuangcos and at the Davao International Airport.¹⁰³

Taking these news item and report as leads, the Commission was able to obtain information and evidence which may have some connection with the arrival of Eduardo Cojuangco, Jr, a personality mentioned in the Galido affidavit who incidentally arrived a few days before the coup attempt.

The Chartered Flight to Kota Kinabalu

On 20 November at 9:15 a.m., a plane registered as RP-C585 left Manila for Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia with a lone passenger, Roberto Huang. The plane was piloted by Capt Adriano Morales and Capt Loreto Vergeire.¹⁰⁴

Capt Morales initially told the Commission that the flight was chartered by Jayapuri Brunei Ltd and arranged through the Executive and Tourist Aviation, a company owned by Chemical Industries of the Philippines, Inc and managed by him. Huang, later testified that “about two or three” months before 20 November, a certain Oliver Ker, a Malaysian whom Huang had accidentally met in one of the casinos in Metro Manila, called him by telephone. Ker told Huang that he would arrange for him to visit Kota Kinabalu. Around 20 October, Huang was allegedly called by another man (whose name Huang could not remember), claiming to be the manager of Jayapuri, who told him that “they were contacted by Ker to arrange for a chartered flight for me [Huang]...” In any case, Huang was requested to assist in getting a charter and so he asked Capt Vergeire to arrange it.

The route contracted for, as authorized by Jayapuri, was Manila-Kota Kinabalu-Manila.¹⁰⁵ Without the prior knowledge of either Jayapuri or Ker, Huang added Davao City to the itinerary. According to Huang, a side trip to Davao City would not make that much difference in price, and so he and Capt Vergeire decided to do it on their

own. However, the price differential and the flying time are not likely to be negligible because Capt Morales, in a sworn statement, said that Manila, Kota Kinabalu, and Davao are like the three points of an equilateral triangle as shown in Figure V-1.

[Figure V-1 — Flight Diagram of Manila-Kota Kinabalu-Davao-Manila]

At any rate, the total cost of the charter flight was a little over US \$6,000. About two weeks before 20 November, around US \$5,000 was sent to Huang allegedly from Ker through an emissary whose identity Huang could not remember. The foreign exchange was not surrendered to the banking system. Approximately US \$4,000 was given to Vergeire as down payment, while Huang kept the balance. When asked whether Vergeire issued him a receipt, Huang first said “I cannot remember, but I think so ...” and then corrected himself and said a receipt was issued “because I remember he [Capt Vergeire] wrote ‘Jayapuri’ on the receipt” But in the end, Huang confessed that he was not really sure a receipt had been issued. Capt Vergeire, he said, was not really authorized to issue a receipt because, “from what I know, the airline is not his own or he does not work for the airline” whose plane they had used.

When asked whether a charter contract was in fact executed to cover the flight, Huang claimed: “I am not familiar with it. I don’t know if there was a contract signed by Mr Vergeire with whom, to whoever, I don’t know.” Ker, for his part, apparently did not object to the informality of the arrangement, even if this was the first and only time Ker had arranged for Huang to charter a flight to Kota Kinabalu.

Huang alleged that the purpose of the trip was to make a deal about an oil mill, belonging to an insolvent company under receivership. It was situated about 200 kilometers from Kota Kinabalu, in a place whose exact name Huang could not remember.

The plane landed in Kota Kinabalu at 11:50 a.m. of 20 November. The pilots and Huang stayed there for three days, billeted in separate rooms at the Hyatt Hotel. Neither Morales nor Vergeire claimed to know what Huang did or whom he met. Capt Morales even disclaimed knowing whether Huang stayed at the Hyatt Hotel in Kota Kinabalu.¹⁰⁶ On the other hand, Huang admitted that he told the pilots that he was checking in at the Hyatt Hotel and that on one occasion, the pilots invited him for a drink at the hotel lobby.

Huang did not meet with Ker until “in the afternoon, in the evening”. They agreed to see the oil mill the next day, after which Huang would meet its receiver.

On 21 November, Ker and Huang went to the mill site and were there for less than two hours. They were permitted by the guard to look at the machineries and they saw that “there are about 12 units of them ...” Huang considered the mill as still saleable, but, as a bargaining ploy, he described it to Ker as “in a very bad condition”.

The following day, Ker told Huang that the receiver would not be able to meet him. No reason was given. In fact, not even the name of the receiver was revealed by Ker. The wasted time, effort and money did not seem to bother Huang. After all, he claimed to have “earned a few bucks,” and said that the money spent was not his.

On 23 November, the plane left Kota Kinabalu at 2:00 p.m. for Davao City, allegedly with only Huang as the passenger.¹⁰⁷ At Davao International Airport, it was met by PAFSECOM, the Bureau of Customs and the Commission on Immigration and Deportation personnel. After refuelling, the plane left for Manila.

There are conflicting testimonies on the number of passengers aboard the flight to Manila, but there was unanimity on the point that Huang was not one of them.¹⁰⁸

The plane arrived in Manila at 7:45 p.m., 23 November.

Huang maintained that although the leg from Davao to Manila was already paid for, he really intended to disembark in Davao all along because it was imperative for him to brief his business associate, a certain Jess Quiogue, on what

had transpired in Kota Kinabalu. He admitted, however, that he had made no prior appointment with Quiogue. Yet, instead of calling Quiogue from the Davao airport to find out if they could meet, Huang went to Davao Insular Hotel. He took his time before trying to contact Quiogue, who turned out to be in Manila. So Huang had to take the last PAL flight to Manila.

The Commission also received evidence showing that on 21 November, another aircraft, registered as RP-C410, owned by Agricultural Investors, Inc, an Eduardo Cojuangco, Jr company presently under PCGG sequestration, left Manila at 10:43 a.m. for Bacolod with Enrique Cojuangco, Ramon Ang, and Danilo Gamboa, as passengers.¹⁰⁹ The aircraft arrived in Bacolod at 11:57 a.m. and stayed there until 12:06 noon of 22 November, at which time it flew to Malita, Davao del Sur with Cojuangco and Ang as passengers. Gamboa was left behind in Bacolod. At 4:33 p.m. of 23 November, RP-C410 flew from Malita to Manila allegedly with Enrique Cojuangco and Ang as the only passengers.¹¹⁰

These two flights present a number of coincidences. For instance, all the pilots are somehow connected with Eduardo Cojuangco, Jr. The pilot of RP-C410, Capt Jose Castillo, admits to having piloted for Eduardo Cojuangco, Jr several times in the past. He met with him personally at least once, between 23 November 1989 and 30 November 1989 at Cojuangco's residence at Balet Drive, Quezon City. The co-pilot of RP-C585, Capt Vergeire, was a pilot of the Cojuangcos for 14 years. He too admitted that he met with Eduardo Cojuangco, Jr at his residence after he had learned of his return. Morales initially denied knowing Eduardo Cojuangco, Jr personally, but later, in his sworn statement of 7 September 1990, he confirmed what Castillo had stated under oath, namely that "Morales,... taught them [Eduardo and Enrique Cojuangco] how to fly years ago . . ."¹¹¹

In addition, both Vergeire and Castillo were aware of each other's whereabouts on 23 November without having actually talked to each other. When Vergeire left Manila, as pilot of RP-C585 on 20 November, he did not know that Castillo was going to fly RP-C410 the next day. But Vergeire claimed to have known that Castillo was flying near Davao City on 23 November in the afternoon because he allegedly "heard him through the radio." Castillo also admitted knowing Vergeire's whereabouts at the same time because he "heard his voice over the radio."

It must be noted that by the time Vergeire in RP-C585 flew into the Davao Airport at 4:45 p.m., Castillo had already taken off from Malita about twelve minutes earlier. Morales admitted that he and Vergeire started radio contact with the Davao International Airport tower only when they were over Cotabato. Furthermore, the Aircraft Flight Logbook Report (No 6301) of RP-C410 reports its "microphone weak" and "radio altimeter out". Still, both pilots claimed they knew where the other one was during this time.

What seems significant to the Commission is the admission made by Morales that RP-C585 could have flown from Kota Kinabalu and landed at Malita before proceeding to the Davao International Airport¹¹² without the government authorities finding out. Malita is on the direct line of a flight from Kota Kinabalu to Davao City. Morales insisted that they did not land at Malita. However, it took them two hours and 45 minutes to fly from Kota Kinabalu to Davao City and only two hours and ten minutes to negotiate the nearly equal distance from Davao City to Manila.¹¹³ Varying flight conditions could possibly account for the difference of 35 minutes, although such time could also be used to land and unload a passenger in Malita.

B.3. Government Activities

In the meantime, bits and pieces of information related to a coup attempt were either gathered by or filtered into the various intelligence services of the Armed Forces.

B.3.a. National Capital Region

In Manila, on 3 November, BGen Rodolfo Biazon, CG, National Capital Region Defense Command (NCRDC), detected that a coup attempt was shaping up and that there would be an alliance between the RAM-HF and the Loyalists.¹¹⁴

B.3.b. Camp Aguinaldo

On 21 October, in Camp Aguinaldo, elements of the security force of Vice President Laurel under Maj Gamos and Lt Calimag were reportedly preparing plans, vehicles, codenames and numbers, and sketches of streets and buildings, all presumably in preparation for the coup.¹¹⁵

At Camp Aguinaldo, on 28 November, an unconfirmed report was received from the Intelligence Office of the Philippine Marines regarding the plan of some officers to launch a coup within the week. FSRR elements were pinpointed as participants. The wife of Lt Rodolfo Cachola was identified as the source of the report. Mrs Cachola revealed that her husband and another officer undergoing Scout Ranger training in San Quintin, Pangasinan were called to FSRR HQ in Fort Bonifacio and were briefed on the forthcoming coup. Lt Cachola relayed this information to his wife with instructions to report it to the Philippine Marines.¹¹⁶

B.3.c. Fort Bonifacio

In Fort Bonifacio, also in October 1989, Col Raul Urgello recommended to MGen Manuel Cacanando, CG PA, the relief of Capt Lim and Lt Julius Flores from their positions as FSRR's Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations (G3) and Intelligence Officer, respectively, based on Urgello's observation that said officers had united the Scout Rangers against BGen Rene Cardones, CG FSRR.¹¹⁷

On 2 November, on suspicion that the Scout Rangers and the Marines would participate in a coup attempt, an artillery battery consisting of five pieces of 105 mm Howitzers were pulled out of the Rangers leaving the FSRR with three defective ones.¹¹⁸

Before 30 November, BGen Cardones received reports that certain FSRR officers were holding meetings which he believed were for the purpose of motivating people to participate in a coup. Moreover, before 1 December, he received reports of visits made by BGen Blando to FSRR HQ which were not cleared with him, contrary to military protocol. Cardones also observed that Blando continued to have contacts with Purugganan, Lim, Galvez and Sanchez, all FSRR officers.¹¹⁹

B.3.d. Villamor Air Base

In June 1989, Ebuena was reported to be visiting PAF bases recruiting officers and men for the coup.¹²⁰

On 3 October, the PAF Intelligence Office received reports about a RAM-HF plan to undertake a coup attempt during the visit of President Aquino to the United States in November 1989.¹²¹ The following day the Air Intelligence and Security Group received information on the formation of a group calling itself the Young Officers Union (YOU) reportedly poised to stage a coup if the Aquino government did nothing about the Uzi-Galil-Car-Buko scandals.¹²²

On 27 November, PAF received information about YOU's plan to stage a coup, making their first move in Sangley.¹²³

B.3.e. Cavite

In October 1989, a group of military personnel was reported to be recruiting at Sangley Point for another coup attempt, allegedly offering P10,000 to P20,000 to each recruit.¹²⁴

B.3.f. Central Luzon

In November, elements of the Angeles Metropolitan District Command (METRODISCOM), Pampanga PC/INP Command, Olongapo METRODISCOM, Zambales PC/INP Command and SUBCOM were purportedly recruited for a coup attempt.¹²⁵

B.3.g. Laguna

In August, Capt Rafael Cardeno, reportedly of the PC Criminal Investigation Service (CIS), visited his PMA classmate, Capt Melito Mabilin, police station commander of San Pedro, Laguna, at the latter's office, and gave Capt Mabilin 10 to 15 photocopies of information sheets on the YOU, which was said to be composed of officers from the ranks of captains to majors only. According to Mabilin, his wife burned the papers.¹²⁶

B.3.h. Pampanga

In Angeles City, before the opening of classes in June 1989, Capt Felizardo Serapio, Jr, CO 174th PC Company, was visited by his compadre and PMA classmate (Class 77), Capt Roque Maranon. At that time, Maranon was under detention for his alleged involvement in the 8legeof Camp Olivas during the 28 August 1987 failed coup. Maranon was allegedly out on pass from detention to attend a court hearing. Although Serapio disclaimed that Maranon tried to recruit him, he did not discount the possibility that Maranon's mention of his "assets" in Angeles City was the latter's indirect way of recruiting him. Serapio also said that, by that time, he had received information regarding recruitment efforts in his area by rightist elements in the Constabulary.¹²⁷

B.3.i. Cebu

During the PC Day Anniversary celebration in Cebu City in August 1989, Fusilero spread the news that a coup would take place.¹²⁸

At Punta Engano, Lapu-Lapu City, in September, an enlisted man under the Negros Island Command (NICOM) was approached by unidentified persons to join Fusilero in the planned coup. Members of the "Lost Command" of ex-Col Carlos Lademora were reportedly in Cebu meeting with some coup plotters.¹²⁹

Maj Alphonsus Crucero, NICOM Staff Officer for Intelligence, overheard FSRR officers complaining about the military leadership and about reforming the whole system.¹³⁰

In October, BGen Palma held a meeting with major unit commanders in Camp Lapu-Lapu, Cebu City, to discuss rumors of a coup and to emphasize the importance of following the chain of command. A separate meeting was held with BGen Comendador, who, when asked what his stand was, allegedly answered that he would follow the chain of command.¹³¹

B.3 j. Negros Occidental

In the first week of September, Fusilero and other suspected RAM-HF leaders were reportedly in Negros Occidental courting the support of officers and enlisted men.¹³²

At Negros Occidental, in the second week of September, Lt Col Anthony Lim of the 5th Scout Ranger Battalion (5 SRB) and Lt Col Roy Kyamko, CO 7 IB reported to BGen Jarque, CG NICOM, that Bibit was soliciting their support for a coup attempt.¹³³ In Hinigaran, Negros Occidental, in the fourth week of October, ex-Lt Col Bibit arrived with a group at the wake of the late MSgt Tomas Angostura PC. He also inquired from Lopez, CO 332nd PC Company, about the peace and order situation and the morale and welfare of the men. When asked why he was in the area, Bibit said that he just wished to condole with Angostura's family and that he was going around visiting "friends".¹³⁴

At Bacolod City in August, Bibit was seen with an unidentified companion at the Alice Log Cabin; he was also seen by MSgt Zoilo Ramos at the Golden Field Complex.¹³⁵

In September, a conference was reportedly held on the island of Pulupandan near Guimaras attended by some prominent businessmen and military officers. A separate report was received on the frequent meetings between some hacienda owners and disgruntled PC officers concerning a coup attempt.¹³⁶

In Bacolod City, on 4 November, it was learned that a coup had been planned to be carried out during President Aquino's visit to the US. However, it was allegedly aborted because the RAM-HF could not secure full support from its contacts. Continuous rebel recruitment to the level of battalion commanders and officers of NICOM was being monitored.¹³⁷

B.3.k. Dumaguete City

At Dumaguete City in the third week of November, P/Capt Rogelio Bais, INP, Deputy Station Commander for Administration of the Dumaguete City police station, received a call that some armed men were at the South Sea Hotel & Restaurant. A team responded and reported that the armed men were military personnel led by Fusilero. No further action was taken by the police authorities.¹³⁸

B.3.l. Davao City

On 20 November, an alleged study group from the Special Intelligence Training School (SITS), ISAFP, under a certain Capt de Guzman of the PAF, arrived in Camp Catitipan, Davao City, supposedly to conduct a survey among officers and enlisted personnel, directed by the CSAPP. Questions asked related to the probability of a coup d'etat.¹³⁹

On 23 November, Capt Gerry Diamante appeared at the 8 IB HQ, Camp Catitipan, Davao City and talked to the Battalion Executive Officer (EX-O), Maj Roberto Bara, warning the latter of the movement which had started its "countdown" and that it would soon "explode".¹⁴⁰

The local government officials in Davao del Norte were alerted of rumors of coup d'etat which would take place at Davao City and the Central Bank branch therein would be the target of rebel soldiers.¹⁴¹ On 20 November 1989, the study group of SITS, ISAFP was tasked to survey the military camps in view of the information of a pending coup d'etat. Hence, full red alert status was enforced in all units by BGen Baccay, who also called an emergency conference. It was learned that some junior officers had been conducting clandestine meetings in Davao City for the past few days with 2Lt Cesar Mancao as one of the active participants in the meeting.¹⁴²

B.3.m. Agusan del Sur

On 22 November, Capt Diamante appeared at 401 Bde HQ, Agusan del Sur, to inform the Brigade Commander, Col Cristobal Gurra, and staff officers about the "Movement to Free Mindanao," which he said would be launched within the month. Initiated by young military officers, the movement plans to sever Mindanao from Luzon and establish a revolutionary government. Diamante stated that the revolutionary government would be organized in coordination with other secessionist groups.¹⁴³

Other pre-coup activities which form an integral part of certain events are left out of this section and are included instead in the respective battle zone narratives.

[Figure V-2. REBEL TROOP MOVEMENTS IN METRO MANILA. December 1989 Coup Attempt]

[Figure V-3. REBEL TROOP MOVEMENTS IN LUZON. December 1989 Coup Attempt]

[Figure V-4. REBEL TROOP MOVEMENTS IN VISAYAS and MINDANAO. December 1989 Coup Attempt]

[Figure V-5. SANGLEY AIR & NAVAL BASE BATTLE MAP]

[Figure V-6. CAMP AGUINALDO BATTLE MAP]

[Figure V-7. VILLAMOR AIRBASE BATTLE MAP]

[Figure V-8. FORT BONIFACIO BATTLE MAP]

NARRATIVES OF BATTLE ZONES

C. Fort Bonifacio and Villamor Air Base

The takeover of Fort Bonifacio was critical because of the tactical importance of the camp. Fort Bonifacio has the biggest ammunition depot in the Philippines where the Light Armor Brigade (LABde) with their armored vehicles, plus armories of high-powered weapons and combat equipment are found. Howitzers based in Fort Bonifacio can lay its deadly ammunition all the way to Malacanang and Camp Aguinaldo. Another reason was that the headquarters of the elite fighting units of the AFP, the First Scout Ranger Regiment (FSRR) of the Army and the Philippine Marines (PMAR) of the Navy, are based inside the camp.

Signals of a Coup

After hearing several reports of an impending coup, a group of Philippine Army Intelligence Officers of the 15th Intelligence and Security Unit (ISU) held a meeting in the morning of 29 November at their headquarters.¹⁴⁴ However, the conferees merely confirmed receipt of such information and dismissed the same as rumors.

Unfortunately, the unconfirmed reports proved to be true. On the evening of 29 November, Scout Rangers of the 14 SR Coy, FSRR, under Capt Jaime Junio based in Tagaytay, attacked the PAF Repeater Station in Tagaytay City. This was to signal the start of the attempted coup.¹⁴⁵ By 10:00 p.m. of 29 November, reports were received that elements from this company had destroyed the antennae of the PAF Repeater Station.¹⁴⁶ However, they failed to cut the cable of the communications equipment. This enabled the radio operator in Tagaytay to contact the duty operator at VAB and was able to report the incident to Col Dominador Salac, PAF Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence (A2), at about 10:15 that evening.¹⁴⁷

This message was relayed to Col Rene Dado, PA Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations, (G3), who was at the Army Operations Center (AOC). The AOC is near the Communications Center (COMCENTER) which houses the communications facilities of the Army. As Operations Officer of the Philippine Army, Dado issued a directive to the Post Commander of Fort Bonifacio to strengthen the security of all vital installations. He also directed the CO of Task Force Bonifacio to send elements of his unit to beef up security at the AOC.¹⁴⁸

There were indications that the attack in Tagaytay was premature. In subsequent interrogation of the arrested rebels by men under BGen Rene Cardones, (CG FSRR), one of the men arrested remarked to the investigator: “*Napauna lang ‘yung tira namin doon kagabi*, [actually] *mamayang gabi pa yung pukpukan*.” (Last night’s attack was premature, the action is later tonight).¹⁴⁹ As pointed out by BGen Loven Abadia, WingCommander 205 HW, Junio “got his signals crossed” as the attack “got everybody curious”.¹⁵⁰

C.1. Movement of Scout Rangers in Fort Bonifacio

C.1.a. 30 November

Preparation of Scout Ranger Troops

At 2:00 a.m., Capt Jose Agdeppa, course director of the FSRR on training instructed his trainees to withdraw their rifles and ammunitions. He issued M-16 rifles and 60 rounds of ammos with magazines per soldier. It must be noted that at this time, aside from the FSRR HQ staff and trainees, there were no Ranger units assigned in Fort Bonifacio as all other units were deployed outside the camp. Most of the Rangers inside the camp were trainees at the Retraining Center under Agdeppa. The Rangers were supposed to graduate by 28 November but to allow them to stay longer in Fort Bonifacio, their graduation was deliberately delayed.¹⁵¹ Capt Lim coordinated the other Scout Rangers who belonged to the HQ Company.¹⁵²

It was reported that the sudden increase in the number of Scout Rangers inside the camp was due to the arrival of personnel coming from other SR units, like the 4 SRB under Lt Col Galvez stationed in Isabela, the 9 SR Coy under Capt Albert Yen at Fort Magsaysay, and the 14 SR wyunder Junio in Tagaytay City. These troops moved from their home base to Fort Bonifacio, and “infiltrated” or un-officially joined the other Scout Rangers based inside the camp a few days before 30 November 1989.¹⁵³

By early dawn of 30 November, intelligence officers were receiving mounting information which pointed to an impending coup. There were reports that Honasan and Bibit were present at Ilang-ilang St, North Cembo in Fort Bonifacio. Counter-intelligence operatives conducted surveillance in the area but found no sign of them.¹⁵⁴ Thirteen of the soldiers who raided the AFP communications station in Tagaytay were arrested by CAPCOM troops. The arrested soldiers belonged to the 14 SR Coy.¹⁵⁵ Three of these soldiers, Pfc Joseph Soriano, Sgt Eduardo Acevedo and Cpl Maguillen were investigated by personnel of BGen Cardones.

Meeting of PA Officers

At 8:00 a.m. of 30 November, seeing that the veracity of the reports about an impending coup was becoming clearer, Capt Jaime Yangzon, Assistant Chief, Operations Branch G3, PA called a conference of all junior battle staff officers to disseminate the information received about the coup. He then ordered the officers to take the necessary security measures in the event that the reported coup materialized.¹⁵⁶

At 10:00 a.m., Col Dado instructed the intelligence officer of the Headquarters and Headquarters Service Group (HHSg) to monitor activities of Scout Rangers within Fort Bonifacio.¹⁵⁷

Also by this time, Col Cesar llano, Commander of the PA Security and Intelligence Service Group (SISG), received a report from Capt Ralph Villanueva, Commander 3 ISU, that a coup was to be launched in the evening of the same day or early dawn of 1 December.¹⁵⁸ llano called a conference of officers of the SISG. He asked his EX-O, Lt Col Rodolfo Garcia, to preside over the conference, so that the former could call up his chief, Col Raul Urgello, PA Intelligence Officer (G2). Urgello, however, was tired and dizzy from lack of sleep due to the interrogation he conducted on Junio, and so he instructed llano to inform MGen Cacanando directly.

At 3:00 p.m., llano went to HPA but did not find Cacanando who was then in Baguio attending the launching of the “No Hazing Movement” and the Recognition Day rites at the PMA. llano instead met Dado and told the latter of the impending coup. At that time, Dado was preparing to leave for Bataan the following day (1 December) to assume the command of the 702 Bde. He told llano that if a coup occurs after his departure, Lt Col Jaime Ligot, the Deputy Operations Officer, can take over. llano rejoined the conference of the intelligence officers, who were still waiting for him, at about 5:30 p.m.¹⁵⁹

Cacanando left Baguio at around 3:00 p.m.¹⁶⁰ On his way to Manila, he first heard about the impending coup at 7:00 p.m. when President Aquino called him by phone and asked “What’s this startling report, General?”, referring to the reported attack by the Scout Rangers on the PAF communications facility in Tagaytay City. She also asked him to cancel his 4 December trip to the US.¹⁶¹

Cacanando immediately called his General Staff by phone and ordered that a conference be held at his quarters later that evening upon his arrival. He also ordered Col Abraham Paray to put all armor assets within Fort Bonifacio on alert status, to which the latter complied.¹⁶² At about 5:00 p.m., the junior battle staff of the AOC was activated to direct, monitor, and prepare contingency forces.¹⁶³

Meanwhile, the number of Scout Rangers in Fort Bonifacio had swelled to include elements of the 4 SRB from Isabela, which arrived in batches at Brgy Militar (Brgy Sto Niño) in Fort Bonifacio. They reputedly were the same elements who were monitored at about 1:15 p.m. by the Nueva Ecija Constabulary Command, passing through the area aboard three 6 x 6 trucks, one jeep and one pick-up.¹⁶⁵

In the early evening of 30 November, Col llano went to the G2 (PA) (Col Urgello’s) office to wait for MGen Cacanando. There, Maj Rodolfo Espiritu, Intelligence Chief Operations Officer, reported the entry of civilians

carrying bayongs on board jeepneys and going to the FSRR HQ. This information was submitted to the G2.¹⁶⁶ By 7:00 p.m., ISU Operations Officer Capt Percival Abu had obtained information about a plan to hold Cacanando hostage by the Special Intervention Platoon (SIP) under Lt Vicente Gregorio Tomas, who was reported to have sided with the rebels.¹⁶⁷ Ironically, the SIP was supposed to be the unit assigned to protect the CG PA in case of a coup. Likewise, Tomas was a most unlikely coup participant. He was with Col Dado in Camp Aguinaldo during the August 1987 coup attempt, when they both defended the government against Honasan. During that engagement Tomas was wounded.

At 6:30 p.m. Ilano prepared a written report of the intelligence information he gathered.¹⁶⁸ He sent copies thereof to Cacanando and to the other units. The copy for Cacanando was delivered by Capt Rodrigo Maclang and was received by Maj Yano at the quarters of Cacanando.¹⁶⁹

The Scout Ranger rebel troops were consolidated and made combat ready at about 8:00 p.m. of 30 November. In preparation for the planned attacks, Maj Purugganan and Capt Lim held a third meeting at the office of the G2 FSRR to finalize their plans. It will be recalled that their first two meetings were held in October and early November.

At this third meeting, the group already included Capt Ed Malabanjot and Leovino Valencia. They were informed that the "activity" would take place by 3:00 a.m. of 1 December 1989. Their task included the takeover of HPA, AOC, 808 Custodial Company, INP TRACOM, and Gates 1 and 2. Capt Jose Cruz, FSRR Logistics Officer, was assigned to provide supplies and equipment.¹⁷⁰

At 9:00 p.m. the rebel Rangers had started to move in different directions. Thirty minutes later, they took control of the Area Research Center. Further information revealed that Marcos Loyalist troops were ready to lend their support.¹⁷¹ Rebel soldiers aboard two 6 x 6 trucks passed through the vicinity of the HPA and moved towards the AOC.¹⁷²

At about 10:00 p.m., MGen Cacanando arrived at his quarters. He convened the Staff Conference which he had called for while en route from Baguio City. This was attended by the General Staff of the PA with selected Post Unit Commanders.¹⁷³ Cacanando and the Staff discussed the reports about the attack on Tagaytay and on the reported coup. The former ordered the security at Gates 1, 2 and 3, including the detention centers, strengthened. He gave further instructions to his officers to meet him in a conference at the AOC with the entire Battle Staff. They then proceeded to the AOC at about 12:00 midnight.¹⁷⁴

The Takeover of the Headquarters Philippine Army

Lt Col Ligot was at his office inside the HPA when rebel soldiers on board the two 6 x 6 trucks passed by the vicinity of the HPA reception area. He called the AOC, to which Dado had proceeded upon Cacanando's instructions, to verify if the troop movement was authorized. He learned from Capt Edgardo Gurra that the soldiers were not friendly troops. BGen Lisandro Abadia called from Camp Aguinaldo and, upon being briefed about the development, instructed Ligot to lock the HPA doors and not to let the troopers enter. Ligot complied.

Lt Col Julius Javier, the PA EX-O, who was at the AOC, tried to call HPA but to no avail as he found the phone lines dead. Ligot then ordered the accounting of personnel who were also told to stay dispersed inside the Army Operations (G3) office. Capt Glorioso Miranda who was among the armed troopers outside, went to the HPA to talk to Ligot, who was the highest ranking officer present at that time. Miranda gave the assurance that there was no intention to harm anyone and requested that the door of the building be opened. Upon hearing this, Ligot acceded but only Miranda was allowed to enter the building. The latter also requested that the offices of MGen Cacanando and BGen Ramberto Saavedra, Chief of Staff PA, be opened.

By 10:00 p.m., the rest of Miranda's troops had assumed control of the HPA.¹⁷⁵ Government personnel did not resist because they were outnumbered. The rebels pointed their guns and rifles at Government personnel and demanded their surrender. The latter were disarmed and told to follow whatever instructions the captors would give.¹⁷⁶ The raiders were led by Capt Pablo Casalme and Miranda and 2Lt Arnulfo Pajarillo.¹⁷⁷

Then at 10:30 p.m. power lines in Fort Bonifacio were cut, resulting in a total blackout.¹⁷⁸ Rebel troops took over Gate 1 of Fort Bonifacio at Pateros. These troops were students of the Mortar Gunnery Course of the FSRR. They took their firearms, M-60 machine guns with 300 bullets each, from the Regimental Troop School. Supply room personnel did not want to allow the withdrawal of the firearms, but were prevailed upon to do so by Capt Fidel Legiralde, Jr.¹⁷⁹ There were reports that Capts Cruz, Agdeppa, Lim, and Jose Barao and Lt Cesario Almendras supervised and distributed firearms, ammunition, and equipment to rebel Rangers.¹⁸⁰

The intelligence information gathered by Capt Abu about Lt Tomas of the SIP siding with the rebels came as a surprise. Upon learning this from Abu by phone, Lt Danilo Estropia of Cacanando's Security Services team confronted Tomas about the report. Tomas confirmed it saying "*Go na sila*(referring to the SIP)".¹⁸¹

The situation became serious as the very platoon tasked to guard the AOC had joined the rebels. Worse, the AOC was the venue of MGen Cacanando's conference with the PA staff officers scheduled at about midnight of 30 November.¹⁸²

Lt Estropia then went to the ISG Office and broke the news to Col Ilano. At about 11:00 p.m. of 30 November, Estropia and Ilano went to fire AOC and tried to warn Cacanando, who was not yet there when the two arrived. Ilano then relayed the information to BGen Saavedra who in turn asked Capt Morales what troops were below the AOC Office. The latter said they were the SIP. Overhearing this, Col Dado interrupted and said "*atin yan*" (They are ours). Ilano warned the personnel at the AOC not to let them come up because they would capture Cacanando. Thereafter, Ilano left the AOC and went back to his office.¹⁸³ It remains unconfirmed, however, whether Saavedra received Ilano's report.

As recounted by Col Paray, Lt Tomas was manning a checkpoint near the Bachelor Officers Quarters (BOQ) in Fort Bonifacio at about 11:40 p.m. of 30 November. Paray was allowed to pass through and proceeded to inspect the 4th Light Armor Company Separate (4 LACS) to check on the readiness of armored vehicles and crew in case of any eventuality.¹⁸⁴ Then, he went on to the AOC for the staff meeting called by Cacanando. Paray reached the AOC at 12:35 a.m. 1 December and saw Cacanando, Saavedra, Col Dionedo Villanueva, PA Personnel Officer (G1), Col Dado, Col Reynaldo Gopilan, PA Logistics Officer (G4), Majs Benjamin Magday and Cesar Javier, Capts Gurrea, Yangzon, Jesus Abante, and some other AOC junior officers.¹⁸⁵

C.1.b. 1 December

Escape of MGen Cacanando from the AOC

Before midnight of 30 November, rebels had already taken over the HPA, located some 100 meters from the AOC. Col Gopilan at the AOC received a report from Capt Carlos Holganza of the PAPlans Office(G5) about the presence of rebel Rangers around the HPA.¹⁸⁶ At this time, Lt Estropia asked MGen Cacanando's Aide-de-camp, Lt Ronaldo Manahan, "*Alam na ba ni CG na si Tomas angpapasok dito?*" (Does the CG know that Tomas will take over here?). Surprised, Lt Manahan relayed this to Maj Carlos Calanog.¹⁸⁷ Immediately, Calanog led Cacanando out of the AOC, boarding a wagon together with two aides, Lts Manahan and Sayson.¹⁸⁸

At the same time, Rangers entering the AOC compound stopped the outgoing wagon at the gate. They pointed their guns towards its occupants and shouted "Halt! Halt!" Pretending to be with the RangerB, Estropia shouted back "*Clear na yan. Si Maj Calanog yan.*" (That vehicle has clearance. Maj Calanog is inside). The wagon was allowed to pass leaving Estropia behind. He later noticed that Lt Yogyog was leading the team of Rangers manning the gate.¹⁸⁹ Cacanando and his group then proceeded to the HHSG about one kilometer to the left of AOC. Phone lines at the AOC were suddenly cut.¹⁹⁰

FSRR elements aboard two trucks arrived at the AOC at about 12:40 a.m. of 1 December. No resistance was put up by the SIP under Tomas. By 1:00 a.m., all SIP elements wore the rebel forces' countersign. The guards previously manning the gates were herded to one side and instructed not to make any false moves.¹⁹¹

Because MGen Cacanando was incommunicado, Gen de Villa appointed BGen Galido as acting CG PA.

The officers at Cacanando's conference were held hostage by rebel Rangers. Among the rebels were Col Sanchez, Lt Col Galvez, Majs Valencia and Purugganan, Cpts Yen, DominadorPagulayan, Fernando Abuan, Ernesto Cutiyog, and Essel Soriano and Lts Galvez, Tomas, Alvin Tiamwatt and Agane Adriatico.¹⁹² The rebel Rangers also took control of the nearby JUSMAG compound.¹⁹³ Capt Yen, together with some FSRR radio operators, sent out communications in the name of MGen Cacanando.¹⁹⁴

Apparently the transmitted misinformation was used to move troops stationed in the north.¹⁹⁵ One of the messages was addressed to BGen Marcelo Blando, CG 7 ID.¹⁹⁶ The rebel Rangers also broadcasted radio messages in the name of MGen Cacanando, stating that the whole PA was fully supporting the rebel forces in their alleged effort to reform the political structure, and urging all Army units to contribute to the attainment of this objective. BGen Orlando Antonio, CG NOLCOM, received the radio message at about 8:00 a.m. of 1 December while he was aboard a Huey helicopter bound for Tarlac. However, he disregarded this message since no radio telephone contact with the HPA could be established for verification. It was instead referred to BGen Lisandro Abadia.¹⁹⁷

Col Ilano said he sent Capt Abu and Capt Maclang to go around and try to obtain information about the Ranger's activities. Maclang and Abu wore rebel countersigns allegedly to be able to move freely. After the attempted coup, the two were relieved by MGen Cacanando. He also relieved Col Ilano of his command for the failure of his intelligence operations.¹⁹⁸ Ilano denied the imputation, claiming they were in fact able to establish the occurrence of the coup several hours before it began.¹⁹⁹

Takeover of Vital Installations

The Scout Rangers led by Capt Legiralde moved swiftly. Aside from securing the HPA, AOC, the JUSMAG compound, Gates 1 and 2, they also attacked the 808th Custodial Company at the Army Detention Center. A firefought ensued at the area, including the vicinity near Gate 1.²⁰⁰ The Scout Rangers prevailed. They disarmed the personnel at the 808th Custodial Company and released the 1987 coup detainees from the detention center.²⁰¹

The Scout Rangers also rushed to COMCENTER. They disarmed the personnel there, including Capt Feliciano Fernandez, Communications Officer, PA Signal Group, who was in charge of the COMCENTER. An unidentified Ranger announced a coup d'etat, the capture of AOC, G3 HQ, and the PALAR and instructed that communications and power lines be destroyed. However, Capt Fernandez was able to negotiate and the Rangers agreed not to blow up the communications system; instead, they disconnected the telephone lines at the main distribution frame.²⁰²

By 2:00 a.m., the rebel Rangers had already taken control of HPA, AOC, COMCENTER, JUSMAG compound, the 808th Custodial Company, Gates 1, 2, 3, including the INP/NCRDC Field Force,²⁰³ and the National Mapping and Resource Inventory Authority (NAMRIA) where they took the firearms of the security guards and nine vehicles which they used subsequently in transporting officers and hauling supplies and equipment.²⁰⁴

A group of about 20 Scout Rangers searched the quarters of key military officers including those of MGen Cacanando and BGen Cardones.²⁰⁵ One company of Rangers led by 2Lts Raymundo Acorda and Angel Adrian Sievert arrived at Cacanando's quarters and disarmed the guards assigned at the gate. The Rangers then made the guards drop to prone positions. Lt Estropia, who proceeded to Cacanando's quarters after leaving the AOC, talked to the Ranger officers and noting that Cacanando was not there, ordered them not to search his quarters. The Rangers obeyed and proceeded to man the JUSMAG.²⁰⁶

BGen Cardones was also not in his quarters when the Rangers arrived, since he was attending the Command Conference held by Gen de Villa at Camp Aguinaldo. When he returned to his office at the FSRR HQ in Fort Bonifacio, and upon hearing that Scout Rangers had taken over major points in Fort Bonifacio, he took temporary refuge in the quarters of Lt Col Javier. Cardones hid by the creek, staying there the whole night and then escaped by going over the wall towards Dasmarinas Village.²⁰⁷

Build-up of Rebel Ranger Logistics

After taking control of various vital facilities and locations in Fort Bonifacio, the Scout Rangers sought to acquire additional arms. The troops of both “B” Company and “C Company, 1 SRB, FSRR were instructed to withdraw their M-16 rifles with magazines and 140 rounds of ammunition.²⁰⁸ The rest of the 14 SR Coy based in Tagaytay City arrived in Fort Bonifacio by 4:30 a.m. of 1 December and stayed in the Liaison Office of the FSRR HQ.²⁰⁹

Later, they were called to formation and boarded a 6 x 6 truck with Lt Galvez and were brought to man Gate 2.²¹⁰ At 6:30 a.m. Lt Col Salvador Limsiaco, Chief of Staff of LABde, Lt Col Paypon of PAFC, Maj Nescarito Ramos of SSBde and Maj Pablo Bayot of GI, LABde were stopped by FSRR elements at Gate 2 on their way to their offices. They were made to board a white Land Cruiser of NAMRIA and they were brought under escort to the FSRR Officers Lounge where they were detained for 11 hours.

Limsiaco later reported the presence at the lounge of officers who were not organic to the FSRR and were wearing rebel countersign patches, namely, Lt Col Franklin Brawner, Lt Col Ldgot, Col Leopoldo Aliac, Capt Soriano and Capt Cutiyog. Ldgot, however, said that he had to wear the patch because otherwise he could not have left the AOC.²¹¹ He requested Col Sanchez and Capt Lim to allow him to go to his office, promising to return. He was then allowed to leave.²¹²

Presence of BGen (Ret) Felix Brawner

Limsiaco saw BGen (Ret) Felix Brawner, Jr and MGen (Ret) Jaime Echevarria, both in civilian attire, moving about freely in the area near the Officers Lounge. Limsiaco requested BGen Brawner to contact his (Limsiaco's) wife to assure her of his safety.²¹³

By morning, Capt Lim and other Scout Ranger officers had gone to the AOC.²¹⁴ Col Dado and the rest of MGen Cacanando's staff were still being held there as hostages. Some of the rebels at the AOC, particularly LtCol Galvez and Lts Adriatico and Tomas, tried to recruit him to join the rebel cause. He refused.²¹⁵ In his testimony, Col Dado confirmed the presence of BGen Brawner in the area. Col Paray, one of the officers hostages at the AOC, stated that at about 10:00 a.m., BGen Brawner visited the AOC and spoke to him about the “importance of the armor” saying “if the rebels had them, this would hasten what they (the rebel Rangers) were doing.” When Col Paray did not agree, BGen Brawner left and walked towards the HPA and there conversed with Col Sanchez and Maj Valencia.²¹⁶ By this time, the rebels had intensified their defense Position at the AOC by placing a V-150 and establishing lookouts and flm emplacements at every corner of the AOC complex.²¹⁷

Recruiting the Light Armor Brigade Commander

Knowing the importance of the assets under the control of Col Paray, Lt Col Galvez, Valencia, Lim and other FSRR officers exerted efforts to convince him to release the 4 LACS and place it under the FSRR. Paray refused. Lim told him that some of his men had sent feelers wanting to join the rebels. While Paray was confident none of his men would join the rebels, he agreed to go to the 4 LACS area to ask for the stand of his men.

At 3:00 p.m., they proceeded to the 4 LACS compound and the personnel there immediately took defensive positions so that the Rangers could not approach them. Only Paray was allowed to step forward. He spoke to Capt Amado Contreras, Company Commander, who reaffirmed the company's position to follow orders only from Paray. Paray then went back to the Ranger officers and told them his unit would not join.²¹⁸

Before the coup, as a precautionary measure, Paray instructed his men that if a coup occurs, the 4 LACS should obey only orders given by him personally.

Lim persisted in trying to convince Paray, who continued to refuse. In their heated argument, the former dropped the name of BGen Blando who he said was expected to arrive at the AOC by helicopter.²¹⁹ There were also reports that a helicopter was sent in the morning to Fort Magsaysay to fetch Blando. The latter, however, did not arrive at AOC. Maj Purugganan was heard to ask “*Bakit wala pa si Tatang One?*” (Why is Tatang One not yet here). Among the Rangers, “Tatang One” was the code name for Blando.²²⁰

Seeking Artillery Equipment

Aside from the armor, the rebel Rangers also sought artillery equipment. At 9:00 a.m., Capt Constante Pante, Operations Officer of the Honor Guard Battalion (HGB) HHSG, PA, with a RAM-HF countersign placed on his left arm, went to the firebase (the place where the 105 mm Howitzer guns were located), gave Capt Eugenio de los Santos, head of the Battery Command, six pieces of countersigns, and tried to convince the latter and his personnel to wear them. De los Santos refused.

At 3:00 p.m., de los Santos saw Pante, Galvez, Lim, Soriano, Cutiyog and Paray at the 4 LACS area, which is beside the Battery Command. All except Col Paray were wearing countersigns, and Capt Pante said to the others “*atin yan*” referring to Capt de los Santos. At 11:30 p.m., Pante returned to the firebase and approached de los Santos with a map and instructed him to compute the “data” of Camp Aguinaldo and Malacañang. As used in the military, “data” mean the calculations needed to aim the 105 mm Howitzers, which have a firing range of about 11 kilometers. Both Camp Aguinaldo and Malacañang are well within the range. Pante also instructed de los Santos to “lay the guns,” but de los Santos stalled, saying it was too late in the night. Pante, who claimed to be the new HGB Commander, allegedly threatened de los Santos that if he would not join the rebels he would be liquidated.²²¹

Regrouping of Rebel Rangers

Failing to persuade the COs of the 4 LACS and the Artillery unit of HGB, the Rangers had to make do with only five armored vehicles which they took from the Maintenance Depot, and two platoons of the HGB.²²² By this time, PAF jets had destroyed the rebel air assets in Sangley Point and BGen Blando had failed to arrive at Fort Bonifacio. The Scout Ranger officers sought to regroup. They left the AOC by early afternoon of 1 December.²²³ Some of the hostaged government officers were released by that time.²²⁴ At about 2:30 p.m., Capt Lim and Lt Col Galvez arrived at the COMCENTER and instructed its personnel to restore one hot line at the AOC to the FSRR headquarters and one local line at the AOC.²²⁵

At the FSRR Officers Lounge, Col Sanchez released Lt Col Limsiaco and Maj Bayot, but instructed for them not to leave the camp compound. The two reported to the LABde.²²⁶

By late afternoon, Sgt Logan of the monitoring team had reported that some Scout Rangers and AWOL soldiers numbering about 300 had been observed changing their white countersigns to red countersigns.²²⁷ The monitoring team under SSgt Oscar Obenia, HQ Intelligence Company, reported to the NCRDC Command Operations Center the sighting of 100 Scout Rangers in full combat gear aboard two V-150s and two 6 x 6 trucks moving from Fort Bonifacio towards Ayala Avenue and EDSA.²²⁸

C.1.c. 2 December

Early in the morning, Lt Tomas and his security, wearing the RAM-HF countersign, arrived at the firebase and asked de los Santos to tow one 105 mm Howitzer to the AOC building. The latter refused and said that unless Col Dado or Maj Magday instructed him to do so, he would not comply.²²⁹

Shortly thereafter, Capt Pante arrived again and asked de los Santos to bring out the 105 mm Howitzers to defend Fort Bonifacio in case of an attack by government troops from SOLCOM.²³⁰ De los Santos again refused.

Government Troop Movements

Between 8:00 to 10:00 a.m., the 4 LACS personnel maneuvered and redeployed all their armor vehicles away from the area near the firebase. They then consolidated at the LABde HQ to rescue the remaining hostages at the AOC.²³¹ At the same time, the personnel at the HHSG, which is just across the AOC, began to take defensive positions.²³²

FSRR elements, noting the movement of the armor vehicles, alerted Maj Valencia; he then asked Col Paray to explain the 4 LACS movement. The latter took this opportunity to request that he be allowed to leave AOC to meet the men. His request was granted and he went to the Brigade HQ to talk to his officers and men. He reminded them to remain loyal to the duly constituted government. He also wrote a note to BGen Lisandro Abadia regarding the situation which was delivered by courier.²³³

The maneuver of the 4 LACS which resulted in all the armor moving out of the firebase left the Howitzers of de los Santos without protection. To avoid having the artillery fall into rebel hands, de los Santos instructed his men to remove the firing pins of the 105 mm Howitzers, bury them in the nearby field, and to leave their post.²³⁴

Feelers for Negotiation

By 9:00 a.m., the Scout Rangers at the AOC had received reports that General Headquarters was planning to stage an offensive operation against them, employing two brigades under the NCRDC.²³⁵ This news led Capt Agdeppa to instruct his troops of "C" Company, 1SRB, FSRR, to establish a defensive perimeter against government troopers.²³⁶ By mid-morning, some Scout Rangers started abandoning their positions in Fort Bonifacio. At about 11:00 a.m., feelers for a dialogue were received by Cacanando shortly after Maj Valencia and Capt Lam arrived at the AOC for this purpose. Col Dado held a short dialogue with the two. One of their requests was for the CG PA or G2 to call former CG PA MGen (Ret) Rodolfo Canieso of NICA and discuss some demands of the Rangers.²³⁷

In the meantime, Cpts Yangzon and Gurrea slipped out of AOC through the back exit and established contact with the PA Battle Staff at HHSG.²³⁸ They briefed Cacanando on the situation at the AOC.²³⁹ Gurrea and Yangzon returned to the AOC, informed Dado about then-contact with Cacanando, and presented their escape plan in case the negotiations failed. Dado then went to see Cacanando.²⁴⁰ The latter sent Col Urgello, who was designated as his official emissary, and Dado to talk with the rebel leaders of the Scout Rangers²⁴¹ to settle the matter peacefully. Col Sanchez, Lt Cols Galvez and Ochosa, Maj Valencia, Cpts Lim, Yen, Pagulayan, Abuan, Cutiyog, Soriano and Tiamwatt, and Lts Tomas, Galvez and Adriatico met with Cols Urgello and Dado, Maj Magday, and Cpts Gurrea and Yangzon at the G2 section of the HHSG building.²⁴² Urgello revealed that Tomas was disgusted because he thought they were just being used in a power play.²⁴³

Capt Lim served as spokesman for the rebels. As a result of the negotiations, it was initially agreed that there would be no fighting inside Fort Bonifacio and that the rebels would recognize the authority of MGen Cacanando. They also agreed to assemble at HPA Grandstand for accounting of personnel and inventory of equipment.²⁴⁴ Lim, however, indicated that the matter must be cleared with Maj Purugganan, giving rise to the impression that Purugganan was the leader of the rebel Scout Rangers in Fort Bonifacio.²⁴⁵

At 1:00 p.m., as the rebel Rangers abandoned AOC, government troopers led by the Headquarters Intelligence Security Group (HISG) immediately secured the building.²⁴⁶ The Rangers also left the COMCENTER with instructions not to restore the communications system without their clearance.²⁴⁷ At around 2:00 p.m., they started pulling out from the areas they occupied, as earlier agreed upon. However, instead of assembling at the HPA Grandstand, they consolidated at the Golf Club area near Gate 2 fronting McKinley Road at Forbes Park.²⁴⁸ About 350 rebel Rangers, excluding those who may have left earlier, under Maj Purugganan, Lt Col Galvez, and Capt Lim, instead of returning to barracks went to the Makati Commercial Center. Some 66 Rangers under Col Sanchez, Lt Col Ochosa and Maj Valencia returned to barracks.²⁴⁹

Retaking of Fort Bonifacio by Government Forces

HPA personnel immediately took control of all vital installations in Fort Bonifacio²⁵⁰ as soon as the rebel forces vacated the occupied areas in the camp.

MGen Cacanando then directed the reorganization and consolidation of his forces to man designated areas including vital installations such as the AOC, HPA Building and COMCENTER. He directed HHSG to strengthen the security of Gates 1, 2, 3, the detention center, and the ammo dump. BGen Cabanlig's Marines manned Gate 3. The Command Contingency Task Force was reorganized under Col Paray. Inventory of equipment and physical

accounting of personnel were conducted by all Post unit commanders.²⁵¹ At the COMCENTER, Capt Fernandez ordered the restoration of normal operations and the inventory of all equipment, firearms and ammunition.

C.2. Movement of the Rangers to Makati

It is not exactly clear why the rebel soldiers, contrary to prior agreement reached with Dado and Urgello, marched from Fort Bonifacio and occupied Makati's commercial district. The government forces did not anticipate the rebel seizure of Makati's tall buildings. When everything was over and done with, they theorized that it was simply a delaying tactic to allow rebel reinforcements to arrive and to prevent additional government forces from assisting the defenders of Camp Aguinaldo.²⁵²

On the other hand, the Mayor of Makati, Jejomar Binay, called it a "last ditch" stand taken by the rebels who had been defeated at Fort Bonifacio.²⁵³

In an interview with rebel-at-large Maj Purugganan conducted by journalist Sheila Coronel of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism on 14 January 1990, Purugganan said that Makati Commercial Center figured in the planning prior to the December 1 activity as a defensive fallback position. Said Maj Purugganan: "Now, if you will take note, 'there are I think more than 40 embassies there and . . . 109 multinational centers in Makati. And that position, if you will be able to occupy that, and looking from other areas adjacent. . . the place is like a fortress. And controlling that area is practically controlling the whole of Makati.'"²⁵⁴

The Makati takeover was a very costly incident. Lives were lost; property was destroyed; the tourism industry suffered a very serious blow; and for several days the financial life of Metro Manila, and to a considerable extent of the entire country, was paralyzed.

C.2.a. 1 December

Although various reports indicated rebel presence in the Makati Commercial Center on 1 December, nothing foretold the events that were to occur the following day. At around noon, ex-Lt Col Honasan was sighted at the Coffee Shop of the Hotel Intercontinental Manila (Intercon).²⁵⁵ In the early evening, DZRH reported rebels pulling out of the PLDT Building, in Legazpi Village.

Commo Calajate dropped off Navy Capt Ison from his beige staff car, somewhere along Pasong Tamo Street sometime around 7:30 p.m. From there Ison proceeded to his sister's house in Quezon City where, sometime later, he was picked up by the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) personnel after surrendering to Commo Pio Garrido, Jr, PCG Commandant.²⁵⁶

C.2.b. 2 December

Things began to stir by midmorning. At about 10:00 a.m., reports were received by Mayor Binay that about 20 rebel soldiers, riding in four private vehicles, were converging at the area around the Intercon²⁵⁷ where a meeting of the Central Committee (CENCOM) of the Nacionalista Party (NP) was scheduled to be held at 1:30 p.m., to be followed by a press conference at about 3:00 p.m.²⁵⁸

Evidence received by the Commission disclosed that sometime between 9:30 and 10:00 a.m., Amy Castillo from the Office of Vice President Laurel called up Emelinda Santos, Banquet Coordinator of the Hotel Intercontinental (Intercon), and reserved the Dasmariñas Room for 30 to 35 persons.²⁵⁹ The charges for the room and the snacks served amounted to P3,715.00. It was paid for in cash and covered by an official receipt numbered 399281, dated 2 December 1989, made out to the Nacionalista Party.²⁶⁰

As early as 1:00 p.m. rebel soldiers were seen massing at the corner of Ayala Avenue and EDSA. About 30 Army troopers were scattered on the sidewalk beside the Hotel Intercontinental and in the car park behind. An armored personnel carrier was parked at the sidewalk along Ayala Avenue north of the Intercon.²⁶¹

The NP CENCOM Meeting started as scheduled at 1:30 p.m. Although the press conference was scheduled to follow only later at 3:00 p.m., media people came early so that the meeting of the CENCOM was also covered by the media.²⁶² The press conference ended by 4:00 p.m.

It is not clear at what time the rebels first entered the Intercon; whether it was before or during the Nacionalista Party press conference. Newsman Ramon Isberto declared that he saw no uniformed soldier inside or in front of the Intercon during the press conference; but Mayor Binay testified receiving reports saying that the hotel's elevators were manned by rebel soldiers. Gloria Diaz, who was at the coffee shop of the hotel testified that the rebel soldiers entered the hotel lobby, "after lunch, merienda time."²⁶³

The exact time for the entry of the rebels could have been easily pinpointed had two hotel officials, Chief of Security Pedro G. Rojo,²⁶⁴ and Resident Manager Jean Pierre Etroit,²⁶⁵ who were most of the time in the lobby of the hotel, during this period, been either more observant, or more cooperative as witnesses.

Etroit, liberally embellished his testimony with "I don't know" or "it is difficult to say" and other vague responses. To the question "can you tell us more or less in the evening what time they [rebel soldiers] went into the hotel?" he simply replied: "It was still light outside, so I believe 5:00, 6:00 or 5:30, something".²⁶⁶

Rojo, whose office was located at the ground floor of the hotel, claimed twice before the Commission (first on 1 March and then on 25 June 1990) that he learned of the Nacionalista Party press conference, which was held on 2 December, only on 6 December 1990 and from a television news report at that. He averred

As far as I can recall on December 2, 1989, regarding the presence of soldiers, all I can say was on or about 6:00 in the evening of December 2 that was the only time that a group of soldiers entered the hotel lobby and asked me where the way to the second floor was. But before that time all I can remember was there were really soldiers but not inside the lobby but outside the hotel.²⁶⁷

The firmness by which he clearly remembered 6:00 p.m., however, is a stark contrast to his recollection of his whereabouts between noontime and 6:00 p.m. He said

I cannot exactly say where I am between that time but I'm sure I'm in the hotel.²⁶⁸

In any case, it was established that at about 2:00 p.m., around 500 Scout Rangers had entered the Makati Commercial Center and began the occupation of the area.²⁶⁹ Part of the group headed by Capt Lim entered the Intercon around 3:00 p.m.²⁷⁰ Another group led by Galvez proceeded to the parking lot behind the hotel and then went to Twin Towers where they stayed most of the time.²⁷¹

In quick succession, and meeting very little resistance, the rebels set up their positions in 22 buildings and establishments in the Makati Commercial Center.²⁷²

By about 3:30 p.m., DZRH reported the presence of snipers in almost all of the tall buildings in the commercial center, notably the Twin Towers, the Hotel Nikko Garden (Nikko), the Intercon Hotel and the PCIB building.²⁷³

GHQ AFP could not immediately send its own reaction forces since Camp Aguinaldo was still under attack from the rebel forces at the White Plains area under Lt Col Gojo.²⁷⁴ Instead, MGen Montano assigned the task of confronting the rebels at Makati principally to the available units of the PC²⁷⁵ under BGen Aguirre, who was at Camp Bagong Diwa waiting for instruction to go to Camp Aguinaldo and assist in its defense.²⁷⁶ The government forces, composed of elements of PC Laguna under Lt Col Edgar Aglipay, PC Batangas under Lt Col Regalado, and the Regional Special Action Force of RECOM 4 (RSAF 4), and an assault force of MPFF under P/Lt Col Romeo Maganto supported by SWAT teams, left Camp Bagong Diwa at about 3:45 p.m. They arrived at Makati at about 4:00 p.m.²⁷⁷

The MPFF, composed of 92 enlisted men, in full battle gear encamped at Ugarte Field, established a blocking force at the intersection of EDSA and Pasay Road, and positioned troops along the left lane of EDSA (going to Quezon City) fronting San Lorenzo Village.²⁷⁸

Upon its arrival, the Laguna PC deployed its units. Elements of the RSAF 4 and the 229 PC Coy under Capt Rodolfo de Garcia established an advance command post near the intersection of Ayala Avenue and Herrera Street. The 223 PC Coy under Maj Ismael Rafanan and PHQ elements under Capt Ricardo Marquez conducted reconnaissance at the vicinity of the Mandarin Hotel and along Makati Avenue. The 224 PC Coy under Capt Felipe Buena occupied various buildings at the intersection of Ayala Avenue and Paseo de Roxas. The 226 PC Coy under Capt Leo Kison augmented the Batangas PC command at the corner of Pasong Tamo and Pasay Road while the 228 PC Coy under Capt Luisito Palmera occupied de la Rosa Street.²⁷⁹

To prevent loss of civilian lives and to minimize possible damage to property, the government forces decided to retake Makati from the rebels “block by block, building by building... sniper to sniper.”²⁸⁰ The general plan was to slowly constrict the area under rebel control until the rebels realize that, having been surrounded by a superior force, it was time to give up.²⁸¹

Although initially the government forces were not as heavily armed as the rebels, they nevertheless were able to chalk up some immediate successes.

At 5:40 p.m. DZRH reported that the Paseo de Roxas and the Makati Greenbelt areas were clear of rebels but the glass walls and doors of the Interbank Building were shattered.²⁸² At around 7:00 p.m., elements of the 15 RSAF 4 occupied the Pacific Star Building at the corner of Makati and Sen Gil Puyat Avenues as the rebels retreated towards the Mandarin Oriental Hotel (Mandarin).²⁸³ DZBB reported a stalemate at Ayala Avenue,²⁸⁴ while DZXL reported that there was sporadic firing going on at about 9:40 p.m. at the other end of Paseo de Roxas and at the corner of EDSA and Ayala Avenue.²⁸⁵ At 10:00 p.m. government troops attacked the rebels occupying the PCIB Building.²⁸⁶

The day ended with government forces suffering some casualties. At about 11:30 p.m., while some MPFF elements were with Patrolman Macalino and a certain G. Mojica, a civilian police aide, checking their road block near San Lorenzo Village, rebels riding a dirty-white Hi-Ace van came by and opened fire killing Macalino and Mojica and wounding Maganto. The latter, after instructing P/Capt Renato Valeria to take over the operations, was rushed together with other casualties to the Makati Medical Center. Reinforcements from the RSAF 4 arrived and positioned themselves at the overpass in front of Mantrade.²⁸⁷

C.2.c. 3 December

At 4:00 a.m. on orders of the Commander of the Task Force Makati, the MPFF pulled out of their roadblocks and returned to the Command Post to provide perimeter security. The troops were divided into three teams: one team under Capt Valeria was deployed in the vicinity of the Sean Philip Building; another, under P/Capt Vicente Vargas at the Makati Fire Central Station; and the third, under P/Lt Jose Rayco at the Makati Medical Center.²⁸⁸

At about 8:30 a.m., the elements from the 15 RSAF 4, under Capt Ronald Sabug and Capt Philmore Balmaceda, occupied and secured the DBP Building.

At 9:30 a.m., 15 RSAF, four elements encountered rebels at Ayala Avenue. One V-150 of the government was hit by rebel anti-tank weapons. Two enlisted men were killed and Capt Tagaca and five other members of his assault group were wounded.²⁸⁹ Shortly thereafter, P/Lt Nelson Yabut was also wounded as rebels fired their 90 mm recoilless rifles while he was boarding the V-150. Finally, at 10:45 a.m., a V-150 was neutralized by rebel soldiers while it was on a reconnaissance mission at the corner of EDSA and Ayala Avenue.

BGen Aguirre believed the rebels had “an oversupply of sophisticated communication ... not [of the kind] from the basic supplies of the military” which were able to jam the radios of the government troops.²⁹⁰

At 2:00 p.m., MGen Montano ordered the Task Force Makati to assault any target where the presence of Honasan is confirmed.²⁹¹

About 3:00 p.m., elements of the Eastern Sector Command under Col Jewel Can son, Rizal PC Commander, arrived at the Makati Advance Command Post to reinforce the government troops at the corner of Paseo de Roxas and Puyat Avenue.²⁹²

At about 4:00 p.m. 3 December, a BO-105 helicopter with tail number RP 183 belonging to the PC Aviation Group, piloted by Lt Col Alfredo Silapan with Capts Tito Ticman and Dante delos Trinos, and under the guidance of Lt Col Meynardo Carpio, CO PC RIU, took off from the CAPCOM helipad and proceeded to the Makati area. The helicopter maneuvered over Fort Bonifacio and delivered several rounds of 50 cal HMG fire at the rebels located at the multi-level parking lot behind the Intercon. On its second and third attempts, the helicopter gun malfunctioned forcing the aircraft to return to CAPCOM headquarters.²⁹³

At about 5:30 p.m., shortly after elements from the Rizal PC arrived at the Task Force Makati Advance Command Post, a convoy of three cars wandered into a no-man's land in the area of Makati Avenue by the DBP Building and was met with heavy rebel fire. One car had to be abandoned; two security personnel and BGen Aguirre were wounded.²⁹⁴

Close to midnight, the 1st Marine Brigade moved its tactical command post from the corner of EDSA and Boni Serrano Avenue to the area between Ayala Avenue and Pasay Road, to act as a blocking force.²⁹⁵

At an undetermined time, Pedro Samatela, a security supervisor of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company, and Jesus Nava, an assistant, were executed by the rebels who occupied the building. This was recorded in the firm's closed circuit television, unfortunately, the perpetrators could not be identified through the video tapes.²⁹⁶

C.2.d. 4 December

At 8:00 a.m., the government troops from the 15 RSAF 4 occupied the Mandarin.²⁹⁷ At 10:00 a.m., elements from the PC Batangas had an encounter with rebel soldiers at the vicinity of Gibson's at the Landmark Building.²⁹⁸

With the Mandarin in government hands, troopers of the 15 RSAF 4 exchanged fire with the rebels at the Grand Atrium, PCIB and UCPB Buildings.²⁹⁹ Meanwhile, at the Rustan Commercial Corporation's store at Ayala Avenue, rebels sought permission from Rustan's Security Chief, PC Col (Ret) Virgilio Poblete to plant snipers on top of Rustan's Building. Poblete was able to dissuade them from doing so. Instead, at the request of the rebels, he gave them two cases of sardines and a case of coffee.³⁰⁰

At 3:00 p.m., Gen de Villa, on account of feelers received from the rebels that they wanted to talk to BGen Arturo Enrile, PMA Superintendent, called the latter to Camp Aguinaldo to establish contact with the rebels. From Camp Aguinaldo at 11 p.m., BGen Enrile was able to establish telephone contact with Lt Col Galvez at the Tuscany. The latter informed the former that they, the rebels, intended to hold on until President Aquino resigned or until they died in the process. At 11:45 p.m., contact was also made with a certain Lt Dario at the Twin Towers. BGen Enrile impressed on him the futility of further resistance and asked that he be allowed to talk directly to the rebel group. Lt Dario said he would inform their leader.

During the night, the Mandarin hired a fleet of taxis and safely evacuated its guests.³⁰¹

At about midnight, PMAR troops under BGen Cesar Abella, after conducting patrols at the Forbes Park area, arrived at the Task Force Makati Command Post. They were deployed along Paseo de Roxas, Pasay Road, Ayala Avenue, EDSA vicinity Mantrade, and McKinley Road.³⁰²

C.2.e. 5 December

At 1:00 a.m., the 2nd Marine Battalion Landing Team (MBLT2) established a blocking position at McKinley Road together with the Command Group, 1st Marine Brigade (1 MBde) which had its tactical command post at the San Antonio Arcade.³⁰³ Heavy fighting occurred very early in the morning. The Marines at McKinley Road, at about 2:00 a.m., were fired upon by the rebels posted at the high-rise buildings in the commercial center. The firefight lasted for two hours.³⁰⁴ At about 4:30 a.m., rebel snipers at Nikko also engaged the MBLT 2 at the corner of Pasay Road and Palm Avenue.³⁰⁵ An encounter occurred at 5:00 a.m. between the rebels and the 2 Marine Coy MBLT 2 at the multi-level car park behind Intercon. Twelve government troopers were wounded.³⁰⁶

At 6 a.m., the 15 RSAF 4 troopers under Lt Leodegardio Regis and Lt Rogelio Moral attacked the Grand Atrium under covering fire provided by the team commanded by Capt Romeo Sabug.³⁰⁷

While all this fighting was going on, the Department of Tourism, between 4:00 to 6:00 a.m., established contact with the rebels through feelers from the rebels wanting to find out whether the Department was really acting in good faith in seeking the safe evacuation of tourists trapped in the hotels controlled by the rebels. At around 9:00 a.m., Tourism Undersecretary Rafael Alunan, with an announcer of DZAM acting as intermediary, received a call from Maj Purugganan who wanted to hear directly from Alunan about the government's intentions. After a brief discussion, the evacuation was agreed to in principle, and with the assurance from Maj Purugganan that they were ready to open the gates of Makati at 10:00 a.m., Alunan agreed to meet with the rebels in an hour at the Petron Station outside the Dasmariñas Village gate on Pasay Road. Because it took some time to mobilize buses, Alunan got to the meeting place only at about 11:00 a.m. By then he was told that the evacuation would not push through because the rebels complained of "intermittent firing". Alunan was advised to settle the matter with BGen Aguirre.

The intermittent firing complained about must have been the firefight at the Grand Atrium at about 6:00 a.m., when the 15 RSAF 4 troopers attacked, and at 10:00 a.m. when the rebel snipers fired again at the Marines on Pasay Road.³⁰⁸

At any rate, Undersecretary Alunan with Tourism Secretary Peter Garrucho, personally went to the Headquarters of BGen Aguirre and asked for the troops to cease firing. Aguirre gave them 30 minutes, extendable upon request, to iron out the details with the rebels. Aguirre agreed also to give two hours for the actual evacuation of the tourists.

At about the time that the Tourism officials were negotiating with the rebels, BGen Enrile, together with volunteer-negotiators, Lt Col Edilberto Adan, Capt Ricardo Morales, Lt Jose Manuel Faune, Lt Clemente Enrique and Capt Arturo Ang, all of the Philippine Army, proceeded to the FSRR Headquarters to gather information about the rebels. There they were informed by BGen (Ret) Emilio Luga that he was also able to establish telephone contact with Galvez, Purugganan and Iim at the Intercon. Enrile accordingly invited Luga to join the negotiating team.

Garrucho and Alunan returned to EDSA to meet with Purugganan only to find that they were at the Intercon being interviewed by the media. After thirty minutes of mingling with rebel soldiers at Nikko, Garrucho and Alunan were invited to meet with the rebels at the Intercon. After an hour and a half of discussions, the negotiations encountered a hitch as the rebels demanded that the government troops should move back one kilometer from all sides. Since that was a military issue, the talks were suspended and both parties agreed to meet again the following morning.

It must be pointed out that even while the negotiations were going on, sniping from both sides continued. Garrucho noted that he was at one point so close to the shooting that he personally saw a guy on a motorbike get hit during one of the exchanges.³⁰⁹

By about 3:30 p.m., a portion of the Insular Life Building caught fire after being hit by rebel mortar. Nevertheless, by this time, about seven buildings had already been retaken from the rebels.³¹⁰ There was one incident of intense firing at about 4:00 p.m., with the government suffering one casualty, Pfc Acosta.³¹¹ Heavy sniper fire harassed the Marines who did not fire back.³¹² At about 5:50 p.m., the combined forces of the government captured the Grand Atrium as the rebels retreated to the Manila Peninsula and the Makati Tuscany.³¹³

Two rebel soldiers, Pvt Clarito Bongo and Pvt Mario Anos, trying to escape in civilian clothes and under cover of darkness, were intercepted at 7:00 p.m. along Ayala Avenue.³¹⁴ An hour later, MPFF elements were dispatched on

orders of the Task Force Makati Commander to secure the BPI Building and others along Ayala Avenue. The MPFF troops were divided into three groups: one, under P/Lt Rayco which secured the Philbanking Building; another group under P/Capt Santos took the Banco Filipino Building and the third under P/Capt Vargas took the new Makati multi-level car park.³¹⁵

Ceasefire was announced at 8:00 p.m.

At 9:00 p.m., Lt Col Galvez called to ask for the evacuation of their two wounded soldiers to the Fort Bonifacio General Hospital. To prove the government's sincerity, the request was granted and the two wounded rebels were picked up by a Red Cross Ambulance at about 9:45 p.m. Upon being informed by BGen Enrile, Lt Col Galvez agreed to consider Enrile's proposal for them to return to barracks. He also promised to call back Enrile. At 11:45 p.m., an unidentified caller told Enrile that the rebel officers were ready to receive him at Nikko. In response, Enrile asked the caller to contact the Chief of Staff by phone and thereafter call him.

At 12:00 midnight, the 1st Marine Brigade established a blocking force at vantage points in EDSA at the corners of McKinley and Pasay Road.³¹⁶

C.2.f. 6 December

Fifteen minutes after midnight, BGen Enrile was again contacted by the unidentified caller, who claimed that de Villa had been contacted and that the rebels were waiting for him at Hotel Nikko. With the clearance from de Villa, the government negotiators left Fort Bonifacio at about 1:20 a.m. in two private cars owned by BGen Enrile and a certain Capt Pangilinan. They passed through the Dasmariñas gate and then to Nikko. Galvez, Purugganan, Lim and five other members of the rebel group were waiting for them at the hotel lobby. It was revealed at this time that the contacts made by the unidentified caller were arranged by Galvez.

At 2:15 a.m., BGen Enrile reported to de Villa that he and the negotiating team had established face-to-face contact with the rebels, who agreed to release all the hotel occupants and residents of the rebel-controlled buildings at daylight. De Villa ordered a total ceasefire³¹⁷ and prohibited troop movements.³¹⁸ At about 4:00 a.m., de Villa advised Garrucho to bring the evacuation buses to the Makati Commercial Center at about 6:30 a.m.

Negotiations specifically for the return to barracks started at 2:45 a.m. After two hours, the parties decided to recess and resume negotiations after the evacuation.

The guests in the occupied hotels and the residents of the condominium buildings under rebel control started leaving the area at about 7:00 a.m. Some 20 tourist buses under the supervision of Tourism Secretary Garrucho and Undersecretaries Narzalina Lim and Alunan were made available for evacuation. Alunan, who had the opportunity of meeting with Galvez and Purugganan during the evacuation, observed that Galvez looked demoralized, except when he was talking to media. He described Maj Purugganan as "gung-ho."³¹⁹ He further told the Commission that while the evacuation was going on, he heard from foreign journalists that Alona Alegre, known Marcos loyalist, was seen at the top of the Intercon wearing a red cross uniform together with some armed persons dressed as civilians.³²⁰

From Nikko, the government tourism officials proceeded to the Intercon, then to the Manila Peninsula Hotel, and the other buildings thereafter.³²¹ At about 11:00 a.m., the evacuation of about 878 guests and civilians was completed.³²² Most of them were brought to the Fiesta Shopping Center Complex near the NAIA.

Things were not, however, at a standstill on the military side. Garrucho reported that just before he left Makati after the evacuation, he saw a Fiera-type vehicle transporting ammunition to the rebels at the Intercon.³²³

Enrile sought to resume negotiations with the rebels but was unsuccessful on account of continued rebel complaints about government troop movements. Talks were formally resumed at 4:00 p.m., and continued on and off until about 8:00 p.m.

At about the same time the 15 RSAF 4 were occupying the Manila Peninsula Hotel, the rebels were consolidating their forces at the PLDT, Allied Bank, Ritz Tower and Twin Towers.³²⁴

Finally, after the rebels were informed by BGen Enrile that they had only up to midnight to finish their negotiations, an agreement for a return to barracks was reached at about 8:00 p.m. However, it was agreed that no media announcements would be made until the next day. The rebels were to remove the mines they had planted in the area during the night.³²⁵ Purugganan was not present during the last phase of the negotiations. It was learned later that he slipped out just before the final talks.

C.2.g. 7 December

After arrangements were made for the turnover of the buildings to the PA soldiers and the safe passage of the returning rebels to Fort Bonifacio, BGen Enrile ordered their return to barracks at 7:00 a.m.

By 8:30 a.m., the rebels came out of their positions in the still occupied buildings—PLDT, Allied Bank, Ritz Towers and Twin Towers. Shortly thereafter, the government forces at the Pacific Star, the Mandarin, PCIB, UCPB and the Grand Atrium buildings advanced and conducted mopping up operations to make sure that the buildings were free of mines. Afterwards, the buildings were turned over to the civilian security guards to prevent looting and other untoward incidents.³²⁶

On their way back to Fort Bonifacio, the rebels were able to project before the television cameras and the onlookers at the sidewalks a victorious image. At about 3:00 p.m., the government held a Makati victory parade for the forces that defended the Constitution and the duly constituted authorities.

C.3. Philippine Marines Headquarters, Fort Bonifacio

C.3.a. 30 November

Doubtful Red Alert

At about noon, BGen Eduardo Cabanlig, Commandant PMAR, claimed that he instructed all units, including the Marine Battalion Landing Team 4 (MBLT4) under Maj Cesar de la Peña, to go on red alert. He said he sensed unusual happenings. He learned on 28 November from the Marines, who were training with the Scout Rangers at Fort Bonifacio, that their graduation was postponed because they were to move to Pangasinan. Then, in the morning of 30 November, YOU posters were noticed along EDSA and in the Makati area. At that time too, he was informed of the Command Conference called by the CSAFP to be held at 5:30 p.m. in Camp Aguinaldo.³²⁷

It appears, however, that the instruction was not implemented. In the list of red alert declarations from 1 September 1987 to 1 December 1989 for the Philippine Marines HQ submitted by the Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations PMAR, Lt Col Armenio Cristal, Jr.,³²⁸ no red alert was declared on 30 November 1989. The last was on 3 November which was downgraded on 13 November.

BGen Cabanlig attended the Command Conference in Camp Aguinaldo where they were briefed of the impending coup which was to occur at 2:00 a.m. the following day. Thereafter, he returned to his HQ and upon arriving at his HQ at 10:30 p.m., he immediately held a conference among his officers.³²⁹ The conference was attended by Capt Jonathan Martir, Operations Officer of the MBLT 4, and other officers of the battalion namely, Capt Basilio Calimag, EX-O; Capt Romualdo Gualdrapa; Capt Ben Chavez, Logistics Officer; Capt Celestino Ferrera, Intelligence Officer; Capt Santos Petalio, a company commander, and other junior officers. BGen Cabanlig briefed the officers about the impending coup³³⁰ and instructed Capt Calimag to prepare the MBLT 4 to move to Camp Aguinaldo (LOGCOM/NCRDC) HQ because Maj de la Peña had not yet reported having been on “pass” since 25 November.

Interestingly, according to Cabanlig, Lt Col Gojo, a relative of Honasan, was also on leave for 15 days before the coup attempt allegedly because of family problems.

Meeting of Marine Officers

After the meeting, they went back to the Battalion HQ. Capt Martir was surprised to see three officers and 12 enlisted personnel who were not organic to the battalion. These officers were Capt Ariel Querubin of the Western Command (WESCOM), Capt Jaime Napoles of LOGCOM and Capt Juancho Sabban of SUBCOM.³³¹

Querubin and Sabban, who were Martir's classmates at the PMA, were involved in the 28 August 1987 coup attempt. With Kapunan, they attempted to bring down to Manila from Baguio the PMA cadets to support Honasan. These non-organic officers had with them VHF radios which were not a regular issue of the Marines. Querubin tried to convince Calimag not to move yet and just to wait because if he moved to LOGCOM or NCRDC HQ, he would be pulverized by artillery fire as the Army artillery were already pointed towards GHQ (meaning Camp Aguinaldo). Calimag said that his unit would follow the chain of command and would move. Querubin was furious; Calimag turned around and told Martir to find out how many men they have and to start arming some of their personnel within the battalion quarters for there may be a firefight to stop them from moving.³³²

Martir moved to his section (S3) and instructed his operations chief, MSgt Fortes, to direct all personnel to go to the armory and get their issued firearms and prepare for a possible firefight. While he was giving instructions, Martir saw the personnel of the intelligence unit (S2) already wearing white patches on their left shoulders; he already doubted that Capt Querubin had actually controlled some of the MBLT 4 officers. When he was about to confront those wearing patches, Capt Ferrera entered the room with an Ultimex weapon and machinegun, and proceeded directly to the quarters. Martir, who followed him with Calimag, confronted Ferrera and asked why he did not say that he was committed to YOU during the conference with Cabanlig. Ferrera, answered that he is not YOU and "this is another thing and it is the instruction of their Battalion Commander" (referring to de la Peña). Calimag just remained quiet.

When Martir went out, he saw de la Peña who looked haggard and tired. It turned out that he arrived from Iloilo at 7:00 p.m. that day but he proceeded to his Antipolo residence. Martir told him that Querubin and Sabban came to convince Calimag who did not give in. De la Peña instructed Martir to call all officers of the battalion for a conference. De la Peña went to the radio room and directed the radio man to announce through the public address system for all officers to proceed to his office for a conference.³³³

Martir returned to the office of de la Peña where he saw him and Calimag talking; de la Peña told Martir to lock the doors and to join them. Just as he had seated, there was a loud knock on the door. When he opened it, he saw Lt Col Gojo who pushed the door, proceeded to where Maj de la Peña was, extended to him his right hand and said, "*Cesar, 'yung pinag-usapan natin*" (Cesar, don't forget what we had discussed). De la Peña stared at Gojo who had with him a VHF radio and extended to him his hand. De la Peña walked towards the quarters with Martir and Calimag. When asked by Martir, "*Sir, ano ba ito?*" (Sir, what is this?), de la Peña did not answer but merely reiterated his instructions to call all officers for a conference.³³⁴

While the officers were entering the office of de la Peña for the conference, Capt Petalio was seen holding a bunch of countersigns similar to those of the S2 personnel. Martir also saw Lt Rolando Cal, another company commander who was holding a radio similar to that of Gojo. De la Peña asked the officers to follow the tanks wherever they would go. Martir told de la Peña that his order is in opposition to that of the Commandant; but the latter insisted that they should follow the tanks. He told de la Peña "*hindi ako puede diyan, sir*" (I can't go along with your plan, Sir). He went to his office and got his .45 pistol and M-16 rifle. Before he was able to report to Cabanlig what happened, de la Peña approached him and said that they are still friends.³³⁵

At about 11:30 p.m., just before Martir arrived at the office of his Commandant, BGen Biazon called up BGen Cabanlig and requested for PMAR 6 x 6 trucks to ferry the elements of MBLT 4 to Camp Aguinaldo to be escorted by CAPCOM mobile cars. Col Millena, Logistics Officer PMAR, called up the motor pool to prepare all available trucks to ferry the troops and one 60 RR mounted on an M151 truck to be attached to the MBLT 4. However, BGen

Biazon called up again to get confirmation if MBLT 4 had joined the coup because when he called up MBLT 4 to direct them to intercept two truckloads of unidentified soldiers at the South Expressway, he was informed that “*Bumaliktad na kami.*”³³⁶ (We have joined the rebels).

At about midnight, Cabanlig talked to the Marine trainees; he learned later that when they marched back to their barracks with their officer-in-charge, Capt Castillo, rebel officer Lt Liwag pointed a gun at Castillo and Liwag was able to persuade 71 of the more than 200 trainees to join him.³³⁷

At this point, Martir arrived at Cabanlig’s office to inform the latter that the MBLT 4 was committed to YOU and reported on what transpired at the MBLT 4 Headquarters. Cabanlig was surprised; he ordered his Aide-de-camp, Lt Romeo Tanalgo, to call de la Peña by telephone. No contact was made as the lines were busy. Cabanlig ordered his Operations Officer, Col Salazar, to block the gates and not to allow the MBLT 4 to go out. Salazar then directed the placement of barricades and ordered the MP detachment to stop the MBLT 4 from getting out.³³⁸

C.3.b. 1 December

Since his Aide-de-camp failed to contact Maj de la Peña, Cabanlig sent the Intelligence Officer of the PMAR, Col Buenaventura, to try to convince Lt Col Gojo, and for the MBLT 4 to desist from participating in the coup.³³⁹ In his testimony, however, Cabanlig stated that he sent his Intelligence Officer to meet Maj de la Peña. At two minutes past midnight, while his Intelligence Officer was on his way, four LVTs and two V-150s followed by troops numbering about 200 rammed Gate 3 and left for VAB. There were, however, elements of the unit still being formed and so Cabanlig ordered Buenaventura and MSgt Renato Villanueva to talk to them. These elements told them that they have “crossed their bridges” and that they are leaving the camp.³⁴⁰

Mobilization of Marine Units

Evidence further discloses that by late afternoon of 30 November, the Marine officers had already started to mobilize the MBLT 4 based in Fort Bonifacio. Sworn statements by Marine enlisted personnel show that many of them were ordered to mobilize on the evening of 30 November without knowing that the action was intended for a coup. The troops were moved to different locations. One enlisted personnel narrated his experience

An armed man in fatigue uniform bearing no nameplate arrived at the Headquarters of the Philippine Marines (PMAR HQ) and ordered the drill inspector to order the men to withdraw their rifles. Hence, firearms were issued and troop formation was done in front of the station of tanks at the PMAR HQ.³⁴¹

The Marine troopers were informed that they will be participating in the “Balikatan Exercise” at Subic Base.³⁴² There was a consolidation of a large number of Marine troops by early evening of 30 November. Later, the troops of MBLT 4 were ordered to assemble in front of Brown Hall of the Marine HQ.³⁴³ The company commanders were instructed to report to de la Pena and Calimag.³⁴⁴ These were the troops which were ordered to move out of Fort Bonifacio and to proceed to occupy VAB by late evening.³⁴⁵

The 34 Marine Company (MC) of MBLT 4 was directed by its CO, Lt Cal, to pack-up for the following day’s Exercise Balikatan. The troops then fell in with their firearms and proceeded to Gate 3 of Fort Bonifacio. There, Cal and his men boarded a ten-wheeler truck which brought them to PTV-4.³⁴⁶

At about 4:00 a.m. of 1 December, Cabanlig went out of Gate 3 and got in touch with some commercial radio patrol units like DZRH, DZEC and DZMM. He announced to the Marines through the radio that he was for the government. He told them not to be deceived by any of the officers and asked them to march back to camp.³⁴⁷

In the afternoon of 1 December, Cabanlig sent Col Romeo Daranchang, PMAR Chief of Staff, with Lt Col Jose Cordero and Capt Andayan to VAB to convince the Marines to go back. Daranchang was able to talk to Gojo, who appeared to be the one “calling the shots.” However, Gojo refused saying “they have burned their bridges.”³⁴⁸

Cabanlig devoted the whole day of 1 December to the consolidation of his forces. He was able to gather a force of 700 men.

C.3.c. 2 December

Thinking that Fort Bonifacio was still under rebel Ranger control, Cabanlig said that he decided to launch an attack against the FSRR HQ. As they were ready to move, he received a telephone call from the Army Chief of Staff, BGen Saavedra, advising the former to stop from attacking as Fort Bonifacio had already been cleared. Cabanlig received a call from de Villa who ordered him to prepare the Battalion he had formed to reinforce the troops in Malacañang on de Villa's orders.³⁴⁹

C.3.d. 3 December

On this day, the PMAR continued to consolidate forces; it remained at standby to reinforce Malacañang forces.³⁵⁰

C.3.e. 4 December

At about noon, BGen Aguirre called BGen Cabanlig to request the latter to move his battalion to Paseo de Roxas in Makati. When Cabanlig cleared this with de Villa, the latter granted him authority to move; he then coordinated with the Mayor of Makati, but this movement did not materialize.³⁵¹

C.3.f. 5 December

At about 5:00 a.m., the 11th Marine Battalion was deployed with CAPCOM at Makati Commercial Center.

At 12:00 midnight, the 1st Marine Brigade established blocking forces at a vantage point in EDSA, on McKinley and Pasay Roads.³⁵²

C.4. Villamor Air Base

C.4.a. 30 November

Declaration of Red Alert

Because of the intelligence reports on the Tagaytay City relay station attack at 10:30 p.m. the previous day, CG PAF MGen Jose de Leon, declared a red alert in all PAF units.³⁵³ BGen Rogelio Estacio, CG PAFSECOM placed the 805th Special Operations Squadron (SOS) on standby alert by 10:40 a.m. of 30 November.³⁵⁴ At 2:00 p.m., BGen Loven Abadia, the Commander of the 205th Helicopter Wing (205 HW), put his unit on red alert.³⁵⁵ By evening, Estacio received intelligence reports that the coup would be staged at dawn of 1 December. He requested one V-150 from the PAF Operations Officer to help in securing NAIA but this was denied.³⁵⁶ Col Felipe Abando, Jr, Commander of the 100th Training Wing, Fernando Air Base, Lipa City, received similar intelligence information, and ordered that base security be increased.³⁵⁷

Immediately after the adjournment of the Command Conference called by CSAFP in Camp Aguinaldo, MGen de Leon called up his office to inform his officers to be ready for a conference. Upon his arrival, de Leon convened the conference with the various COs of the PAF, the Unit Commanders in VAB, and the HQ staff at the Hall of Flags on the third floor of the PAF headquarters (HPAF).³⁵⁸

C.4.b. 1 December

Marine Troopers Enter Villamor

The conference started by about midnight.³⁵⁹ As de Leon broke the news to his officers, saying: “Gentlemen, there is this fantastic news about. . .” he was cut short by gunfire from the direction of Gate 2 of VAB.³⁶⁰ Immediately after, two LVTs with two V-150 Commandos, two 6 x 6 trucks and other armored vehicles led the troops of the MBLT 4 under de la Peña, along with the Marines under Gojo towards VAB. The vehicles rammed Gate 3 of Fort Bonifacio and followed by about 200 troops following, crossed the bridge across South Expressway and moved towards Gate 2 of VAB.³⁶¹ An LVT rammed through Gate 2 of VAB.³⁶² They rumbled along Sales Street in VAB. Immediately, the VAB Unit Commanders rushed back to their units while de Leon, Vice Commander BGen Protacio, BGen Leopoldo Acot and the HPAF Staff rushed to the adjacent Command Operations Center (COC) which was also on the third floor. The entries to the third floor were sealed with iron grills and barricaded by office tables.³⁶³ BGen Loven Abadia rushed to the 205 HW HQ.³⁶⁴ BGen Estacio rushed out of the conference rooms, stopped by his quarters for his arms and slipped through the golf course into NAIA.³⁶⁵

The Marines were composed mainly of MBLT 4 from Fort Bonifacio led by Maj de la Peña and Capt Calimag, and other units like the 4th MC under Lt Filomeno Macahilig, 2Lt Jarius Gelverson III and 2Lt Oscar Ramos, the 24th MC under 2Lts Delfin Actas and Memel Roxas; and the 44th MC under Lt Santos Petalio, 2Lt Adonis Fernandez and 2Lt Oscar dela Pena. Elements of the 31st MC, MBLT 1 stationed in Sta. Catalina, Bata, Bulacan and led by 2Lt Francis Carandang and 2Lt Gerry Tagle later joined in attacking VAB.

Within an hour, the Marines gained control of VAB.

Takeover of 520 ABW

The first move of the rebels was to capture the armor assets inside VAB assigned to the 529th Special Operations Squadron (529 SOS) which is under the 520th Air Base Wing (520 ABW). The SOS was organized by then CG PAF MGen Sotelo after the August 1987 coup as an anti-coup force. It was provided with two V-150s, four recoilless rifles, ten machine guns, and other armaments. Yet, when the time came for the squadron to defend VAB, not a shot was fired. In fact, its two V-150s were used by the rebels to attack Camp Aguinaldo on 3 December.³⁶⁶

Capt Robert Yusay, EX-0 of the 529 SOS, while proceeding to his HQ, met the Marines following the LVTs.³⁶⁷ Yusay immediately radioed the Wing Commander (WC) of the 520 ABW, who advised him to check out the movement. Yusay then proceeded to the 520 ABW barracks, woke up TSgt Armando Padilla and his men, and ordered them to take out the two V-150s with body number F-301 and F-302.³⁶⁸ The men boarded their tanks. Yusay then radioed the WC to report that his unit, including the two V-150s, was ready for action upon orders. The advise was to maintain the stronghold.³⁶⁹ Likewise, 2Lt Abner Awang, Light Armor Commander PAF, sought clearance from his superiors to engage the rebels but was told not to confront them.

In the meantime, 70 to 80 armed soldiers led by Lt Hernando “Boy” Caraig of 16 IB, PA, based in Quezon, surrounded the tanks while the personnel of the 529 SOS readied themselves inside the tank. Noting the superior number of Caraig’s men, the tank commander, Lt Domingo Balitaan, directed the crew to disembark but to lock the tank’s door. TSgt Padilla was brought to Lt Caraig and was asked where the crew were. Padilla refused to answer. This prompted Caraig to threaten Padilla with bodily harm. Later, Caraig’s men destroyed the door locks of the tank and Padilla was ordered to drive and tow the van used by the Marines. The van was stuck after overshooting the corners of Zetzer and Andrews Avenues. After doing so, Padilla requested Caraig to allow him to disengage. This time, the latter allegedly threatened Padilla with death if he did.³⁷⁰ The rebels took complete control of the 529 SOS, and later, left at 1:30 a.m. of 1 December, making sure all the communication lines were out.³⁷¹ Meanwhile, they had stored the firearms they gathered from the 529 SOS personnel in the two V-150s they had commandeered.³⁷²

Attack on the 205th Helicopter Wing HQ

Other Marine troopers maneuvered to capture the air assets inside the base. After ramming Gate 2, the Marine LVTs went to the flight line of the 205 HW. Fifty Marines marching at the back of the LVTs disarmed the guards at the 505 Air Reserve (AR) flight line, and took hostage four officers and 26 enlisted personnel (EP). Capt Antonio Bautista, Commander of the 209th Tactical Helicopter Squadron, who was still at the flight line, directed two EPs to

arm their helicopters. They immediately returned because rebel Marines had already taken control of the flight line.³⁷³

By early morning, several trucks with an estimated two companies had entered the flight line to reinforce the rebel troops. Two platoons with the LVTs proceeded to Hangars B and C and immobilized the 452nd First Division Marine Squadron (FDMS) and 451st Special Squadron (SS) personnel.³⁷⁴ Then two V-150s followed and stopped at the 205 HW driveway near the Bachelor Officers Quarters (BOQ). The Marines in the V-150s shouted at the Wing personnel led by BGen Loven Abadia to surrender but the latter steadfastly held their ground and placed more M-60 machine guns in front of the HQ.³⁷⁵

By dawn, the rebel Marine tanks bombarded the 205 HW HQ area with cannon fire.³⁷⁶ A gunbattle ensued as Loven Abadia and his men gave resistance to the Marines' attack.³⁷⁷ The firefight lasted ten to 15 minutes.³⁷⁸ Loven Abadia and his men laid flat on their stomachs as the tanks kept firing. Rebel Rangers were seen leading the attack. When one of Loven Abadia's men was injured, a PAF colonel on the government side waved his cap at the LVTs so that he could approach the wounded soldier. The colonel was mad and he shouted invectives at the Rangers who also approached the wounded man. The Colonel shouted: "*Bakit ninyo kami binabari? Hindi ba kami ang sumasagip sa inyo sa bundok?*" [Why are you firing at us? Aren't we the ones who save you in the mountains?]³⁷⁹

The gunbattle left the 205 HW HQ partially burned and the BOQ razed to the ground. The force of the Marines was overwhelming. They later took control of the 205 HW tarmac. They, however, were not able to fly any of the helicopters and other aircraft because none of the pilots of the 205 HW HQ would cooperate with the rebels.³⁸⁰

Rebel Control of the Gates

Other rebel Marines in Villamor supported by armor took control of Gates 1, 2 and 3. Not knowing about the loyalty of the Marines as they passed the 528th Law Enforcement Squadron (LES) HQ, its EX-O, Capt Jose Maceda, led a team to investigate Gate 2 where Marines surrounded them and confiscated their firearms. Maceda identified the rebel officers as Lt Col Gojo, Lt Col Gasmin, Capt Mariano, ex-Lt Col Bernarte, Capt Querubin, Capt Pineda, and another captain with Serial No: 0-7790³⁸¹ who confiscated Capt Maceda's .45 cal pistol.³⁸²

Entry at HPAF

The Headquarters of the Philippine Air Force (HPAF) houses the offices of top PAF officers including the COC which coordinates all movements of the PAF. At 4:00 a.m., rebel Marines surrounded HPAF and broke the glass doors of the first and second floors. They checked out every office including those belonging to Air Personnel, Logistics, Comptroller, Dental Surgeon, Chief of Engineers, and the Chief Chaplain. The personnel in the Dental Surgeon's office were sent to the Dental Dispensary and the Chaplain personnel to the chapel, while the Air Logistics personnel were told to stay in the office but were ordered to keep the doors locked. All telephone lines in the HPAF were cut.³⁸³ The Marines ransacked the HPAF Supply Section as the seven supply personnel were disarmed and confined at the office of the Air Comptroller.

Negotiation at the HPAF

Inside the Air Personnel Office, Col Santiago Madrid, PAF EX-O, met the rebel Marines. He asked that he be brought to Maj De la Peña whom he personally knew. Madrid was led to de la Peña and Lt Col Gojo at the hallway of HPAF. Gojo wanted to assault the third floor of the HPAF and gave an ultimatum. Madrid, in an effort to negotiate with the rebels, called the COC at the third floor and was able to relay the ultimatum. Answering the call, the Air Personnel Officer replied that Gojo must deal first with the Commander of the Air Squadron, BGen Acot, before making any move towards the third floor.

Dialogues followed. Col Roberto Sabularse, Air Comptroller EX-O, and Madrid served as intermediaries who relayed messages between the rebels and the PAF officers at the third floor. They managed to convince the former not to attack the third floor because all the personnel there were already immobilized. Madrid also tried to convince Gojo to stop the attack at the 205 HW.

MGen de Leon, in the meantime, was able to maintain constant communication with other unit commanders and to direct the operation of other PAF bases through the COC. Fortunately, the personnel of the Office of the Director for Communications-Electronics under Col Edgardo Rosal, who were on stand by at the third floor, ensured the continuous operation of the radio and telephone in the COC.³⁸⁴

By 4:00 a.m. some tanks and Marine troops, after immobilizing the 205 HW, the BOQ and Hangars B and C, the 505 ARS, 520 ABW and the 452 FDMS, had regrouped at the flight line. Two more Marine platoons crossed Fort Bonifacio to VAB. Armed with bazookas and machine guns, the rebels occupied the overpass connecting the gates of both camps.³⁸⁵

Meanwhile, Lt Caraig, after immobilizing the 520 ABW, ordered the two V-150s to be brought to the gate of the 420 SW HQ. The armor vehicles, upon orders of Caraig, rammed the gate but were fired upon.³⁸⁶

As of 8:00 a.m. the Marine troops were still in control of VAB. They were then consolidating their forces, with some Marine elements looting the firearms supply and cash storage boxes.³⁸⁷ At 9:00 a.m., some Marines started to move out. Members of the MBLT 4 boarded a 6 x 6 truck which brought them to PTV-4.

Aircraft Activity from Villamor

The NCRDC Command Operations Center received a report that a helicopter left VAB for Camps Aguinaldo and Crame at about 5:15 a.m.³⁸⁸ Upon learning this, personnel at the HPAF contacted BGen Jose Comendador, CG 2 Air Division (2 AD), to request for the dispatch of four F-5s from Mactan Air Base (MAB) in order to intercept the rebel planes at VAB. The planes from MAB never arrived. It was later learned that Comendador prevented the pilots from flying the planes.³⁸⁹

The Marines wanted to take control of the helicopter air assets in VAB. Ex-Lt Cols Ceferino Sarmenta and Dante Bernarte tried to persuade, but without success, the pilots of 505 ARS under Lt Col Rodolfo de Castro, Squadron Commander, to fly the helicopters out of VAB.³⁹⁰ Bernarte was also seen talking to Lt Lopito Gonzales, aide of Col Jaime Iletto, at the back of the VAB theatre. Incidentally, both Bernarte and Gonzales were also implicated in the August 1987 coup.³⁹¹

According to Gonzales, however, he was sent by Iletto from Clark Air Base to return Loven Abadia's gun. He was still in VAB when the attempted coup occurred, and he talked to Bernarte who was his previous CO.³⁹²

Firefight at the 205 HW HQ

The firefight at the 205 HW still raged by early afternoon. The Wing personnel fired at the LVTs and the Marine troops as they approached the HQ area.³⁹³ The Marines retaliated with a Howitzer round aimed at the HQ, which damaged the Wing Adjutant's office, killed TSgt Austria and wounded Sgt Rolando Acevedo, AIC Alex Urnaguino, and Sgt Baccay.³⁹⁴ Personnel of the 529 SOS, 520 ABW with their Squadron Commander, Maj Julius de la Torre, proceeded to the 205 HW HQ after a ten-minute lull in firing. While at the corridor of the building with some personnel of the 205 HW, de la Torre heard two big bursts from an M203 (grenade launcher) fired by the Marines. These hit the 529 SOS building and wounded its seven personnel.

During the lull, women were seen bringing food to the rebels. Loven Abadia tried to contact GHQ AFP to bring reinforcements. However, it was reported that the tank reinforcement sent turned around and joined the rebels.³⁹⁵

Negotiation for a Ceasefire

Col Felix Duenas, Air Plans EX-O, called up Col Paulino Poquez, Duty Officer of the 205 HW, to advise the Wing personnel not to return fire as the former was negotiating a ceasefire with the rebel Marines at HPAF. Col Romeo Daranchang, together with Lt Col Cordero and Capt Andayan, arrived at HPAF to persuade Gojo and de la Peña to return to Fort Bonifacio. Both rebel officers refused.

Duenas and Sabularse spoke to Loven Abadia proposing a ceasefire wherein Abadia was not to take counter-offensive action provided the Marines desist from attacking Abadia and his men. This proposal was similar to an earlier agreement forged with the rebels at HPAF. Loven Abadia refused, insisting that the Marines should leave the 205 HW area first. But as the Marine troopers continued firing, he fought back. Meanwhile, rebel Marines and Rangers surrounded the 205 HW compound and some were able to penetrate the rear, capturing some of Loven Abadia's men. Abadia moved forward and went inside a building near the 205 HW HQ.

Cols Sabularse, Duenas, and Atayde, Deputy Commander of the 205 HW, met with Lt Gener del Rosario of 16 IB, 2 ID, who referred them to ex-Lt Col Bernarte, who in turn, directed them to Col Reynaldo Samaco. Unable to decide on Abadia's terms, Samaco escorted them to Gojo who was at the HPAF area. While initially insistent that Abadia and his men first lay down their arms, Gojo finally agreed not to fire as long as Abadia and his men would not fire. Col Sabularse and company returned to the 205 HW area but found the 205 HW personnel already disarmed; Abadia, however, was nowhere to be found. He was still inside a building together with four unidentified lieutenants.³⁹⁶

Atayde stayed behind while Sabularse and Duenas proceeded to the Air Force Research and Development Center. The two were tasked to see Gojo at the HPAF area to arrange a meeting with either BGens Acot or Protacio.³⁹⁷ Acot was able to talk to Gojo.³⁹⁸ The rebel Marines at the 205 HW area were then fetched by trucks, later consolidating at the HPAF.³⁹⁹ Loven Abadia managed to escape, and boarded a taxi for Camp Aguinaldo.

Then at about 3:00 p.m., news of a government offensive was received. Poquez received a call from Capt Edgardo Samonte, CSAFP Aide, that loyal F-5s strafed and destroyed the rebel air assets in Sangley. Unconfirmed news that the F-5s will also go to VAB to target the tanks at the 205 HW flight line made Poquez instruct his personnel to retreat behind the HQ. The F-5s did not arrive. Instead, three USAF F-4s flew over VAB on persuasion flights.⁴⁰⁰

President Aquino made a call at 3:34 p.m. to Capt Eustaquito Manalo, Wing Commander, 205th Presidential Airlift Wing. Manalo briefed the President about the situation in his area.⁴⁰¹

Movement of Rebel Marines to Camp Aguinaldo

The Marines disabled the helicopters located at the VAB tarmac and those inside Hangars B and C by breaking their chin bubbles and cutting the electrical wirings.⁴⁰² After doing so, the Marines left the hangars and started converging near the HPAF.

At about 10:00 p.m., a large number of Marines prepared to leave the HPAF. Three LVTs, three V-150s, two of them with serial nos F-301 and F-302, and several trucks, joined the Marines.⁴⁰³ 2Lt Gelvezon ordered his troops to move.⁴⁰⁴ The 4 MC MBLT 4 left Villamor and headed north.⁴⁰⁵ Some of his men thought they were returning to Fort Bonifacio; but instead, they headed for EDSA on foot. There was some shooting as they crossed the Magallanes overpass, but they were able to continue towards White Plains.⁴⁰⁶ The rebel Marine troops passed through Mandaluyong, then Valle Verde and ended up near the Mormon Church at White Plains.⁴⁰⁷ Although some of the Marines returned to barracks during this night march, the rebels numbered about 600 by the time they were in the vicinity of Camp Aguinaldo.⁴⁰⁸

BGen Gerardo Flores, PC-INP Intelligence Chief (C2), received a report on the departure of the rebel Marines from VAB. The 701 Bde under Col Edgardo Batenga was dispatched from Camp Aguinaldo to block the rebel Marines at the corner of EDSA and Ortigas Avenue.⁴⁰⁹ At around 1:00 p.m., the Marines (with some PA and GHQ troops) under Lt del Rosario were fired upon by a government Sikorsky helicopter as they were headed towards White Plains, causing them to retreat to an abandoned house.⁴¹⁰

C.4.c. 2 December

Government Forces Retake Control of VAB and Assess Damage

By midnight, rebel Marines had completely withdrawn from VAB, and government troops once again took control of the base.⁴¹¹ Capt Lauro de la Cruz, Security Officer, went down from the third floor and assessed the damage at the HPAF.⁴¹² 2Lt Abner Awang with 14 men, took over the 529 SOS building. The commander of 529 SOS also found that their armory had been ransacked, and the cabinets plus table drawers were forcibly opened. An inventory was made of the supply and the armory. The 529 SOS personnel were then directed to secure Gate 2. The DACE and 501 CS personnel worked round the clock and reinstalled 28 AFP and PLDT telephones that were disconnected in the HPAF offices, including the PLDT cable destroyed during the fire at the 205 HW.⁴¹³

As a precautionary measure against a possible return of the rebels, the Explosives Detection and Demolition Team (EDDT), was directed to plant claymore mines and improvised bombs (drums of gasoline) at Gates 1 and 2 of VAB to prevent possible re-entry of rebel tanks. The EDDT also scoured the area for bombs that may have been planted by rebel forces. In the process, they discovered three boxes of ammunition taken from the 205 HW HQ and the Presidential Airlift Wing and a PLDT transmission line in a plastic container at the 520 ABW Commander's Office.⁴¹⁴

C.4.d. 3 December

The AFP TRACOM convoy under BGen Pedro Juachon, which included two V-150s and a crew from NCRDC, arrived at VAB at early dawn with instructions from MGen de Leon to stay in VAB, defend the base from possible enemy attacks, and apprehend withdrawing rebel forces holed up in Makati or Manila intending to regroup at VAB.⁴¹⁵

C.5. Manila Domestic Airport and Cavite Coastal Road Incident

To the rebels, control of airports is necessary to stop the movement of government troops from other areas and to facilitate the arrival of rebel troops and armaments from the provinces.

C.5.a. Before 30 November

Planning for the Takeover of Manila Domestic Airport

As early as 15 and 16 November 1989, a group composed of ex-Maj Lyle Tugbang and Maj Jose Gamos, TSgt Inocentes Dionesa and some members of the NAIA Police led by P/Lt Romeo Raquion held a conference at the office of Viking Brokerage located at the old Manila International Airport (MIA) in preparation for the launching of a coup d'état. During the meeting, Raquion assured Gamos that he could supply 15 of his men, mostly members of the Guardians.⁴¹⁶ It seemed that the purpose of the meeting was to recruit volunteers to augment rebel forces in their takeover of NAIA and the Manila Domestic Airport (MDA). Raquion, however, denied any participation in the coup.⁴¹⁷

C.5.b. 30 November

Mobilization of the Guardians

In the early evening, Rodolfo Morit, Jr, a ranking national officer and Honasan's co-incorporator of the Guardian Centre Foundation Inc (GCFI), went inside the prison reservation of the Bureau of Corrections in Muntinlupa, Metro Manila and gathered about 30 Guardians.⁴¹⁸ Morit was dressed in a military uniform. He directed them to attend a meeting of the Guardians at Baltao Subdivision in Paranaque, Metro Manila that same evening.

The 30 Guardians were composed of 26 prison guards, including Manuel Garces, Jr, the founder and leader of the Bureau of Corrections Muntinlupa Guardian Brotherhood Inc Chapter, and four civilians identified as Baggy Sacco, Rolando Pascual, Eduardo Franco and Roger Borja.⁴¹⁹

The group left Muntinlupa at about 10:00 p.m in three civilian vehicles (two Harabas and a jeepney) driven by one Brasil, Garces and Sacco. On their way to Baltao Subdivision, Morit told them that their mission was to assist the government forces at the NAIA against the expected attack of NPA rebel forces.⁴²⁰ They arrived at Baltao Subdivision at around 11:00 p.m.

The movement of the prison guards was reported by Bureau of Corrections Superintendent Vicente Apurongto Prisons Director Meliton Goyena, a retired PC brigadier general. Goyena was told that the reason for the movement was to assist the RAM-HF soldiers stage a coup in Manila.⁴²¹

Troop Movement of Maj Jose Gamos and ex-Maj Lyle Tugbang

At about 11:00 p.m., some 70 uniformed armed men led by Maj Gamos and ex-Maj Tugbang, met at the Barangay Hall of Brgy Vitales, Parañaque.⁴²²

C.5.c. 1 December

This group of 70 armed men proceeded to MDA.

At about 1:35 a.m., the government monitoring team at VAB reported heavy exchange of gunfire at the vicinity of MDA.⁴²³ The PAFSECOM soldiers, defending the airport terminal, fought the RAM-HF forces. At around 2:00 a.m., another heavy exchange of gunfire in front of the area took place lasting for ten minutes.⁴²⁴

Danilo “King” Cruz, a broker representative, received a radio call from ex-Lt Col Bibit to proceed to Baltao Subdivision fronting the Cargo Terminal at NAIA. Cruz was PRO of the Customs Gun Club when Bibit was the president. Cruz is said to be an ex-PC Sergeant and former bodyguard of Jackie Ponce Enrile. At the NAIA, Cruz saw Bibit and 40 other armed men, one of whom was Tugbang. From NAIA, the group proceeded to MDA.⁴²⁵

Gamos arrived at Baltao Subdivision with his armed companions and led them and the Guardians from the Bureau of Corrections to the Ding Velayo Sports Complex across MDA, arriving there at 5:00 a.m. Gamos instructed the Guardians to stay there and await the delivery of food.⁴²⁶ The group of Gamos positioned themselves at the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service office at the old MIA.

About 100 RAM-HF soldiers arrived at the Baggage Terminal Area of MDA and demanded from Lina Precalla, a lady security guard, the keys to the parked vehicles outside. Since Precalla did not have the keys, Capt Bistro, the leader of the rebels, ordered the rigging of the ignition system so the vehicles could be used.⁴²⁷

By 5:45 a.m., the forces of Gamos and Tugbang, now numbering about 100, had taken control of the MDA Terminal Building. They overpowered the PAFSECOM personnel guarding the building and herded them into a room inside the terminal.⁴²⁸

By morning the RAM-HF forces began using PAL facilities at MDA. At about 9:00 a.m., a van resembling a PAL delivery truck arrived at the Velayo Sports Complex bringing food in packs similar to that served during in-flight meals. The Guardians partook of the food and shared it with their fellow rebels inside the sports complex.⁴²⁹

At 10:00 a.m., a V-150 with “RAM-SFP” markings⁴³⁰ earlier captured at VAB by the rebel forces led by Lt Caraig, arrived at the MDA.⁴³¹ Then, three PAL vehicles arrived in front of the PC/INP Hangar loaded with about 20 fully-armed men, either in military or civilian attire. One alighted and talked to P/Lt Ricardo Espiritu, a police officer stationed at the hangar. To avoid armed confrontation and destruction of PC/INP assets, an agreement was reached allowing P/Lt Espiritu and his men to retain their arms and equipment, while the rebel soldiers in the PAL vehicles stayed in the area.⁴³²

The V-150 returned to VAB by early evening and then proceeded to the South Expressway to wait for other rebel troops coming from Calamba, Laguna.⁴³³ It was reported that these troops stopped upon reaching the Calamba gate

of the South Expressway, when a government helicopter flown by BGen Loven Abadia hovered over and poised to attack them if they proceeded.⁴³⁴

Government Troops Take Defensive Action

At the Quick Reaction Center at the old MIA, a Battle Staff was created by the PAFSECOM. There were reports that Bibit used the telephone facilities of DHL office located at the old MIA building.⁴³⁵ A detailed check of DHL phone bills did not disclose any use by Bibit of DHL phones. However, DHL Philippines General Manager Jose Feliciano told the Commission that Crismel Verano has been DHL's tax consultant for more than ten years now.⁴³⁶ Verano is linked to the coup in the Galido affidavits.⁴³⁷ In coordination with NAIA General Manager Eduardo Carrascoso, PAFSECOM personnel barricaded runways 06-24 and 13-31 with fire trucks, baggage containers and other obstruction to prevent the use of the runways by the rebels.⁴³⁸

Withdrawal from the Manila Domestic Airport and Confrontation at the Cavite Coastal Road

By afternoon, the RAM-HF forces led by Gamos and Tugbang, withdrew from MDA and proceeded to the vicinity of Quirino Avenue and Coastal Road in Parañaque. They were blocked by government forces from the South Sector Command (SSC) of PC CAPCOM led by its CO, Lt Col Jose Bandung, Jr. The roadblock was earlier established at 2:00 a.m. by BGen Aguirre to prevent the entry of rebel forces from Cavite.⁴³⁹

The RAM-HF troops sent an emissary in the person of TSgt Inocentes Dionesa, PC, to request Bandung not to block their way. Because Bandung would not give way, a firefight lasting for about two hours occurred.⁴⁴⁰ After a while, Gamos again sent a feeler to Bandung and when that effort failed, shooting erupted between the contending forces until the rebels started to withdraw towards Tambo, Parafiaque.⁴⁴¹

At about 5:00 p.m., the troops of P/Lt Col Romeo Maganto, CO MPFF, in two 6 x 6 trucks, arrived at the Coastal Road area to augment the blocking force of Bandung and to establish another road block there.⁴⁴²

During the firefight, Bandung, PC SSgts Leonardo de la Rosa, Melvynne Luzuriaga, Reynaldo Montforte, and Chito Mercado, all of the government side, were wounded.⁴⁴³ On the rebel side, Cpl Uy was killed and others were wounded including Danilo Cruz. A Red Cross volunteer was similarly wounded and Airport policeman Ruben de la Cruz was killed.⁴⁴⁴

Withdrawal of the Guardians

The Guardians from Muntinlupa stayed in front of the Ding Velayo Sports Complex up to 3:00p.m., waiting for the promised delivery of guns and uniforms. No delivery was made. When the RAM-HF soldiers occupying MDA left, the Guardians felt abandoned.⁴⁴⁵ They started leaving the place one by one; the last one to leave was Manuel Garces, Jr. According to the latter, they abandoned their three vehicles prior to their return to Muntinlupa to avoid detection.⁴⁴⁶ They were able to return to the New Bilibid Prison Reservation in Muntinlupa that same afternoon, unnoticed by the guards at the main gate, despite the augmented guards and the two machine guns earlier mounted at the main entrance of the prison reservation.⁴⁴⁷

No formal administrative investigation was conducted by the Bureau of Correction officials and no formal report had been submitted to the Department of Justice about the activities of these guards during the last coup.⁴⁴⁸ The Commission, through Resolution No.089⁴⁴⁹ dated 4 July 1990, recommended to the Department of Justice their investigation.

RAM-HF Soldiers Withdraw

By 9:30 p.m., majority of the RAM-HF soldiers inside MDA had pulled out and moved towards VAB on board private cars and vans.⁴⁵⁰ Moments after, the armed group that arrived at the PC/INP Hangar premises also left the area.⁴⁵¹

C.6. PTV-4 Incident

C.6.a. 30 November

The takeover of the government television station, PTV-4, located at Bohol Avenue, Quezon City, was crucial for the coup considering that television is a vital medium for propaganda. When informed about an impending coup, Conrado Limcaoco, network manager of PTV-4, instructed his security aide, MSgt Jesus de Guzman, to advise 2Lt Alfredo Javillonar, PC OIC Security Platoon assigned at PTV-4, that a red alert had been declared at about 5:00 p.m. Javillonar was then at his camp at Bago Bantay.⁴⁵² Later that night, Javillonar went to PTV-4 and briefed his personnel, assigning some of them to the entrance gate at Scout Albano St and the others to the barracks inside the compound.⁴⁵³

Movement of Rebels to PTV-4 Complex

At about midnight, the 34 MC of the MBLT 4 under Lt Rolando Cal, arrived at the PTV-4 compound from VAB aboard two ten-wheeler civilian trucks, taxis, and Ford Fieras, accompanied by two V-150s. According to Pfc Cadera,⁴⁵⁴ the movement was upon orders of Gojo. Other units were also mobilized by the RAM-HF troops.

C.6.b. 1 December

At around 1:40 a.m., Capt Nestor Bernardino, CO 221 PC Coy stationed in Taytay, Rizal, told his men of the directive for them to establish checkpoints in Taytay. However, instead of doing so, he brought his men to PTV-4 compound where they were met by several soldiers upon their arrival at around 2:00 a.m. Three unidentified officers fetched Capt Bernardino. When he returned, he distributed white patches to his men for countersign purposes. Some soldiers withdrew from the area and returned to their station⁴⁵⁵ because they sensed that Capt Bernardino deceived them.

By 1:00 a.m. an undetermined number of RAM-HF soldiers stopped a ten-wheeler truck (Plate No CFL 333) at the Nichols underpass. The truck driver, Anastacio de la Cruz, said that he was delivering construction materials to Pasay City when he was commandeered by men in military uniform.⁴⁵⁶ The truck was brought to PTV-4 at about 3:00 a.m. where the soldiers disembarked.⁴⁵⁷

Attack at PTV-4 Complex

At 1:10 a.m., some 250 Scout Rangers and Marines clad in black and camouflage uniforms, respectively, with one Scorpion tank and a V-150 arrived and deployed at Scout Esguerra and Albano Streets near PTV-4.⁴⁵⁸ Lt Col Ernesto Salvador, CO of the NCRDC Security Battalion, called 2Lt Javillonar and instructed him to prepare as rebel soldiers were likely to enter the area.⁴⁵⁹ By 1:30 a.m., two ten-wheeler trucks loaded with uniformed men followed by two V-150s and one APC tank approached the PTV-4 gate. The two trucks stopped at the pedestrian gate and the men under Lt Cal rushed inside the compound and occupied strategic points. The V-150s and the APC proceeded to Scout Albano St. Javillonar ordered the duty technicians to immobilize the television and radio stations.⁴⁶⁰ Cal asked Javillonar to join them but he refused.⁴⁶¹

A reinforcement platoon from Alpha Coy, Security Battalion, under Lt Manuel Visperas and 2Lt Oscar Fajardo, was dispatched to PTV-4 to aid Javillonar and his unit.⁴⁶² The platoon, aboard a 6 x 6 truck, arrived at PTV-4 at 1:40 a.m.⁴⁶³ Fajardo, was instructed by Lt Col Salvador through the radio to assault the rebel forces. Fajardo hesitated because the rebel forces were superior in number. Moreover, government troops and civilian employees of PTV-4 were still inside. Instead, Visperas tried to negotiate for the peaceful and safe evacuation of Javillonar and his men.⁴⁶⁴ Javillonar introduced Cal to Visperas. Cal gave Visperas the choice of either joining them or remaining neutral. Salvador arrived to personally assess the situation. He negotiated with an unidentified soldier who told him that the rebels were led by Kapunan and Batac. After negotiations, civilian employees and government troops were allowed to leave the PTV-4 compound.

Javillonar then proceeded to their barracks situated at PTV-4's tennis court which was also surrounded by rebel forces. One of his men reported that the armory of the Security Platoon was opened and unidentified Scout Rangers took, among others, three M-16 rifles, one .50 cal machine gun, and a recoilless rifle. It was reported that "RAM boys" entered the barracks and held at gunpoint SN1 Ricardo Peña, Sgt Tambot PAF, JN1 Galit, Cpl Bataan, A1C Canlas, and SSgt Baybayan. Personal belongings such as fatigue uniforms and shoes were also taken. He then directed his men to join Visperas' men at the gate of PTV-4.⁴⁶⁵

Salvador ordered Javillonar to move to GMA-7 and Visperas to proceed to Broadcast City.⁴⁶⁶ At the main gate, Salvador ordered his men to move out since they were outnumbered.⁴⁶⁷

Government Troops Regroup

Salvador's men regrouped at GMA-7 at about 3:30 a.m. and from there proceeded to Broadcast City where they linked up with the unit of Maj Marcelino Yacat, PMAR, head of the military detachment at the Batasang Pambansa. BGen Biazon gave orders for Salvador to act as negotiator with the rebels at PTV-4, and for Yacat to lead the combined units of the Security Battalion and the Marine forces to launch a tactical assault against the rebels should the negotiations fail.⁴⁶⁸

At 4:00 a.m., some Officer Candidate School (OCS) students of AFP TRACOM led by Maj Wilhelm Doromal arrived at PTV-4 to support the rebel forces.⁴⁶⁹ Meanwhile, armed men with white armbands entered the PTV-4 penthouse. A certain Mr Bilbao recognized "Red" Kapunan among them.⁴⁷⁰

By 5:00 a.m., the streets leading to PTV-4 were blocked by the rebels with the assistance of some civilians. Rebel troops blocked the corner of Quezon Blvd and EDSA with a ten-wheeler truck.⁴⁷¹ NCRDC COC received a report that rebel Scout Rangers and Marines were also blocking the vicinity of Bohol Avenue and Scout Albano St.⁴⁷² Cal pulled out the 34 MC from PTV-4 and stationed it at a nearby street corner.⁴⁷³ Some rebels went to Quezon Blvd staying there till nightfall of 1 December.⁴⁷⁴

Government Troops Try to Retake PTV-4

At 5:00 a.m., the four platoons of the Marine Security Group (MSG), with orders from higher HQ arrived at PTV-4 to retake it. At the back of PTV-4, RAM-HF soldiers started firing at the first MSG platoon. An exchange of gunfire ensued. A grenade from an M-79 grenade launcher exploded, injuring Pfc Binanitan and Pfc Tironez.⁴⁷⁵

The other government troops moved to the intersection of Quezon Blvd and EDSA. The fourth MSG platoon under Capt Javier and the 22 MC MBLT 2 under 2Lt Ramon Mitra III moved towards south of Quezon Blvd while the other platoons turned left towards Cubao. At the vicinity of Aristocrat Restaurant, about 200 enemy troops were positioned. As Capt Javier's troops were taking cover, heavy fire came from a Tora-Tora Plane killing Pfc Villaces and Cpl Galpo and wounding Sgt Lasang, Sgt Rafallo, Cpl Rudam, Pfc Rivero, TSgt Catbugan, SSgt Hernandez, Pfc Caasi, and Sgt Vitales.⁴⁷⁶

The government troopers returned fire, retaliating with their V-150. The first, second and third platoons under Capt Bucsit stationed themselves at the corner wall of PTV-4 in Mother Ignacia and Scout Albano intersection. Another firefight started at about 5:30 a.m. During a lull in the fighting, Maj Yacat took the opportunity to negotiate for the surrender of the rebels.

Meanwhile, the fourth platoon was deployed by Capt Javier within 50 meters from PTV-4. They planned to redeploy by squads. When they were about to do so, they were hit by gunfire from 90 RR mortar and bombing from a Tora-Tora plane.⁴⁷⁷

The elements of the MSG and the Marine Contingency Battalion failed at this time to retake PTV-4 due to strong enemy resistance and the presence of civilians. They instead established blocking positions at the intersection of

EDSA and Quezon Blvd.⁴⁷⁸ At 6:45 a.m., armed confrontation continued. While the 22 MC MBLT 2 soldiers were resting at a corner not far from PTV-4, enemy soldiers fired at them. They fired back causing the rebels to retreat.⁴⁷⁹

Enemy Airstrikes and Reinforcements

At 7:00 a.m., the 15 SW Operation Center monitored that PTV-4 was a target of the rebel Tora-Tora planes.⁴⁸⁰ Upon sighting the convoy of government troops heading for PTV-4, two Tora-Toras strafed them, killing a number of civilians and soldiers at EDSA and Quezon Blvd. The rebel planes were also observed flying over Camp Aguinaldo and bombing NCRDC Headquarters by 7:20 a.m.⁴⁸¹

At 8:00 a.m., a rebel Sikorsky helicopter joined the two Tora-Toras in strafing government forces under Salvador and Yacat.⁴⁸² The helicopter also bombed NCRDC Headquarters.⁴⁸³ It attacked elements of the Security Battalion positioned at the transmitter of RPN 9 in Panay Avenue.⁴⁸⁴

At 9:00 a.m., the 44 MC MBLT 4 left VAB on board a 6 x 6 truck, and proceeded to PTV-4 to reinforce the 34 MC MBLT 4. With the former were Capt Romulo Gualdrapa, Capt Edgardo Cabalquinto, Lt Santos Petalio, and 2Lt Adonis Fernandez.⁴⁸⁵

From late morning till noontime, radio reports were heard about ongoing negotiations between government forces and the rebels. DZRH reported the negotiations between Capt Javier representing the government, and for the rebels, Lt Paterno Reynato Padua of the Scout Rangers and Lt Rolly Tan of the Marines. However, the negotiations were interrupted due to the presence of civilians (“*uziseros*”).⁴⁸⁶

DZRH also reported that Marine Sgt Lloma, one of the APC personnel, defected to the rebel side, allegedly because, their leader Maj Marcelino Lakap was gone and they had no support nor reinforcement from Camp Aguinaldo. Speaker Ramon Mitra, through the radio, urged Sgt Lloma to take charge of the command and not to defect.⁴⁸⁷ Subsequent information disclosed that this was a rebel psywar tactic.

At noontime, rebel troops posted at EDSA corner Quezon Blvd were able to surround two government APCs near the Ninoy Aquino Park.⁴⁸⁸

Rafael Recto Arrives at PTV-4

At about 8:00 a.m., rebel soldiers under Lt Col Eduardo Kapunan took over PTV-4 and established a temporary command post in the office of Network Manager Conrado Limcaoco on the third floor.⁴⁸⁹ Around 2:00 p.m., a group led by Rafael Recto arrived at PTV-4. With Recto were Joaquin Rodriguez and Edgardo Castro, an official of the Department of Foreign Affairs and one of those involved in processing the issuance of a passport to Eduardo Cojuangco, Jr. Both Rodriguez and Castro testified that they accompanied Recto to PTV-4 because he (Recto) claimed his daughter Plinky was at the adjoining ABS-CBN station and he wanted to fetch her.

According to PTV-4 Chief Security Officer, Orlando Fontanilla, Recto’s group was allowed entry into the compound by a rebel Scout Ranger officer who instructed him to bring Recto and his group to the third floor of PTV-4. Fontanilla complied and brought Recto and his companions to Limcaoco’s office where Recto inquired from the rebel officers there about a press conference.⁴⁹⁰ One of the rebels replied, according to Fontanilla, “*wala daw presscon, walang order na may presscon*.”⁴⁹¹ (There’s no presscon. We have no orders for a presscon). With that, Recto and his group departed from PTV-4. Fontanilla testified that Recto neither entered the premises of ABS-CBN nor asked him about Plinky. In their testimony before the Commission, Rodriguez and Castro also confirmed that Recto did not enter ABS-CBN.

In his sworn statement, Fontanilla stated that he saw Lito Gorospe in the Master Control booth of ABS-CBN with a written statement which Gorospe intended to read and 12 videocassettes which he would show, if they were able to operate ABS-CBN.⁴⁹² However, both ABS-CBN and PTV-4 had been disabled so none of these events took place.

Government Troops Retake PTV-4

The rebel soldiers left the PTV-4 premises at 9:00 p.m.⁴⁹³

Rebel MBLT 4 troops which occupied PTV-4, moved to Ortigas Avenue.⁴⁹⁴ Some of them regrouped at the nearby JUSMAG area while the others, at the vicinity of Camelot Hotel.⁴⁹⁵

At 9:30 p.m., Salvador, and a composite team from GHQ, reoccupied PTV-4.⁴⁹⁶ At 10:00 p.m., 2Lt Javillonar returned to PTV-4 and inspected the building together with the Administrative Manager, Emmanuel de Asis. They discovered that the vault (of money) had been forced open. The lockers of the soldiers assigned at the station and the armory in the general manager's room on the third floor were likewise ransacked. Guns, ammunition, and personal belongings of the soldiers were gone.⁴⁹⁷

At 11:30 p.m., Maj Ducusin, CO MBLT 2, left Camp Aguinaldo and established blocking positions at the vicinity of corner EDSA and East Avenue, Quezon City.⁴⁹⁸

C.6.c. 2 December

At 1:30 a.m., rebel troops left ABS-CBN for Timog/Circle, accompanied by some civilians in T-shirts and "maong" pants and escorted by two V-150s.⁴⁹⁹ One of the V-150s (Body No. 401) developed engine trouble and was abandoned. Elements of the Security Battalion under MSgt Tangonan recovered the V-150 and towed it to their HQ.⁵⁰⁰

By 5:00 a.m., MGen Ramon Montano ordered BGen Cesar Nazareno, RECOM 3 Commander, to block all enemy forces withdrawing from PTV-4 heading towards Camps Crame and Aguinaldo.⁵⁰¹

By 6:00 a.m., the 34 MC MBLT 4 under Lt Cal had moved to the Camp Aguinaldo area near White Plains to join their comrades.⁵⁰²

D. Camp Aguinaldo and its Vicinity

It appears that the ultimate objective of the rebels were to take over Camp Aguinaldo because this meant the fall of the symbolic seat of military power and to gain control of the center for AFP military operations. Inside Camp Aguinaldo are the headquarters of the AFPs top military officers, the main office of the Department of National Defense, the Logistics Command (LOGCOM) which controls and supplies the fire power, ammunitions and equipment requirement of the entire AFP, and the Joint Operations Center (JOC) which Col Edgardo Batenga, CO 701 Bde, describes as "the heart and soul of GHQ AFP."⁵⁰³

D.1. Pre 30 November Events

Intelligence Receives Mixed Signals of a Coup

As early as June 1989, the AFP Intelligence Office (J2) received information on a joint Zumel-Honasan attempt to destabilize government on the first or second week of June 1989. The plans did not materialize, although there was information of recruitment inside PAF bases by ex-Lt Col Neon Ebuen.⁵⁰⁴

Information on recruitment continued to be received up to August 1989 when Honasan was reportedly meeting unidentified top military officers and government officials.⁵⁰⁵ During this month, the Bureau of Customs uncovered a shipment of one million primers used for the manufacture of ammunitions for .45 cal guns consigned to Honasan. The Bureau turned them over to the PC Firearms and Explosives Unit (FEU).⁵⁰⁶

Around 26 November, NCRDC Intelligence under Col Benjamin Libarnes received information that a coup would be staged either on 1-5 December, 16-21 December, or 28-31 December of 1989, or 15-16 January 1990 by the joint forces of Marcos-Ver Loyalists and the RAM-HF.

There were also information about other plots. Military intelligence believed that the so-called “Peoples’ March for Justice” from Ilocos Norte to Manila from 26 October to 4 November was preparatory to a coup. When the coup failed to materialize, a second “Peoples’ March for Justice” was planned for 16-20 December with the Pambansang Salubungan Para Sa Katarungan (PSPK), an affiliate of the Movement for Filipino Ideology, as the front group.⁵⁰⁷

NCRDC Intelligence further reported that the security force under Gamos assigned to Vice President Laurel was preparing plans, code names and numbers, sketches of streets and buildings, and vehicles for a coup. The most compelling evidence was the information given by the wife of Lt Rodolfo Cachola, who was undergoing Scout Ranger training in San Quintin, Pangasinan.⁵⁰⁸ Upon instruction of her husband, Mrs Cachola revealed to the Philippine Marines that her husband and another officer who was also undergoing training, were called to the PSRR HQ in Fort Bonifacio and were briefed on the forthcoming coup.⁵⁰⁹

Infiltration from Within

On rotation, a Senior Command Duty Officer (SCDO) is designated for the 77-hectare Camp Aguinaldo Complex. By practice, the SCDO’s lasts for a period of two weeks.⁵¹⁰ A Command Duty Officer (CDO) at LOGCOM is likewise designated. On 30 November, rebel officers Commo Domingo Calajate and Cmdr Proceso Maligalig, Operations Officer LOGCOM, were SCDO of Camp Aguinaldo and the CDO of LOGCOM respectively. LOGCOM occupies two-thirds of the land area of Camp Aguinaldo. AFP GHQ occupies the remainder.

In September 1989, Navy Capt Manuel Ison, the newly installed CO of the Maintenance Depot of the AFP LOGCOM, completely reorganized and reshuffled the unit, replacing key personnel with his own. His recommendee, Lt Joel Cantos, took charge of the keys to the warehouses which contain oils, lubricants and spare parts. Ison also replaced some of the personnel of the Supply Accountability Office (SAO) with his own men and at the same time restricted Josue Duque, SAO Officer, from entering the warehouse.

On 29 November, troops started to mass in Camp Aguinaldo. NCRDC Intelligence failed to assess the importance of the arrival at LOGCOM that day of a Marine company from MBLT⁵¹¹ based in Bulacan headed by Capt Wilfredo Codiactal, EX-O, with a V-150. Pfc Marcelino Peralta said that the company was ordered to proceed to LOGCOM by Capt Codiactal without revealing their mission.⁵¹² This company first went to VAB, then proceeded to LOGCOM. Another Marine guard company, which was assigned to escort supplies to be picked up from LOGCOM, arrived on 30 November from Olongapo.⁵¹³

D.2. 30 November

At about 11:00 a.m., Col Thelmo Cunanan, CO 202 Bde 2 ID, came to the office of Commo Virgilio Marcelo, CG GHHC, and told the latter “There is gonna be a coup to be staged by the Marines and the Rangers”. Thereupon, Marcelo mobilized all his troops and by 4:00 p.m., they were all ready. At the same time, he relayed the information to BGen Roman Gavino, Jr, AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, and asked for confirmation. The latter could not confirm.⁵¹⁴

At 5:30 p.m., a group of soldiers held a meeting at one of the houses at the Enlisted Men’s Barrio inside Camp Aguinaldo near Gate 5. They discussed plans to ransack the Civil Relations Service (CRS) for arms. Commo Marcelo received information that ex-Lt Col Bibit’s group was already inside the camp to seize its armories.

Government Holds Top Command Conference

The Tagaytay incident led Secretary Ramos, together with Gen de Villa, to call a Command Conference which was held at ISAFP in Camp Aguinaldo starting at 5:00 p.m. The General Staff, the major service commanders, BGen

Cardones, BGen Cabanlig, BGen Orlando Antonio, CG NOLCOM, BGen Tereso Isleta, CG 15 SW, BGen Biazon, BGen Galido, BGen Loven Abadia, Commo Calajate and other major unit commanders attended the conference which lasted until 10:00 p.m.⁵¹⁵

The major service commanders, relayed to Gen de Villa their assessment of the military situation in relation to the previous day's attack by Scout Rangers on the AFP communications system in Tagaytay City. After the conference, Gen de Villa informed the country through a nationwide broadcast that a coup d'etat was about to be carried out by rightist forces. He added though that it had been aborted.⁵¹⁶

BGen Biazon, in order to augment the forces defending the camp, told Gen de Villa: "I am calling our reserve (MBLT 4) from Fort Bonifacio to Aguinaldo".⁵¹⁷ However, Biazon was told that his reserve MBLT 4 had gone over to the rebel side.

That evening, Col Edgardo Batenga, CO 701 Bde, placed his command under BGen Biazon's control. Batenga went to Sta Rosa, Laguna to consolidate his forces. He told one of his battalion commanders, Lt Col Alejandro Lasan, CO 72 IB, to proceed to Camp Aguinaldo with two armored vehicles and to engage all rebel troops coming from the south.⁵¹⁸

D.3. 1 December

Early Signs of Rebel Activity at Camp Aguinaldo

At 2:00 a.m., half of the First Marine Brigade Contingency Force left LOGCOM aboard two V-150s for Fort Bonifacio to join the rebels.⁵¹⁹

By 3:00 a.m., some unidentified armed soldiers entered the AFP Finance Center (AFPFC) and woke up the enlisted men, saying the camp has been infiltrated.⁵²⁰ The armed men allegedly forced them at gunpoint to join their cause.⁵²¹ These men were ordered to join the mutineers by Capt Pimentel, a finance officer, on the pretext that the exercise was "*para sa kinabukasan ng ating mga anak*" (for our children's future). They gave the men M-16 guns and ammunition. They then took some AFPFC vehicles—three mini-cruisers and one hi-ace van—and proceeded towards the Enlisted Men's Barrio near Gate 5.⁵²² Sgt Borbe, one of those in the group, said he saw many armed troops.

One of the vehicles was driven by Cpl Lucio Cabil of AFPFC. With him were SSgt Manlangit, SSgt Aloquin, and Wenceslao Lagradilla. The others riding the other vehicles included SSgt Asuncion, SSgt Borbe, Sgt Juni, Sgt Aguirre, Cpl Encotro, Edwin Velcora, Sixto Rodriguez and others. The men got off when they reached the area near Gate 5.⁵²³ At Gate 5, several government soldiers suddenly arrived with a V-150 and arrested them. Only then, claimed SSgt Asuncion, did he realize that he was with the rebel group.⁵²⁴

At the same time, about 50 armed military men were reportedly seen at the vicinity of Lambat Disco and Euro Car Sales near the corner of EDSA and P Tuazon St in Cubao, Quezon City.⁵²⁵ TSgt Henry Aquino recognized former NISA Lt Col Rodolfo Tor as one of the armed men who fired upon the NCRDC intelligence team monitoring Euro Car Sales.⁵²⁶

Ransack of the Civil Relations Service Office

Inside the GHQ premises, rebel troops started to mass. The AFP Civil Relations Service (CRS) armory was ransacked by 12 to 14 armed men at 4:30 a.m.⁵²⁷ Sgt Macario Mabazza narrated that, while sleeping at the CRS, armed men wearing masks woke him up and forced him to jump over the wall and flee.⁵²⁸ Some of the men were recognized as organic personnel of CRS. Later it was discovered that various firearms were stolen.

At about 5:00 a.m., some Military Police (MP), believed to be rebels, arrived at Camp Aguinaldo aboard a 6 x 6 truck, a pick-up and a V-150. However, Capt Duque rounded them up and brought them to the grandstand of Camp Aguinaldo, then to the HSC stockade. Confiscated from the rebel MPs were four M-14 rifles and one M-16 rifle.

First Rebel Airstrikes at Camps Aguinaldo and Crame

As the rebel MPs were being brought to the stockade at about 7:00 a.m., a rebel Sikorsky and Tora-Tora planes started bombarding Camp Aguinaldo.⁵²⁹ Sgt Aloquin, along with the other detainees, escaped as everyone scampered to save their own lives.⁵³⁰ LCdr Vicente Botero, CO, HHSG instructed his men to defend NCRDC HQ.

At 7:00 a.m., Biazon ordered the establishment of a Tactical Command Post at Camp Aguinaldo Grandstand in view of reports that rebel planes would hit Malacañang and military camps.⁵³¹ By 8:00 a.m., this command pose was set up.⁵³²

Later, government F-5 jets were seen encircling the rebel Tora-Tora planes. The two rebel Tora-Tora planes augmented by a Sikorsky helicopter, again attacked and bombed Camp Aguinaldo and Camp Crame at 9:15 a.m.⁵³³ HPC in Camp Crame was hit while Gen de Villa's residence and other buildings in Camp Aguinaldo were razed to the ground.⁵³⁴

At 9:45 a.m., a rebel Sikorsky helicopter fired rockets at Camp Crame hitting the Narcotics Command, HPC, and the COMMEL buildings. The PC-INP forces in Camp Crame fired at the aircraft using .30 and .50 cal machineguns. Because of the burning of HPC, a tactical and operations command post was organized at the Constabulary Security Group (CSG) building and at the Constabulary Adjutant Building.⁵³⁵

The rebel Tora-Toras and the Sikorsky helicopter again went back to strafe and bomb different strategic areas inside Camp Aguinaldo after bombing Malacañang, Camp Crame and strafing PTV-4.⁵³⁶

Commo Domingo Calajate Convinces LOGCOM to Join Rebels

At 8:00 a.m., Commo Calajate convened the officers and soldiers of LOGCOM at the front of the LOGCOM main building. At the meeting, Calajate said that there was already a failure in the chain of command and that GHQ was no longer functioning as of 4:00 a.m. He further revealed his affiliation with the rebels after telling them that he was the highest link in the AFFs chain of command. He then said that he was joining the rebel cause and urged "everyone to do the same". At the meeting, Calajate asked the men who were with him.⁵³⁷ Many raised their hand. Among them were Cmdr Maligalig Jr, Capt Manuel Ison, Lt Col Narciso Daus, Lt Col Nicolas Cabrera, Maj Raul Heredia, and some doctors and nurses.⁵³⁸ All those who did not want to join were given 15 minutes to leave. Col Manuel Mariano, Deputy Commander LOGCOM, after reflecting, approached Calajate and told him that he would not join the rebels,⁵³⁹ after which Mariano left.

The other soldiers were ordered to take measures to secure LOGCOM against government forces.⁵⁴⁰ Pfc Antonio Kabigting said that Calajate ordered them to defend the camp. Lt Col Ramon Palad gave Kabigting masking tape to attach on his left sleeve as a countersign. Maligalig, also wearing a countersign with a drawing on it, told him and the men to withdraw firearms and bullets and secure their offices.⁵⁴¹ Calajate, meanwhile, ordered the Philippine flag inverted. At this point, LOGCOM stopped supplying NCRDC with ammunition. Calajate also instructed that the gate at the Administration Building be barricaded.⁵⁴²

Also at the meeting with Calajate were Col Francisco Deocaris and Capt Manuel Santos. After the meeting, they returned to the Logistics Training Center. Fearing that there may be instructions to shoot those who went out of the camp, Deocaris stayed put and instructed Capt Santos to secure the office and safeguard their things.⁵⁴³

Cmdr Maligalig Takes Over JOC

After the meeting, Maligalig with 50 LOGCOM personnel went to the JOC located nearby and tried to take it by force. When BGen Lisandro Abadia, AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations (J3), heard this, he and troops from 72 IB under Lt Col Alejandro Lasan, began operations to retake JOC.⁵⁴⁴ JOC was then surrounded by Cmdr Maligalig's troops. Lisandro Abadia confronted the rebels at about 11:00 a.m. and without a shot being fired, Maligalig and his renegades withdrew to LOGCOM. Some laid down their arms after the confrontation.⁵⁴⁵ JOC was again safely in GHQ's control.

Government Consolidates Troops

Realizing Camp Aguinaldo's vulnerability on 1 December due to lack of men and defection of his reserves, Biazon had to wait for reinforcements from the commands of BGens Blando, Galido, Nazareno, Carbonell, Abella and Juachon.

First of the government reinforcements to arrive in Camp Aguinaldo were the 72 IB troops of Lt Col Lasan, followed shortly by additional soldiers led by Lasan's commander, Col Batenga of the 701 Bde. Their first task was to assist BGen Lisandro Abadia to clear JOC of rebels. They succeeded and even captured Maligalig. However, after the rebel Tora-Toras attacked, Maligalig escaped.⁵⁴⁶

Batenga's and Lasan's troops were divided: half was assigned to retake LOGCOM and the other half to defend the grandstand. Just about then, troops led by BGen Javier Carbonell, CG 2 ID, and troops from AFP TRACOM under BGen Juachon, arrived and took over the attack of LOGCOM.⁵⁴⁷

Over the telephone, BGen Carbonell tried to persuade Commo Calajate to surrender. When the latter refused, the government forces advanced.⁵⁴⁸ There was a firefight followed by the surrender of the rebels.

During the firefight, some of the 400 officers and men at LOGCOM started to escape. At 2:30 p.m., Calajate, Maligalig, Ison, and 2Lt Ragasa escaped on board Calajate's staff car.⁵⁴⁹ They proceeded to VAB.⁵⁵⁰ By 3:00 p.m., the flagpole which originally had the inverted flag was now replaced by a white one. Col Edgardo Kasilag, Chief of Staff of AFP LOGCOM, told the men defending LOGCOM that Calajate had left, and that they were to follow the chain of command.⁵⁵¹ Kasilag led them in surrendering to BGens Lisandro Abadia and Carbonell at the CSG grandstand.⁵⁵² The surrenderees were processed by Col Manuel Mariano, Acting Chief of AFP LOGCOM. The troops from the 701 Bde secured LOGCOM by 4:00 p.m.

RECOM 3 troops arrived at 5:27 p.m. to reinforce Camp Aguinaldo.

The order to consolidate troops from the 1st Marine Brigade (1 MBde) under BGen Cesar Abella deployed in Bulacan was given the night before. By 11:45 a.m., one battalion had arrived in Norzagaray. The second battalion was ready to move from their headquarters in Malabon by 2:00 p.m. The two battalions, MBLT 1 and MBLT 2, plus three separate companies, 52 MC, 61 MC and the HQS Coy, left Norzagaray by 4:00 p.m. These Marines arrived in Camp Aguinaldo at 7:00 p.m.⁵⁵³

During the whole day, 202 Bde and 203 Bde under Col Thelmo Cunanan and Col Clemente Mariano, respectively, were consolidating their troops preparatory to moving them to the vicinity of Camp Aguinaldo.⁵⁵⁴

MGen Montano ordered a PC Special Action Force (SAF), acting as a reserve and maneuver force, to proceed to Camp Crame with armor elements. The PC and elements of the WPD were directed to deploy blocking forces.⁵⁵⁵

Rebel Marine Troops Start to Consolidate

The major force of the rebels composed of the Marines from MBLT 4 and their armor vehicles started to consolidate at Camp Aguinaldo by late afternoon of 1 December.

By early evening, the rebel Marines at Gate 3 of Camp Aguinaldo started moving to the Mormon Church area, together with the tanks.⁵⁵⁶ At 10:00 p.m., three Marine companies (HQ Coy, 4 MC, 24 MC) MBLT 4, supported by tanks and armor vehicles and led by Maj de la Peña and 2Lt Delfin Actas, moved from VAB through EDSA towards Camp Aguinaldo. Shooting ensued when these troops moved through the overpass by Mantrade Bldg in Makati.⁵⁵⁷ The Marines reached the EDSA-Ortigas Avenue intersection by 11:00 p.m., after breaking through the blockade at Guadalupe bridge set up by Regional Special Action Force. The 701 Bde and elements of the 1st MBde, established blocking positions at the intersection of EDSA-Ortigas Avenue to prevent enemy movements towards Camp Aguinaldo. When they reached the White Plains area by midnight, government forces engaged them in a firefight which resulted in the death of Lt Ireneo Galigana on the rebel side.⁵⁵⁸

D.4. 2 December

At 1:00 a.m., the 34 MC and 44 MC, also of MBLT 4, joined other rebel Marine units in White Plains⁵⁵⁹ area and came under attack by government aircrafts. Some of the rebel Marines took shelter in nearby residences, as well as in the Christ the King Parish in Pasig.⁵⁶⁰

The Second Wave – Breaking through the Barricade

To fortify defensive positions, Maj Amando Melo, CO MBLT 1, moved his Command Group Bravo Coy from EDSA-Ortigas Avenue to the Green Meadows-White Plains area.⁵⁶¹ BGen Cesar Abella, CG 1 MBde, dispatched two V-150s (with body nos. M418 and M421) to augment the blocking forces of MBLT 1.⁵⁶² MBLT 2 under Maj Edgardo Ducusin relocated their blocking position from EDSA-East Avenue in Quezon City to EDSA-Aurora Blvd.⁵⁶³

Seeing the blockade of two 6 x 6 trucks set up by Maj Melo's forces, rebel MBLT 4 officers led by Maj Antonio Bisenio and Capt Calimag sought to speak with Maj Melo. Eventually, negotiations transpired between Melo and Gojo with the former appealing for the MBLT 4 to return to Fort Bonifacio. Gojo, on the other hand, along with Lt Col Felimon Gasmin, Majs Bisenio, Franklin Casipit, and Capt Ariel Querubin tried to convince Melo and his men to join them. The rebels proved more persuasive. Forty-four enlisted men of Maj Melo, with one V-150 (body no M421) defected to the rebel side.⁵⁶⁴

At 3:00 a.m., rebel attacks began. Using an LVT, Gojo's troops rammed through two 6 x 6 trucks blockade put up by the MBLT 1 forces at Katipunan corner White Plains Roads.⁵⁶⁵ The LVT maneuvered along Katipunan Avenue followed by V-150s and went towards Gate 1.⁵⁶⁶ Lt Col Jerry Albano was reported seen manning a V-150 (body no F-302) moving together with another V-150 (body no F-301).⁵⁶⁷

Arrival of Government Reinforcements

The 202 Bde and 203 Bde arrived at Guadalupe about 2:00 a.m. and linked up with the 701 Bde at corner Ortigas Avenue and EDSA. Col Cunanan's 202 Bde, together with two LVTs, proceeded to the area of Green Meadows and White Plains. Their mission was to pursue the enemy and hit them from the rear.⁵⁶⁸ By 5:00 a.m., the 202 Bde and Batanga's 701 Bde used 90 mm recoilless rifles and 105 mm Howitzers to deter the LVTs and V-150s from entering Camp Aguinaldo.⁵⁶⁹

NCRDC dispatched one company from AFP TRACOM under Cmdr Mario Ollero to augment the troops from MBLT 1 and the 203 Bde at corner Katipunan and White Plains to form a blocking force against enemy attempts to break through Gates 3, 4 and 5.⁵⁷⁰ The blocking force was subjected to assaults by rebel troops, and one LVT tried to break through at the concrete northeast wall near the AFP LOGCOM watertank. The rebel tanks continued to attack until 6:00 a.m.

Government Air Strikes Continue

At the same time, government air strikes continue. One UH-1H (Huey) helicopter piloted by Loven Abadia made three air strikes. Rebel gunfire wounded his co-pilot. Likewise, PAFF-5s and Sikorsky helicopters made two airstrikes along Katipunan, dropping bombs at rebel positions. Unfortunately, the bombs hit the men of the 202 Bde under Col Cunanan who were mistaken for rebels since they were moving towards Boni Serrano St.⁵⁷¹ Five of Col Cunanan's men perished while 30 others were injured. Of this event, Col Cunanan relates

The Chief of Staff asked me to assemble the brigade and he went there and he apologized to the soldiers in public for the sad incident and he said . . . Gen de Villa said, 'I accept full responsibility for this'. And this was a very big boost to the morale of the soldiers.⁵⁷²

Arrival of Marine Troops from PTV-4

The 34 MC MBLT 4 under Lt Cal, upon arriving at White Plains area in the morning, was attacked by government Sikorsky helicopters. To lessen their vulnerability to air attacks, Cal ordered his men to proceed to Gate 1 of Camp Aguinaldo.⁵⁷³

A number of rebels had become discouraged by this time. Some left their units and entered nearby houses, changed into civilian clothes, and joined other civilians in evacuating the area.⁵⁷⁴ The rockets fired by the Sikorsky forced the soldiers to seek refuge in houses in White Plains.⁵⁷⁵ At 10:00 a.m., the NCRDC Tactical Command Post received telephone calls from rebel Marine soldiers at the Mormon Church negotiating for surrender.⁵⁷⁶

Government aircrafts continued strafing, firing rockets, and bombing rebel positions at various times of the day.⁵⁷⁷

The Third Wave – More Attacks by Rebels

The subsequent sporadic burst of rebel artillery fire hit the JOC compound. Tasked to defend the GHQ area,⁵⁷⁸ the 72 IB troops under Lt Col Lasan received information that enemy Marines with LVT support were on their way to assault their positions at 4:30 p.m.⁵⁷⁹ Together with the soldiers from the 203 Bde, they repulsed the rebel offensive which attempted to break through the AFP LOGCOM perimeter on Katipunan Avenue. More shooting occurred until 7:00 p.m.⁵⁸⁰

Camp Aguinaldo Defense Plan Implemented

A conference was held at about 8:30 p.m. to coordinate plans for the defense of Camp Aguinaldo and offensive action against rebel positions. At the ISAFP Battle Staff room, de Villa and Ramos met the COs of the 203 Bde, 701 Bde, and the PC SAF Commander. The 203 Bde was tasked to secure the AFP LOGCOM area.⁵⁸¹ Elements from the GHQ, HSC, 203 Bde, MSG and the trainees of the AFP TRACOM under Col Yamzon would secure Camp Aguinaldo. The 72 IB was assigned as a screening force.⁵⁸²

At 11:30 p.m., the government launched its counter attack. BGen Biazon directed one section of the weapons platoon of 72 IB under 2Lt Miravello Miranda to counter attack the advancing rebel forces at LOGCOM. They immobilized one rebel LVT with two shots of their 90 RR. A second LVT withdrew after encountering heavy fire from Miranda's troops. Miranda then re-directed the artillery fire at rebel positions at the Veteran's building.⁵⁸³

D.5. 3 December

The Final Wave – Massive Assault of Rebels

By early morning of 3 December, the rebels prepared their most massive offensive to take over Camp Aguinaldo. Heavy gunbursts of different calibers, cannons, as well as mortars were heard all over Camp Aguinaldo.⁵⁸⁴ The 34 MC under Lt Cal persisted in entering the Camp through Gate 1 at about 1:00 a.m. But as they neared the gate, they were repelled by mortar fire.⁵⁸⁵

At the same time, more than a thousand RAM-HF soldiers coming from White Plains started simultaneous attacks at GHQ with supporting fire from 81 mm mortars, 105 mm Howitzers, V-150s and three LVTs.⁵⁸⁶ The preparation fires were followed by ground assaults, spearheaded by tanks and armor vehicles on the northern and eastern perimeter.⁵⁸⁷ The rebels intensified their effort to break through Gate 1.⁵⁸⁸

Other rebel forces initiated assaults using combined artillery and mortar attacks to enter Camp Aguinaldo alternating between Gates 1 and 2 near LOGCOM. The men of the 203 Bde under Clemente Mariano defended the gates with heavy fire,⁵⁸⁹ causing the attacking Marines to retreat.⁵⁹⁰

The government fortified their defense positions. The 32 MC, MSG, which arrived earlier from PTV-4 retaliated with their 105 mm Howitzer and hit one of the LVTs.⁵⁹¹ Recoilless rifle fire from the troops from GHQ HSC and the 701 Bde and 105 mm Howitzer fire from the 1 MBde and the 202 Bde repulsed the LVTs. The troops of Maj de la Pena were able to enter Camp Aguinaldo behind the burning LVT and took positions at the St Ignatius Chapel, AFPCES and the GHQ Medical Dispensary. The rest of the rebel forces withdrew and consolidated at 18th and 20th Avenues in Cubao.

Surrender Feelers Sent

By 5:30 a.m., surrender feelers through Lt Col Rodolfo Gallardo, Camp Aguinaldo Post Chaplain, were received from Maj de la Pena, who with his men were trapped at the area of St Ignatius Chapel.⁵⁹²

At 9:00 a.m., negotiations pushed through with the assistance of Col Daranchang. At first, Maj de la Pena refused to surrender, vowing to fight to the last man. However, Col Daranchang tried to talk him out of his decision, warning him that Biazon was ready to give the signal to “wipe them out.”⁵⁹³ At 11:00 a.m., about 203 Marine officers and men from 44 MC, 24 MC, 34 MC, and 4 MC led by dela Pefta and Calimag surrendered.⁵⁹⁴

At 4:00p.m., Ramos and de Villa held a press conference to formally announce the government victory. The Government reported that NCRDC and other units deployed 6,932 men. They said, government forces suffered one officer and 31 enlisted men killed in action, 29 officers and 224 enlisted men wounded in action.⁵⁹⁵

The Government also reported that rebel forces suffered one officer and 16 enlisted men killed in action, and 8 officers and 84 enlisted men wounded in action. A total of 390 firearms, 15 military vehicles, six tanks, and a civilian delivery truck were recovered from the rebels.⁵⁹⁶

E. Fort Magsaysay – Greenhills

E.1. Before 30 November

Various Activities at Fort Magsaysay and BGen Blando

BGen Marcelo Blando became the CO of the 7th Infantry Division (7 ID) based in Fort Magsaysay, Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, on 8 August 1989. In the August 1987 attempted coup, Honasan’s main force came from Fort Magsaysay. It is also the training center of the Scout Rangers and one of the venues of Exercise Balikatan 1989. The area of operation of the 7 ID cover the Army units deployed in the provinces of Aurora, Nueva Ecija, Pangasinan, Tarlac, Bataan, Zambales and parts of Rizal, Cavite, and Laguna.⁵⁹⁷

Prior to taking command of 7 ID, Blando was CG of the FSRR and was given by the Scout Rangers the code name of “Tatang One”.⁵⁹⁸

By October 1989, using his prerogative as CG 7 ID, Blando removed the operational control of the First Scout Ranger Company from Col Oswaldo Villanueva, Brigade Commander, 703 Bde, and placed them under 56 IB of Lt Col Levy Zamora.⁵⁹⁹

Blando's closeness to Zamora, Lt Col Arsenio Tecson, CO 68 IB and Maj Alfredo Oliveros, CO 24 IB, was shown by his frequent visits to their commands which were done without the normal advise to their respective brigade commanders.⁶⁰⁰

Col Villanueva noticed this "closeness" between Zamora and Blando to the point that there were several instances when Blando would visit 56 IB and Zamora without informing him. Col Villanueva testified that before the December 1989 attempted coup, BGen Blando seemed to act suspiciously. He said

I do not have any premonition whatsoever, on his [BGen Blando's] participation in the coup d'etat but it was quite strange that whenever he visits my unit, he does not tell me, [he] just tried [to] proceed directly to 56th EB that is Lt Col Zamora and then Lt Col Zamora will not also tell me what they took up together and it is not only once that he did it, he [did] it repeatedly . . .⁶⁰¹

Sometime in September 1989, MGen Cacanando visited the 703 Bde. When he found out that Maj Ernie Amboy, who was involved in the August 1987 coup attempt, was the EX-O of Zamora, he directed that Amboy be assigned elsewhere. Cacanando also found out that the 56 IB had transferred four sacks of firearms to the rear command post. This was reported to Blando, but the latter seemed unconcerned.⁶⁰²

Blando ordered the 73 IB under Lt Col Rolan Erasmo pulled out from the control of the 703 Bde and had it assigned to Fort Magsaysay for retraining and cross training with US Armed Forces under Exercise Balikatan.⁶⁰³ There were reports that the RP-US Exercise Balikatan was used as a cover for the build up and movement of troops by the rebels.⁶⁰⁴

Sometime in October 1989, President Aquino visited Fort Magsaysay. Col Villanueva, who was the Honor Guard Commander of the Brigade for the ceremonies in honor of the President, narrated

. . . When President Aquino was our guest, one of the honor guards there [was] caught with one live ammo inside the chambers of his rifle, although we were told that BGen Blando himself was the one who inspected personally the guards before they were called in front of the Division headquarters.⁶⁰⁵

The soldier, from whom the live ammo was discovered, was investigated by the Inspector General and Provost Marshall of 7 ID.⁶⁰⁶ The report that Blando himself inspected the guard came from Col Josefino Manayao, 7 ID Assistant Chief of Staff for Education and Training.⁶⁰⁷

At Fort Magsaysay, at about 6:00 p.m. of 30 November, Lt Lucero informed Blando that Maj Nestor Senares and ex-Lt Col Eduardo Matillano, both of whom were involved in the 1987 coup attempt, were sighted in Cabanatuan City.

E.2. 30 November

Order for Roadblocks in Nueva Ecija

At 1:15 p.m., troops in full combat gear aboard 6 x 6 trucks, one jeep and one pick-up were monitored by Nueva Ecija Constabulary Command under Col Ferdinand Lagman, PC Provincial Commander, passing through Nueva Ecija. After verifying the movements with Lt Col Artemio Cacal PA, based in Camp Aquino, Tarlac, Col Lagman learned that the movement was authorized.⁶⁰⁸

However, Lagman entertained doubts which made him take other actions. He testified

. . . in my mind however, I was already in doubt because said troops were in full combat gear. So I [gave] instructions to all my company commanders to implement OPLAN Regal⁶⁰⁹ and at the same time informed the Regional Tactical Operations Center of my action. I requested clearance to implement OPLAN Regal immediately. I

also instructed my intelligence officer to proceed to the Commanding General of the 7 ID, who is BGen Blando, to find out if such troops came from his unit.⁶¹⁰

Meanwhile, in the afternoon, Lagman found out that no troops from the 7 ID moved out of Fort Magsaysay. He concluded that the units he saw were Scout Rangers coming from Isabela and he became convinced that the troop movements were signals of a forthcoming coup. Hence, at 11:40 p.m., after conferring again with his operations and intelligence officers, he instructed all company commanders to establish roadblocks as part of OPLAN Regal.

Using trucks and other vehicles as obstacles, PC elements established road blocks along Maharlika Highway in Nueva Ecija particularly in Brgy Malasin in San Jose, Brgy Baloc in Sto Domingo, Brgy Sumacab in Cabanatuan City and in Brgy Castellano in Gapan.⁶¹¹ Verbal instructions were given to Capt Brigido Undan, CO 182 PC Coy, to establish road blocks at Brgy Kita-Kita in San Jose City. Capt Undan also ordered Lt Ronald Estilles to establish road blocks at Brgy Cebar.⁶¹²

E.3. 1 December

Consolidation of Troops under Blando

Lt Col Rolan Erasmo, while sleeping at the bivouac area at Fort Magsaysay, was awakened at about midnight of 30 November and told to report to the Office of the Operations Officer, at the Division HQ to attend an emergency conference with Blando.

At 1:30 a.m., Blando held an emergency conference at the Division HQ in Fort Magsaysay, attended by the General and Special Staffs and Post Unit Commanders. Blando, in civilian clothes but fully armed, gave instructions to prepare to reinforce government forces in Camp Aguinaldo.

PC SAF Company Leaves Fort Magsaysay

At 2:00 a.m., a PC Special Action Force (PCSAF) Company led by Lt Dennis Peter Pefia, composed of six officers and 54 enlisted personnel left Fort Magsaysay for Manila aboard a 6 x 6 truck, a Kennedy jeep, a communication van, a Ford Fiera and Dodge van. MSgt Mendoza, Duty Officer NOLCOM Operations Office, called up Fort Magsaysay to verify the movement of the troops. NOLCOM cleared the movement. They reached Manila without any incident but it was not clear what happened to them there or what they did.⁶¹³

In the meanwhile, BGen Antonio, CG NOLCOM, contacted CSAFP de Villa, and was directed to organize and lead one battalion from Fort Magsaysay. The NCRDC COC also received a report from AFP JOC regarding the movement of the PC SAF.⁶¹⁴

Twenty minutes after the PC SAF left, CSAFP and NOLCOM called to hold the troops. The group, however, had already left and could not be recalled.⁶¹⁵ At 2:25 a.m., the NCRDC COC received a report from AFP JOC that NOLCOM has cancelled the movement of PC SAF.⁶¹⁶ This made the troop movement of the PC SAF unauthorized.

Lt Col Erasmo's 73 IB Troops Mobilized

At 6:00 a.m., Antonio called Blando to ask if the battalion was ready. By 8:00 a.m., 73 IB under Lt Col Erasmo, composed of 15 officers and 294 enlisted personnel, were already assembled at the grandstand. Blando briefed the men, asking them to support the duly constituted authority. According to Col Alejandro Trespeces, Chief of Staff 7 ID, Blando also insinuated that he might not leave or go with the troops to Manila.

Erasmo commented that his troops could have moved for Manila by early morning. However, no adequate transportation facilities for his entire battalion were available until 10:00 a.m., when cargo trucks arrived at Fort Magsaysay. Blando ordered Erasmo to proceed to GHQ in Camp Aguinaldo and then report to Lisandro Abadia at JOC for instructions. Later, Blando told Erasmo "*Mahirap yata ang sitwasyon sa Maynila* (The situation in Manila

is bad). I think we better stay put. Just stand by for any further orders”.⁶¹⁷ Thus, Erasmo’s troops did not move until after lunch.

Mobilization of Scout Ranger Trainees

According to Capt Herbert Avinante, Deputy Commander of the SR Training Center (SRTC) FSRR, Blando ordered him at about 8:00 a.m. to prepare a company of Rangers to go to Camp Aguinaldo. Capt Avinante claimed that the movement was to support GHQ upon orders of de Villa and Antonio.⁶¹⁸ It should be noted that since the SRTC is located at Colado Village inside Fort Magsaysay, the 7 ID under Blando can use the Scout Ranger students for operations. Blando, however, denied giving such orders to Avinante, saying that the Scout Rangers merely attached themselves to his troops on their way to Manila.⁶¹⁹

Avinante then ordered Lt Felipe Sangalang, Administrative Officer, SRTC to alert one company to be led by him. After 124 officers and men were assembled, they moved out from the SRTC to the 7 ID HQ, where they joined other troops from 73 IB. Other elements from 3 LABde and armor units from the Headquarters Service Battalion also joined the troops under Blando.⁶²⁰

Mobilization of Maj Gutierrez’s 71 IB Troops

Because de Villa asked Blando for another battalion, Blando instructed his Operations Officer, Capt Baylon, to direct Maj Pedro Gutierrez, CO 71 IB, to consolidate his battalion from Munoz, Nueva Ecija and proceed to Fort Magsaysay. Upon receiving the orders, Gutierrez called for the different units of the 71 IB, composed of about 250 officers and men, to regroup.⁶²¹ Gutierrez tried to reach his Brigade Commander, Col Villanueva, at his Command Post for instructions and guidance on what is happening. However, Col Villanueva was not there.⁶²² He was then at his quarters in Fort Bonifacio. By 9:30 a.m., the units of the 71 IB, except one company, had regrouped at Mufioz, Nueva Ecija.⁶²³ Capt Undan intercepted two platoons of soldiers belonging to C Coy, 71 IB under Lt Canes on board one 6 x 6 truck and two ten-wheeler trucks which were stopped by the road blocks set up at Brgy Malasin, San Jose City.⁶²⁴ Gutierrez went to Brgy Malasin checkpoint, and talked to Undan to intercede for the passage of his troops. Undan asked permission from his commander, Col Lagman, who granted clearance.

Gutierrez arrived at Fort Magsaysay at 11:30 a.m. with 14 officers and 266 EPs. He reported to Blando at the Office of the Division Sgt Major. Blando was with Col Trespeces, Lt Col Josefino Manayao, Lt Danilo Lucero, Lt Rafael Valencia and Capt Herbert Avinante. Blando directed Gutierrez to proceed to Metro Manila and report to NCRDC at Camp Aguinaldo but to return to Nueva Ecija if the situation does not permit. BGen Blando decided to accompany the 71 and 73 IBs.⁶²⁵

Helicopter Sightings at Fort Magsaysay

During this time, the rebel Rangers in Fort Bonifacio were waiting for Blando to arrive by helicopter. There were unconfirmed reports that Blando would be CG PA if the coup succeeded.⁶²⁶ At about 1:00 p.m., one Sikorsky helicopter gunship with white RAM-SFP markings on its side landed at the Aeroscout area in Fort Magsaysay.⁶²⁷ This helicopter, believed to be refueling, was piloted by Lt Gregor Panelo, PAF.⁶²⁸ The helicopter took off at 3:00 p.m. without Blando and headed east of Fort Magsaysay.⁶²⁹ It was later confirmed that this helicopter was the same one found abandoned and covered with dried leaves at Fort Magsaysay after the attempted coup.⁶³⁰

BGen Blando Prepares Troops for Convoy

The troops from 73 IB and 71 IB were ready for movement by 1:30 p.m. Blando gave a pep talk to the men at the 7 ID grandstand. He reportedly said: “*Sayang ang pagpunta natin sa Maynila kung babaliktad kayo*” (It will be useless for us to go to Manila if we end up joining the rebels). He talked about the plans to proceed to Camp Aguinaldo to reinforce government forces.⁶³¹ Blando still remained in contact with Antonio who instructed him to move for Manila right away.

Blando instructed Trespeces to assemble all the vehicles along the road in preparation for loading the troops in the following order: the first column of vehicles would be utilized by elements of 71 IB under Maj Gutierrez, followed by the command group composed of Blando's close-in security, then elements of the 73 IB under Lt Col Erasmo, and finally, elements of the Scout Rangers. The whole group comprising of more than a thousand men, used two V-150 commandos, 17 M-35 trucks, 13 Kennedy jeeps, two Land Rovers, one van and two cars.⁶³²

Blando rode the V-150 going to Manila, leaving behind Trespeces, who was designated to be the OIC of Fort Magsaysay with orders to get in touch with Blando by radio from time to time.⁶³³

The convoy, led by Blando, left Fort Magsaysay at 3:30 p.m.⁶³⁴ He traveled from Fort Magsaysay to Cabanatuan, then Gapan and Cabaiao, in Nueva Ecija, then Arayat and San Fernando, in Pampanga, and then south through the North Expressway.⁶³⁵ The convoy passed through the PC checkpoints in Nueva Ecija after Col Samonte, CS NOLCOM, at around 4:00 p.m., instructed the Nueva Ecija Constabulary Command to give Blando's troops safe passage. The convoy was reportedly cleared at the Nueva Ecija checkpoints at 6:00 p.m.⁶³⁶

Meeting at Malinta, Bulacan

Blando maintained radio silence during the trip from Fort Magsaysay. The convoy was stopped at Malinta, Valenzuela, Metro Manila, by roadblocks placed by government troops and the Bulacan provincial government. To check the movement of the group, Col Saturnino Dumlao, an emissary from GHQ, met the convoy at about 10:00 p.m.

Dumlao talked to Blando who was at the middle of the convoy. Curious as to what caused the stop, Gutierrez, who was at the front column, went to see Blando who was by then meeting with Manayao, Avinante and Dumlao.⁶³⁷ While the officers were conversing, Erasmo, who was at the back of the convoy, went forward and joined the group which included Valencia and Crucero.⁶³⁸

According to Gutierrez, Manayao and Avinante were trying to persuade Blando not to go to Camp Aguinaldo, and suggested that they go to Fort Bonifacio instead and consolidate there.⁶³⁹ As reported by Erasmo, Blando gave instructions to proceed to Fort Bonifacio saying "Let us make that our last stand."⁶⁴⁰ Blando, however, denied that he wanted to go to Fort Bonifacio. In his testimony, he said that a certain "Officer-in-charge of the Rangers who was a Captain" threatened him at gunpoint not proceed to Camp Aguinaldo and that they should support the rebels.⁶⁴¹ Capt Avinante, the head of the Rangers which joined Blando's troops, however, denied that he threatened Blando.⁶⁴²

Knowing that the rebels already controlled Fort Bonifacio by that time, Gutierrez objected to the instruction and threatened to break away from the group and return to Fort Magsaysay. In view of his objection, it was decided to proceed to a neutral ground instead.⁶⁴³

E.4. 2 December

The group left Malinta at about 12:00 midnight and proceeded to Metro Manila, passing through Balintawak and Munoz Market until it reached Ortigas Avenue. It then turned towards the Greenhills area in San Juan. The convoy avoided passing through EDSA because of reports that it was blockaded. They stopped at the area near the Greenhills Commercial Complex at about 3:00 a.m.⁶⁴⁴

Tired and hungry, the men and officers of the convoy rested at different areas around the parking lot of the Greenhills Commercial Complex. Because of Blando's stand to stay neutral, Erasmo had discussions with Gutierrez regarding the matter. According to Erasmo, they were both by this time harboring doubts as to the loyalty of Blando.

Erasmo suggested that they call Blando for a "no-holds-barred discussion" to which the other officers like Crucero and Valencia agreed.⁶⁴⁵ By 5:00 a.m., Blando agreed and a conference was held, attended by Blando, his HQ staff and all officers of 71 IB and 73 IB. Erasmo testified that

... as a result of this discussion seemingly majority of the officers present were convinced against the government in order to effect change for the better, finally it was decided by BGen Blando to change his stand from being neutral [to supporting] the Reform Movement. Then he consulted us if he can already declare his stand openly against the government. Maj Gutierrez and myself objected by telling him that we will not commit without also consulting the consensus of our men and BGen Blando readily acceded ...⁶⁴⁶

Erasmus explained that, he did not categorically disagree with Blando's decision to side with the rebels because of his training in "obedience and the custom of the service". He claimed that his indirect hint "was a better way to tell him [Blando] that he [Erasmus] does not agree with his [Blando] decision".⁶⁴⁷

E.5. 3 December

Negotiation at Greenhills

Prior to this no-holds-barred meeting, Gutierrez on the evening of 2 December, informed Col Villanueva by telephone that he was in Greenhills. After the call, Villanueva talked to MGen Cacanando for instructions. Villanueva then proceeded from his quarters in Fort Bonifacio to Greenhills. When he arrived at about 5:30 a.m., he sought to talk to Blando, but the latter ignored him. Villanueva then spoke to Gutierrez and asked to be briefed. The latter related the discussion they had earlier. Villanueva, in turn, reiterated to Gutierrez that his stand was for the government.⁶⁴⁸

Villanueva reported to Cacanando at around 7:30 a.m. about the situation in Greenhills and that Blando was for the rebels. Cacanando reacted by appointing Villanueva as OIC of 7 ID, relieving Blando of his command. Villanueva talked to Blando, Manayao, and Gutierrez, reiterating his position and asking Blando to give up. Blando refused to listen. Villanueva then talked to the troops and instructed them to follow his orders. He also set up his HQ at the nearby Mandarin Villa Restaurant and there reported to PA Operations Officer GHQ about the situation.⁶⁴⁹

Firefight with the Scout Rangers

At 8:00 a.m., Capt Avinante briefed his men who were by then wearing rebel countersigns about his plan to go to Camp Aguinaldo and link up with other rebel troops.⁶⁵⁰ They started moving through the streets in Greenhills towards Camp Aguinaldo. At 12:30 p.m., loyal Marines from 2 MC MBLT 2 under Maj Ducusin backed up by three V-150 Commandos arrived to intercept the Scout Rangers.⁶⁵¹

Fighting broke out in Connecticut Street, Greenhills and at the area near Belson House, some 300 to 400 meters away from Greenhills Shopping Center. The firefights were sporadic.⁶⁵² During the shooting, Avinante was hit in the leg and was brought to Cardinal Santos Hospital for treatment.⁶⁵³ There were reports that reinforcements from 24 IB, 68 IB, and 56 IB were expected by the rebel Rangers. When these troops did not arrive despite the prodding of BGen Blando,⁶⁵⁴ the SRTC surrendered and were turned over to BGen Manuel Bruan, CO of the Constabulary Highway Patrol Group.⁶⁵⁵

Surrender of Blando

In the afternoon, Villanueva ordered Gutierrez to arrest Blando. Gutierrez asked that he talk to BGen Biazon first before arresting Blando. Biazon gave the go signal to Gutierrez. By the time Gutierrez was about to arrest Blando, BGen (Ret) Restituto Padilla, de Villa's emissary, had persuaded Blando to surrender peacefully.

Blando was then brought to Villanueva who asked him to stop the movement of 24 IB, 56 IB, and the 68 IB. Blando cooperated. He contacted Maj Oliveros, who stopped the movement of 68 IB under Col Tecson. Blando, however, was not able to contact 56 IB under Zamora.⁶⁵⁶ Blando advised the 7 ID Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations in Fort Magsaysay to stop elements of 56 IB from proceeding to Metro Manila, and gave further instructions to tell the COs of 24 IB and 68 IB that he was revoking his orders to move the troops to Metro Manila.⁶⁵⁷

At around midnight, Villanueva brought Blando and Manayao to de Villa. Upon instructions of de Villa, Villanueva accompanied the troops of 71 IB, 73 IB and HQ personnel to their respective barracks in the North.⁶⁵⁸

F. Activities in Northern Luzon

F.1. Scout Rangers in Isabela

Defense of the Cagayan Valley Region was undertaken by NOLCOM under BGen Orlando Antonio. In December 1989, many Army troops were deployed in Cagayan Valley to fight communist insurgency, which was prevalent in the area. Hence, part of the PA units present in the area were Scout Rangers under the FSRR, which the rebels utilized in the December 1989 attempted coup.

F.1.a. 30 November

Antonio Orders Red Alert in NOLCOM

At the 5 ID HQ in Echague, Isabela, a grievance survey was reportedly made a week before the coup. Lt Enriquez and Lt Vinuya, student officers of the Special Intelligence Training School (SITS), ISAFP, arrived with survey questionnaires focusing mainly on issues and problems confronting the AFP and the present administration. Part III of the questionnaire tended to suggest courses of action against the government such as non-violent civil disobedience or a coup. So-called compelling reasons for certain elements in the AFP to resort to a coup were presented in the survey.⁶⁵⁹

BGen Antonio received an intelligence report about the coup at 1:20 p.m. on 30 November while on troop inspection in Ilagan, Isabela. He then called his Assistant Chief for Intelligence, Col Rubio and instructed him to place all NOLCOM units on red alert. Hence, by 3:00 p.m., red alert status was declared in Fort Magsaysay. Troop movements at night were disallowed.⁶⁶⁰

Movements of Rebel Rangers in Isabela

In the morning of 30 November, Lt Col Rafael Galvez, CO 4 SRB, directed Capt Lauro Gordula, EX-O 4 SRB, to take charge, since he was going to Manila that evening. Galvez also dispatched a group of Scout Rangers for Fort Bonifacio.⁶⁶¹ This group was later monitored to have passed through Nueva Ecija at 1:30 p.m.⁶⁶²

Before leaving for Manila, Galvez had an occasion to talk to Lt Jose Rene Jarque, Operations Officer 4 SRB, who had just arrived at the battalion base in Cordon, Isabela from Manila. Lt Jarque testified

At Cordon, I found out that many of our troops were already gone. They were not in their company headquarters as they were supposed to be, and as the Operations Officer, it was my duty to find out. So, I had a talk with Lt Col Galvez who was then at our Battalion headquarters and he informed me that the troops had gone down to Manila. So, I said 'OK sir, what is the plan?' He told me 'You know', and I said 'Yes, sir.' But he also told me that 'I am giving you the decision whether you should go to Manila or not', and I said, 'OK sir, I will think about it.' Then, being tired from the travel, it was almost a 9 or 10 hour travel from Manila, I decided to take a rest. At around 8 or 9 in the evening, I was called by one of the of the escorts and he told me that Lt Col Galvez was leaving for Manila along with some escorts. And, as always, he is a Lt Col and I am only a lieutenant. [So] I said 'Yes, sir.'⁶⁶³

Lt Jarque further explained what Galvez meant by "You know"

Well, there had been discussions before, sir, about that and he told me that they (referring to Lt Col Galvez) were going down to Manila, because, I mean, he explained it further. I asked, and he said, 'You know, the same as August 27 and 28'. So I said, 'Yes, sir'.⁶⁶⁴

Galvez left Gordon, Isabela for Manila with some companions at about 6:00 p.m.⁶⁶⁵

F.1.b. 1 December

At about 4:00 a.m. of 1 December, BGen Antonio left Ilagan, Isabela and reached the 5 ID HQ in Camp Melchor de la Cruz, Echague, Isabela an hour later. He then instructed BGen Manuel Dizon, CG 5 ID, to prepare a minimum of two battalions to augment government forces in Manila.⁶⁶⁶ At 6:00 a.m., DZRH interviewed Antonio who confirmed the ongoing coup d'état staged by RAM-HF soldiers in Metro Manila. Antonio and Dizon announced that they are following the chain of command.

Antonio also directed Dizon to alert the 41 IB and 45 IB with the commanding officer of the 503 Bde as Task Force Commander, to consolidate forces and to prepare to move on orders to Camp Tito Abat in Manaoag, Pangasinan, as NOLCOM reserve for possible deployment in Manila.⁶⁶⁷ At 7:30 a.m., Maj Mendoza of NOLCOM called for safe passage of elements of 41 IB and 45 IB under Col Guillermo from Isabela to Camp Abat in Pangasinan.

At 8:40 a.m., Antonio arrived in Camp Aquino in Tarlac and immediately called for a conference. He contacted BGen Cesar Nazareno, Regional Commander of RECOM 3 who informed him that troops (68 IB and 24 IB) in Bataan had already left by then. Antonio also talked with BGen Armando Garcia, CG 5th Fighter Wing at Basa Air Base to reiterate his position of following the chain of command.⁶⁶⁸

F.1.c. 2 December

In the morning, Capt Gordula received orders from Lt Col Galvez, who was in Fort Bonifacio, to bring the Scout Ranger troops to Manila. Gordula assembled about 50 men aboard two 6 x 6 trucks. The 4 SRB troops left Isabela and passed through Nueva Vizcaya. The 4 SRB troops were stopped, however, by roadblocks at Bgy Malasin, San Jose City in Nueva Ecija placed by Capt Undan who was manning the PC checkpoint.⁶⁶⁹

A company of Scout Rangers headed by Capt Danny Panandigan belonging to the 2 SR Coy, FSRR stationed in Lallo, Cagayan, also moved towards Manila to join the other Scout Rangers in Fort Bonifacio. They were able to pass through the checkpoint in San Pablo, Isabela at 11:00 a.m. by positioning themselves in prone positions aboard dump trucks. The movement was immediately reported to 5 ID HQ. Instructions were given to the Commander of the 2nd Regional Command Defense Unit (2 RCDU) to intercept the trucks at Camp Upi in Gamu, Isabela. Before reaching Gamu, the rebel Rangers commandeered three aircon buses.⁶⁷⁰

At about 12:00 noon, the three buses were stopped at the check-point at Camp Upi. The rebel Rangers alighted with raised arms. Capt Panindigan was able to talk with Capt Quilang, the OIC of the checkpoint. Shortly after, the rebel Rangers suddenly boarded the three buses and sped away going South.⁶⁷¹

The Rangers led by Panindigan proceeded towards Cauayan, Isabela where they stopped to pick up a platoon of about 25 men from the 4 SRB. There, they were joined by a group composed of five enlisted personnel of the Division Training Unit headed by SSgt Romero and 33 students undergoing CAFGU Cadre Training aboard a ten-wheeler truck and a Dodge pick-up.⁶⁷²

When the group reached Cordon, Isabela by 1:00 p.m., they stopped at the 77 IB 5 ID HQ. Some men belonging to the 4 SRB under Lt Col Galvez joined Capt Panindigan's men. Lt Jarque, at this time was at their Division HQ in Camp Melchor de la Cruz in Echague, Isabela. He went there to coordinate matters because of reports about the coup in Manila. Upon returning to Cordon, he found out that the troops moved because of (1) orders given by Capt Lim, Operations Officer FSRR, (2) a personal call by Lt Col Galvez, and (3) a radio message purportedly coming from MGen Cacanando.⁶⁷³

The group of Capt Panindigan was later stopped at a PC checkpoint in Brgy Kita-Kita in San Jose City, Nueva Ecija. Capt Undan negotiated with the Ranger officers but failed to convince them. Undan then ordered deployment of his troops as the SR officers were determined to break through.⁶⁷⁴

Lt Jarque said that knowing the temperament of the soldiers and anticipating the roadblocks set up from Isabela to Manila because of the coup, he decided to follow the troops. In his testimony, Jarque said

. . . [as the] Operations Officer, knowing that most of the troops went with the First Scout Ranger Company, my first instinct was to follow them. I followed them with the thinking that there will be roadblocks coming from Isabela going to Manila and knowing the temperament of some of our soldiers I wanted somehow to avert bloodshed on those checkpoints and at the same time, convince them that it's a losing cause and we should already start to go back.⁶⁷⁵

He followed the troops with some escorts aboard two Kennedy jeeps and reached them at Brgy Kita-Kita, San Jose City.

Lt Jarque reached the San Jose PC roadblock composed of ten-wheeler trucks, buses and other small vehicles at about 6:00 p.m. There, he met Undan, Panandigan, Gordula and two unidentified officers. Since it was already getting dark, Undan invited the officers to dinner while waiting for the arrival of Col Lagman, PC Provincial Commander. They went to a house where they ate and watched television to monitor the coup events in Manila. They learned from the TV that Lt Col Galvez had already surrendered. In the meantime, Lt Jarque received a radio message from Col Matabalao, CS FSRR, ordering them to go back to their battalion base in Cordon, Isabela. Jarque approached Gordula and Panindigan, who were senior officers, and told them

Sir, ano kaya kung babalik na lang tayo, wala na rin ito. Saka malabo itong dito tayo makapasok, sir (Sir, why don't we just go back? We are in a very uncertain situation, sir). At the same time I also got the radio message at that point in time, sir. I used that as an excuse to them by saying, '*Sir, mayroon po tayong order galing sa itaas*, and so by virtue of chain of command, *kailangan sundin natin ito, sir*'⁶⁷⁶ (Sir, we have orders from the top. We have to follow them, sir).

Convinced of the futility of their effort to go to Manila, the rebel officers agreed to go back. By 8:00 p.m., Jarque organized the transportation of the troops back to Isabela.⁶⁷⁷ Before the troops could leave, Col Lagman arrived and talked to the officers. Gordula informed Undan that they were abandoning their plans and would leave for Cagayan.⁶⁷⁸

The Scout Rangers left at about 9:00 p.m. and proceeded to their respective stations in Gamu, Isabela and Lallo, Cagayan.⁶⁷⁹ Col Capulong, CO 502 Bde, who was manning a checkpoint in Bagabag, Nueva Vizcaya, reported that at about 10:00 p.m., the Scout Rangers were moving back North.⁶⁸⁰

F.2. Movement of Lt Col Levy Zamora's Troops

F.2.a. 3 December

The 56 IB troops under Lt Col Levy Zamora, CO 56 IB, stationed in Imelda Valley, previously moved in the morning of 3 December towards Manila on orders of BGen Blando. They reached Arayat, Pampanga, at about 5:00 p.m.

RECOM 3's OPLAN REGAL, which is to check and control troop movements in their area of command with roadblocks, was very effective. Zamora's troops were checked at Arayat by troops under Lt Col Julius Yarcia, CO, Angeles METRODISCOM. Upon monitoring over the radio that 56 IB troops were approaching the boundary of Pampanga and Nueva Ecija, and knowing that the 56 IB CO is his PMA classmate, Lt Col Efren Fernandez, Pampanga Provincial Commander, called BGen Cesar Nazareno, RECOM 3 Commander, and volunteered to confront the 56 IB.⁶⁸¹

Fernandez proceeded to Arayat, specifically to Brgy Camla and there met Zamora. The latter was insisting on pushing through, saying he was under orders from his "boss", BGen Blando. Fernandez checked with RECOM 3 HQ if the 56 IB movement was authorized. RECOM 3 HQ replied that it was not.⁶⁸²

Fernandez tried to dissuade Zamora from proceeding. He told Zamora that it was physically impossible for Zamora to move forward because “all the people from Arayat to Mexico [Pampanga] have blocked already the highways with vehicles, trucks and jeeps.”⁶⁸³

Once informed of the movements, BGen Nazareno called Col Lagman, who was still in Brgy Malasin, San Jose City, and told him to confront Lt Col Zamora. Lagman immediately went to Cabiao, Nueva Ecija, and arrived there at 5:30 p.m. of 3 December. Lagman narrated the position of Lt Col Zamora’s troops as follows

They were strewn [along] the highway, starting about ten kilometers in Cabiao [going to] the boundary of Cabiao and Arayat. Then from there, I walked. I walked for about four kms and as I faced [them] I was already reconnoitering his defensive position of heavy weapons. So, to go there, if I [would] bring my troops, for sure we would do battle. So I decided to go there alone so that I [would] not provoke the soldiers.⁶⁸⁴

F.2.b. 4 December

Lagman’s estimate of Zamora’s strength was about a hundred men armed with a recoilless rifle, a mortar, M-16s, and machineguns. According to Fernandez, the government side had two battalions, two V-150s, two recoilless rifles and a helicopter gunship.⁶⁸⁵

At about early morning, Lagman and Zamora had a dialogue, with the former persuading the latter to go back. Zamora, however, said that he would go back only if ordered by Blando. Lagman then tried to contact Blando through BGen Nazareno. The latter informed Lagman that Blando was already in custody. Zamora then decided to give up but requested that they wait for dawn, since his troops were scattered on the highway.⁶⁸⁶

Troops Escorted Back to Fort Magsaysay

Before midnight of 3 December, Lagman had requested 7 ID at Fort Magsaysay for an officer to join him. Upon orders of BGen Antonio, Col Trespeces was sent to Arayat, Pampanga to escort Zamora and the men of the 56 IB back to Fort Magsaysay.⁶⁸⁷

Col Villanueva, who was proceeding to Fort Magsaysay with CHPG units as escorts,⁶⁸⁸ passed through Cabiao, Nueva Ecija from Greenhills with troops belonging to the 73 IB and 71 IB. The 56 IB, escorted by Trespeces, linked with the troops under Villanueva at about 4:00 a.m. and all of them proceeded to Fort Magsaysay.⁶⁸⁹

The combined troops arrived at Fort Magsaysay by morning and assembled at the grandstand⁶⁹⁰ where they were formally turned over to Col Trespeces⁶⁹¹, while Col Villanueva turned over Zamora to BGen Antonio. On orders of Nazareno, Lagman together with Antonio later escorted Zamora to Camp Olivas, Pampanga by helicopter.⁶⁹²

Other Troops Intercepted

At about 1:30 p.m., personnel manning the checkpoint at Brgy Malasin, San Jose City, intercepted four officers and 12 enlisted men of the 48 IB with assorted high-powered firearms on board a Kennedy-type jeep from Manila. They also intercepted two soldiers belonging to the HQ and HQ SGB, 5 ID.⁶⁹³

F.3. Aguinaldo’s Support for the Rebels

The then Governor of Cagayan Province, Rodolfo Aguinaldo was vocal in his support for the rebels.

F.3.a. 1 December

By morning, radio stations aired news about the takeover of Fort Bonifacio and VAB by rebels. Aguinaldo, formerly a PC Lt Col, in an interview by DZNC-BOMBO radio’s Grace Padaca and Bong Roxas, expressed his support for the rebel troops, and stated that he would lead troops to Manila to augment the rebel forces.

The airwaves in the Cagayan Valley region became full with counter-statements of support for the government. At 7:44 a.m., Col Aguda expressed his support for the Constitution and the government over DZNC radio in Nueva Vizcaya. At 8:25 a.m., Gov Maning Pimentel of Quirino Province, also stated over DZNC, that the situation in his province was normal and that he was supporting the Constitution and the government. The same broadcast was made by Gov Lurnece of Kalinga, Apayao at 8:30 a.m. PC Col Clyde Fernandez of RECOM 2, stationed in Ilagan, Isabela, expressed support for the government and said that he would prevent Gov Aguinaldo's troops from passing through Ilagan.⁶⁹⁴

After his radio announcement, Aguinaldo went to RECOM 2 HQ and spoke with BGen Pedro Sistoza, Regional Commander of RECOM 2 at 8:00 a.m. As reported by BGen Antonio, Aguinaldo urged Sistoza to dispatch troops and join the rebel forces but he reportedly refused.⁶⁹⁵ Aguinaldo again went on the air by about 10:30 a.m. through DZNC in Tuguegarao, Cagayan, and announced that his troops were already Prepared to go to Manila to reinforce the rebels. He urged all soldiers listening to support their (rebels) forces.⁶⁹⁶

By noontime, Aguinaldo appealed over DZRH to his "fellow soldiers" to join the rebels, referring particularly to the government troops who put up blockades to prevent his men from going to Manila.⁶⁹⁷ At 5:30 p.m., Sistoza reported to Antonio that Aguinaldo would probably send some members of the 17 IB and some Scout Rangers to augment the rebel troops in Manila. Antonio ordered Sistoza to stop Aguinaldo's troops. Instructions were also given to Col George Moleta, CO 503 Bde, to control 17 IB. Antonio also talked to Aguinaldo at about 6:00 p.m. and asked the latter to exercise his leadership to maintain peace and order.⁶⁹⁸

G. Sangley Point Incident

The military significance of controlling Sangley Point in launching a coup attempt is obvious. It is a shared camp housing both the Philippine Fleet (PHILFLEET) of the Philippine Navy and the 15th Strike Wing (15 SW) of the Philippine Air Force.

As later events showed, Sangley Point was in fact quickly occupied by rebels employing a two-pronged strategy: a swift attack from the outside and simultaneous mutiny of some officers and men from within. But, just as quickly, Sangley was recovered on the same day by the government.

G.1. Rebel Troops from Bataan

G.1.a. 30 November

Because of the ongoing preparations for Exercise Balikatan, raw intelligence reports of troop movements received in the morning of 30 November elicited no more than monitoring measures from the military authorities. But, as more definite indications of a forthcoming coup attempt were observed, Sangley Point tried by nightfall to prepare for the worst.⁶⁹⁹ By then, however, the die was cast for Sangley Point. For a seemingly long span of time from midnight of 30 November to mid-afternoon of 1 December, the fate of the country was to be significantly affected by what was to occur at Sangley.

Sangley was the target of rebel forces coming from Bataan and Laguna.

Movement of Troops from Bataan

In the evening of 29 November, at Camp Aquino, Tarlac, the Commanding General of 702 Bde, BGen Liberato Manuel, received a report that a coup d'état would be staged in the early morning of 1 December 1989. He immediately declared a red alert, informed Gen de Villa about the report and subsequently called for a conference of all his battalion commanders.

The conference was held the next day, 30 November at 1:00 p.m., and was attended by Lt Col Arsenio Tecson CO 68 IB, Lt Col Romeo Dominguez CO 69 IB, Maj Alfredo Oliveros CO 24 IB, and Maj Rene Rapisura, CO 60 IB. In

the conference, BGen Manuel informed them of intelligence reports of an impending coup and emphasized his support for the Republic. After the conference, a despedida party was held for Manuel who was about to retire. During the party, Manuel noticed that Lt Col Tecson was talking to someone on the radio in his jeep. The person on the radio was asking *Bakit hanggang ngayon, wala pa kayo sa Maynila?* (Why are you still not in Manila?) Manuel later learned that the person on the other line was BGen Blando. Tecson then informed Oliveros that Blando called with instructions to proceed to Sangley Point in Cavite.⁷⁰⁰

Tecson went to his base at Hermosa, Bataan at 4:00 p.m. and called Lt Siegfred Mison CO Alpha Coy 68 IB. Tecson asked Lt Mison if he was willing to bring his troop to secure Sangley Point in Cavite. The conversation, as told by Lt Mison, was as follows

Col Tecson told me [Lt Mison] that . . . ‘Ako ay nakapag-commit na to . . . dito sa gagawin natin na . . . gagawin bukas’ (I have committed to what we’re attempting tomorrow), and then he told me that, ‘Can you take your company with me to secure Sangley?’, and I said, ‘Sir, nakabibigla naman iyan (That is quite startling), let me think.’ . . . And then he said, there’s no more time to think, wala nang panahon na mag-isip pa (There’s no time to think things over). So you better decide.’ So I told him, ‘sir pass muna ako rito (I can’t do it). I cannot join you sir.’ And then from there, he told me, ‘Okay, you just go with Maj Dimaapi to go to Samal, and he’ll take care of you’, and that was it.⁷⁰¹

Tecson instructed Lt Mison to go with Maj Danilo Dimaapi, Battalion EX-O, to the Tactical Command Post in Samal, Bataan, located eight to nine kilometers away from the highway. It must be noted that the company under Lt Mison was not stationed in Samal, but in Orani, Bataan. Lt Mison left for Samal immediately and stayed there for three days before returning to Orani.⁷⁰²

At 8:00 p.m., upon hearing rumors of troop movements in Bataan, Blando instructed Col Manayao to inquire on the whereabouts of 24 IB. Upon verification with CG 702 Bde, the latter reported that Tecson and Oliveros went to Camp Aquino for a conference, and for the *despedida* in his honor.⁷⁰³

Lt Col Ocampo Meets Lt Col Tecson

At 9:00 p.m., Manuel went to the HQ of Lt Col Ramsey Ocampo, PC Provincial Commander of Bataan, to seek his assistance to stop Tecson and his troops from moving to Metro Manila. Together, they went to see Tecson between 10:00 and 10:30 p.m. at the Marsteel wharf in Limay, Bataan. Ocampo and Tecson are third cousins and are PMA classmates.⁷⁰⁴ Tecson confirmed that he and his troops were going to Sangley⁷⁰⁵ for the purpose of “securing” it.⁷⁰⁶ Ocampo understood this to mean securing Sangley “for the rebel forces”.⁷⁰⁷ Both Ocampo and Manuel failed to convince Tecson not to leave Bataan.⁷⁰⁸ Tecson told Ocampo that he had a “previous commitment” to BGen Zumel and also, that he was “under orders”.⁷⁰⁹ These orders, according to Tecson, came from his “immediate Commander” who, Ocampo came to know later, referred to Blando.⁷¹⁰ That was what Tecson told him on 4 December 1989 when Tecson was already in military custody at Camp Olivas, Pampanga.⁷¹¹ When Blando testified before the Commission, he denied having ordered Tecson to go to Sangley Point.⁷¹²

From Marsteel wharf, Ocampo returned to his camp around or past midnight. He reported the matter to Col Agerico Kagaoan, Operations Officer RECOM 3⁷¹³ for transmission to the Regional Commander of RECOM 3.⁷¹⁴

G.1.b. 1 December

BGen Manuel — who stayed behind in the Marsteel wharf — followed Ocampo to his HQ. Around 1:00 or 2:00 a.m., Manuel talked to the Aide-de-camp of Gen de Villa, suggesting that some ships be deployed in Manila Bay to stop Tecson’s troops.⁷¹⁵

Even before 30 November, Ocampo had heard reports of a “probable destabilization”, i.e., that “there was supposed to be a coup in the offing”.⁷¹⁶ He learned about these in Camp Olivas, during one of their conferences with BGen Nazareno. In that conference, Nazareno gave “guidance to effectively prepare to defend or reinforce the seat of government, just in case there would be a coup.”⁷¹⁷

Tecson and Oliveros travelled from Bataan to Sangley on board what was initially known as an unidentified fishing vessel. The indications of troop movements in Bataan and the involvement of a civilian fishing vessel figured early in raw intelligence reports. However, intelligence reports and after-battle reports said nothing definite about this boat and it continued to be described as an “unidentified fishing vessel”.

G.2. Finding the Fishing Vessel

The Commission considered the involvement of this vessel significant, not only because it ferried two battalions, but also because being a non-military craft, its full story could shed light on an aspect of civilian resources available to the coup plotters. The Commission, however, had difficulty gathering facts as it was “unidentified” in all the after-battle reports. It was only towards the close of its investigations that the Commission was able to discover that the fishing vessel was actually “Lady Vi-T-1”, owned by Odessa Fishing and Trading Corporation (Odessa) with offices at Navotas, Metro Manila.

G.2.a. Pre 30 November

According to Rufino Tiangco, Chairman of the Board of Odessa, about a week after 1 November 1989, a person representing himself as Artemio Tan of Puerto Princesa, Palawan, went to his office and sought to charter a fishing vessel to be used by the middle of November up to December 1989 and possibly up to January 1990. Tiangco informed Tan regarding the terms and conditions for the charter. Tan left bringing with him a sample copy of Odessa’s standard charter agreement along with other papers pertaining to the vessel.

Although Tan represented that he was from Puerto Princesa, Palawan, the evidence received by the Commission belies it. The Election Registrar of Puerto Princesa said that there is no Artemio Tan listed as a registered voter in Puerto Princesa. The City Treasurer reported that Residence Certificate No. 0828116 allegedly issued in 1989 to Artemio Tan was not issued in Puerto Princesa and that there is no business establishment known as Artemio Tan Trading registered in Puerto Princesa.⁷¹⁸ Furthermore, the Station Commander of Puerto Princesa wired the Commission to advise that their efforts to locate Artemio Tan in Puerto Princesa City and in the Province of Palawan were “negative”.⁷¹⁹

Tiangco Charters Out Vessel

On 10 November 1989, Tan returned to Odessa’s office and, on that occasion, reached a final agreement with Tiangco for the charter of Lady Vi-T-1. Tan and Gabriel Cruz, the President of Odessa, signed the charter agreement. Tan then paid Odessa the amount of P80,000 in cash, corresponding to one month’s advance rental and one month’s deposit. Carmelita Villanueva, Odessa’s office secretary, confirmed having received the payment which she turned over to Tiangco. Receipt of the money is not recorded in the books of account of Odessa.

On 27 November 1989, Tan went back to the Odessa office, accompanied by a man he introduced as Rudy Jimenez. Upon Tan’s request, Tiangco issued a letter authorizing Jimenez to board and take over the vessel as Tan’s “encargado”. That afternoon, Jimenez went to the Navotas Fish Port where Lady Vi-T-1 was docked, and presented himself, with Tiangco’s authorization letter, to the vessel’s captain, Pepito Dalivenancio. Jimenez was accordingly allowed to board the vessel.

Between 27 and 30 November 1989, two persons on board a service jeep arrived at the fish port, bringing with them five cavans of rice and three boxes of canned goods which they loaded on the vessel. They were allowed to board the vessel, upon Jimenez’ instructions.

G.2.b. 30 November

At 6:00 a.m., Jimenez ordered Dalivenancio to clear (*idispacha*) the vessel for Palawan. Before leaving the port, Dalivenancio obtained the necessary Coast Guard clearances for the departure to Palawan around 3:00 p.m. of that day. When the vessel crossed the breakwater of North Harbor, Jimenez ordered Dalivenancio to divert the course of

the vessel and proceed to Bataan instead. Dalivenancio testified that he was threatened and intimidated by Jimenez and his two armed companions. Dalivenancio accordingly diverted the vessel and proceeded to Bataan, reaching Limay past 5:30 p.m. Before arriving in Limay, at a distance of about a mile from the shore, Dalivenancio, allegedly upon orders from Jimenez, instructed his crew to remove the name of Lady Vi-T-1. This was done by prying loose the piece of wood on which the vessel's name was inscribed. At this point, Jimenez and his two companions changed to fatigue uniforms.⁷²⁰

Shortly after arrival in Limay, Lady Vi-T-1 shipsided by a tanker. Later on, around 500 uniformed soldiers boarded Lady Vi-T-1 using a barge for this purpose. While still in Limay, countersigns (i.e., square pieces of white paper, with a figure sketched in the middle) were distributed among the soldiers.⁷²¹

G.2.c. 1 December

From Limay, Lady Vi-T-1 proceeded to Sangley Point at about 8:00 a.m. Dalivenancio reported that upon their arrival, they were met by a Coast Guard vessel which escorted his ship into Sangley. Jimenez and his two companions disembarked hurriedly and so did the rest of the soldiers from Bataan. Dalivenancio and his crew stayed on board the vessel.

G.3. Takeover and Recovery of Sangley – 1 December

Laguna Troops Move Towards Sangley

Another rebel force consisting of around 200 men from 16 IB stationed at Nagcarlan, Laguna, were motoring to Sangley Point. The driver of one of the 6 x 6 trucks carrying the rebels, Sgt Benito Cuaresma, claimed that their initial destination was Mauban, Quezon. However, enroute, he was ordered to proceed instead to Sangley where the troops were to serve as security for Exercise Balikatan.

The rebel troops from Laguna arrived at Sangley close to midnight of 30 November.⁷²² Again, the rebels used the Balikatan Exercise as a ruse and sought entry through the Main Gate by presenting a written authorization signed by Cmdr Maligalig.⁷²³ The gate guards refused them entry on orders of PHILFLEET Commander Commo Proceso Fernandez. The rebels led by ex-Lt Cmdr Jaime Lucas, ex-Capt (PN) Felix Turingan and ex-Lt Col Oscar Legaspi PAF disarmed and overpowered the guards and let the rest of the rebel troops in.⁷²⁴

15th Strike Wing Grounded

BGen Tereso Isleta, Wing Commander 15 SW returned to Sangley at around 11:00 p.m. of 30 November. He met his staff to discuss the information he gathered after attending the Command Conference at Camp Aguinaldo. Before 1:00 a.m., he ordered his men to evacuate the aircrafts to Basa or Clark. The rebels at the gate must have overheard his order given through the radio. From the Main Gate, the rebels proceeded to take control of the flight line and neutralized the choppers and other aircrafts. All the units of the 15 SW — 16th Attack Squadron, 594th Air Police Squadron, 20th Air Commando Squadron, 590th Air Base Group — were left intact but effectively neutralized.⁷²⁵ The pilots were taken hostage just before they could takeoff for other bases.⁷²⁶

The government pilots were captured by a team led by Lucas. The pilots were detained in the area of the Tora-Toras. One of the raiding officers, Lt Pierre Robert Pel, identified one of the hostaged pilots, Lt Gregor Mendel Panelo, as a fellow PMA'er. Pel called Lucas' attention to Panelo. Turingan came to try to convince the hostaged pilots to join the rebels. They refused. Turingan and Lucas took Panelo with them. Legaspi, in civilian clothes, came to their area and allowed them to use the telephone. The hostaged pilots reported their situation to their Wing Commander who told them to stay put.⁷²⁷

Augmenting the troops that came in the 6 x 6 military trucks were some 80 rebels, who were reported to have arrived at about 2:30 a.m. on board a Philtranco Bus with body number 3023.⁷²⁸ The bus passed through the Cavite

Gate of the 15SW⁷²⁹ and unloaded its passengers at the supply area⁷³⁰ near the BOQ.⁷³¹ The bulk of the heavily armed troops deployed themselves at the Armory No. 1.⁷³²

Mutiny at the Philippine Fleet

The Philippine Fleet was having its share of problems. Close to midnight of 30 November, Commo Fernandez, upon arriving at the PHILFLEET HQ from Camp Aguinaldo, called for an officers' conference at his office. In attendance were Capt (PN) Francisco Tolin, Commander of the Fleet Support Force; Capt (PN) Jose Agudelo, Chief of Staff; Commander Naval, Fleet Intelligence Officer; Lt Alfredo Ramos, Special Warfare Group Officer of the Day; Lt Manolito Malig-On, Fleet Security Officer; Capt (PN) Alex Nebres, Deputy Commander, Fleet Support Force; and Cmdr Precioso Filio, CO Headquarters Service Unit. Commo Fernandez discussed the matters taken up during the GHQ conference and instructed that the Fleet be put in readiness. He directed the command duty officer to alert patrol boats PS 29 and 19 for possible deployment.⁷³³

While the meeting was in progress, ex-Capt Turingan, Capt (PN) Danilo Pizarro and Capt Fermin Cuison entered the office and tried to persuade Fernandez to join them. Unable to persuade Fernandez, they left.⁷³⁴ Fernandez did not attempt to apprehend the rebels at this point because they were heavily armed. But immediately thereafter, he took steps to secure the HQ and relieved Pizarro as commander of the patrol force, naming Capt Tolin as acting commander. The other officers at the meeting went back to their respective units to prevent them from joining the rebels.

Bataan Rebel Troops Arrive

The two battalions led by Tecson and Oliveros, on board the Lady Vi-T-1, arrived at Sangley mid-morning and disembarked at the Philippine Fleet area.

Attempts to Intercept Lady Vi-T-1

Cmdr Carlos Damian, Commander, Naval Intelligence Security Group II, personally received at around 3:00 p.m. of 30 November a message from RAdm Carlito Cunanan, Flag-Officer-in-Command, Philippine Navy (FOIC), which was transmitted at around 10:30 a.m., to verify the reported troop movement by ship from Bataan to Sangley. He relayed the message to his Olongapo Office situated inside the Subic Naval Base. Nothing was done. It was only on 1 December at around 2:00 p.m. that Cmdr Damian received word from his San Felipe Fort, Cavite City Station that the vessel from Bataan had already landed at around 10:30 a.m. in Sangley.⁷³⁵

At around 6:30 a.m. Commo Antonio Empedrad, Commander, Naval District II, received from PN HQ (HPN) a message assigning to him ships/crafts identified as PS 19, LT 502, AU 100, PG 62, and DF 334 for the purpose of interdicting rebel vessels going to the North and South Harbors, Manila. He directed Capt (PN) Romeo Meana, Commander Task Force 21, whose flagship was the auxiliary ship, AU 100, docked at Pier 15, to intercept the fishing vessel loaded with rebel troops coming from Limay, Bataan. The order was given at 7:00 a.m., but AU 100 came under the operational control of Task Force 21 only at around 7:55 a.m.

This was followed by another order at around 11:55 a.m. Meana, upon receipt of this order from Empedrad, ordered all his ships to intercept the vessel. He thought all along that the vessel was bound for Manila and they waited for it at the breakwater of Manila Bay.

A third order was given by Empedrad to Meana at 6:45 p.m., this time to intercept the same vessel withdrawing from Sangley to Bataan.⁷³⁶ Meana confirmed having received this order of Empedrad at 6:45 p.m. He sent out PG 62 and DF 334. The two vessels reached the vicinity of Corregidor and Limay, Bataan but reported that there was no sighting of the fishing vessel as late as 11:00 p.m.⁷³⁷

Commo Fernandez maintained, on the other hand, that his failure to prevent the successful landing of the fishing vessel was due in part to the directive of HPN on 1 December at around 7:00 a.m., which ordered the transfer of some of his vessels to Naval District II.⁷³⁸

When the Lady Vi-T-1 docked at the Philippine Fleet Port, it was escorted by Navy light craft No. 308. At about 11:40 a.m., the troops disembarked and marched towards the Sangley Gate.⁷³⁹ According to Tecson, at 2:00 p.m. he met Turingan who told him to go to Manila and attack the Western Police District HQ. Tecson said he was receiving orders only from Blando who he tried to contact by radio but failed.⁷⁴⁰ Isleta was allowed to maintain his HQ. He negotiated with Turingan and agreed that he would not attack the latter's troops, which were in control of the air assets, in exchange for the safety of the WOC and his HQ, from where he continued both to monitor the rebel movements as well as keep in constant touch with GHQ. Isleta claimed that he called for assistance from Capt (PN) Jesus Durian, Naval Base commander, who gave him a cold response.⁷⁴¹ Durian denied that Isleta asked for assistance.⁷⁴²

Commo Fernandez reached a similar stand-off arrangement with the rebels led by Capt Pizarro. He was able to retain control of his HQ but could not offer any resistance to the rebels.⁷⁴³

Rebels Briefly Control the Skies

The rebels using three Tora-Toras, one Sikorsky helicopter and an Islander as a forward air controller attacked Malacañang, PTV-4, Crame, and Aguinaldo. The Tora-Toras were piloted by Capt Vergel Nacino, Capt Elmer Amon and Lt Joey Sarroza while the Sikorsky was flown by Lt Panelo. The Islander was piloted by Lt Orlando Caballegan.

At Midday The Tide Turns

Air superiority was regained by the government when Maj Danilo Atienza, at the cost of his life, and other pilots of PAF F-5 jets, from Basa Air Base destroyed the rebel air assets. (For details, see Commission Interim Report No. 2)

The end quickly followed. By about noon, the task force earlier created by MGen Montano, composed of the PC-INP of Cavite under Lt Col Nicetas Katigbak, of Laguna under Lt Col Edgar Aglipay, and Batangas under Lt Col Rogelio Regalado, plus other contingents of RECOM 4, augmented by two V-150s and charged with the mission of recapturing Sangley Point for the government, held a coordinating conference to synchronize their movements.⁷⁴⁴ But even before they arrived at the Sangley Main Gate at about 3:00 p.m., some of the rebels had began dispersing from the shipyard area, taking the shoreline route towards Varadero and Naval Base Cavite. Many were seen still carrying their firearms but others had changed to civilian clothes.⁷⁴⁵ A brief firefight occurred at about 100 meters away from the Main Gate in front of the Combank branch office. Tecson and Oliveros, with their troops, were stopped by PC troops and escorted to Lt Col Katigbak who was at the Main Gate. An agreement was reached for the rebel soldiers to return to Bataan and by about 5:30 p.m., they were on board the Lady Vi-T-1 on their way home. Lady Vi-T-1 could not, however, dock at Limay because of the low tide. It docked instead at Mariveles from where the troops returned to their respective command posts. Tecson and Oliveros proceeded to Camacho, Bataan and surrendered to BGen Manuel.⁷⁴⁶

Capt Pizarro, Capt Cuison, LCdr Fred Tuvilla, LCdr George Uy, Lt Michael Angelo Asperin, Lt Vicente Agdamag, LCdr Ruperto Borromeo and Ens Gerold Josue surrendered to Commo Fernandez. Later, on information given by Capt Pizarro, LCdr Perfecto Pascual, acting commanding officer of AD 614, was picked up from his ship.⁷⁴⁷

G.4. Activities of Lady Vi-T-1 Owners

G.4.a. 2 December

Lady Vi-T-1, now with only Capt Dalivenancio, and his crew on board, proceeded to the Navotas Fish Port where it eventually docked, reaching the Navotas port at around 3:45 a.m. Before reaching Navotas, a Navy boat approached

to a distance of around 100 meters, but did not board Lady Vi-T-1, confining itself to focusing its search lights on the latter vessel.⁷⁴⁸

At around 10:00 a.m., Dalivenancio went to the Odessa office and claimed that he gave a verbal report of the incident to Tiangco and Cruz. In the process, the question of whether or not to make a report as required by law to the Coast Guard was allegedly discussed. Dalivenancio, according to him, was afraid to do so; hence, he requested Tiangco and Cruz to make the report to which the two answered “*sige*” (Okay). Cruz instructed Dalivenancio to make a written report which the latter completed by the evening of the same day. He then delivered the written report to the Odessa office that evening and was received there by Mrs Villanueva.⁷⁴⁹

G.4.b. 4 December

According to Cruz, at past 1:00 p.m., Tiangco and he went to the police station of Navotas to report the alleged hijacking, saying that it was perpetrated by armed persons, but without identifying Tan or Jimenez, and also, without furnishing P/Cpl Florencio Castillo, the desk officer then on duty, with a copy of Dalivenancio’s written report; nor did Cruz and Tiangco bring with them Dalivenancio when they went to the Police station. Castillo suggested that the matter be reported to the Coast Guard and Tiangco said they would take care of it. Castillo said that Tiangco and Cruz merely wanted to have the incident recorded but not investigated.⁷⁵⁰

The police blotter of the Navotas Police contains the description of reports and events which the desk officer enters in chronological order. Each entry is given a number. The Commission observed that the entries usually contain a detailed description of what happened and the full names and addresses of persons included in the entry. The incident involving the Lady Vi-T-1 is unusual in that the entry was at the bottom of a page squeezed into only four lines; that its assigned number is the same as the next entry; and no address, company name nor ages are given for Odessa and either Cruz or Tiangco.⁷⁵¹

Cruz admitted that neither he, nor Tiangco, nor Odessa, nor Dalivenancio made a report to the Coast Guard concerning the incident Dalivenancio also said that he did not execute or file a marine protest although he knew it was his duty to do so.⁷⁵²

Tiangco, in the course of his testimony before the Commission, mentioned that he knew Gregorio Honasan, having been introduced to the latter by Romeo Rivera. This happened in 1987 during a stag party given by Rivera for Don Honasan, who was about to be married. Rivera and Tiangco are both members of the Bullseye Gun Club. At the time Tiangco joined the club, Rivera was its president. Since that stag party, Tiangco claims that he never saw Gregorio Honasan again, although he admitted to regularly buying cement from Don Honasan.⁷⁵³

H. Malacañang and Sta Mesa Incident

H.1. 30 November

Government Troops Prepare for Defense of Malacañang

In response to reports of rebel troop movement from Bataan to Manila received at 9:00 p.m. of 30 November by P/Col Ernesto Diokno, then Acting Superintendent of the Western Police District (WPD),⁷⁵⁴ the entire district, consisting often stations and other organic units in the General Headquarters, went on full red alert. P/Col Diokno ordered the mobilization of all WPD personnel and summoned all field commanders to report to HQ for briefing.⁷⁵⁵

Meanwhile, Col Voltaire Gazmin, Commander Presidential Security Group (PSG), told the Commission that the PSG is always on red alert. However, because of information regarding a possible coup, Gazmin declared Defense Condition three, the highest state of preparedness, at 6:00 p.m.

H.2. 1 December

Bombing of Malacañang

At about 3:00 a.m., President Aquino convened an emergency Cabinet meeting, and after, the meeting, at 3:45 a.m., the President went on television to calm the nation. Demonstrating to the viewers that she was “sitting here safely at this moment at my office,”⁷⁵⁶ she informed the nation of an ongoing coup attempt and assured the people that “our forces have the situation under control.”⁷⁵⁷ At about 6:30 a.m., three Tora-Toras took off from Sangley and flew towards Malacañang.⁷⁵⁸ Legaspi, reportedly acting as general control, directed the planes to fire rockets at Malacañang, Camp Aguinaldo, PTV-4 and Camp Crame.⁷⁵⁹ The planes strafed and bombed Malacañang Complex with machine gunfire and small bombs at 6:45 a.m. The bombings were apparently intended to kill President Aquino, judging from the fact that what was hit was the intended place of safety for President Aquino in case of attack. This was known to the rebels because Noble, being formerly with the Presidential Security Group (PSG), had access to their security plan for the President. However, unknown to the rebels, Gazmin had changed the security arrangements for the President.⁷⁶⁰

Capt Crisanto Reboya, CO of the 1 LACS stationed at Malacañang Park, ordered all gunners of the Armor Infantry Fighting Vehicle (AIFV) to fire their 25 mm (anti-aircraft) weapons at the attacking rebel planes. Some dismounted troops also fired their issued firearms at the Tora-Toras.⁷⁶¹

At 7:40 a.m., the President again went on the air to declare “the mutiny . . . is contained,” informing the people that fighter planes from Basa Air Base were at that moment attacking the Tora-Toras. She warned “never [to] give over this nation to tyranny.”⁷⁶²

Close to noon and after the Tora-Tora attack, US Ambassador Nicholas Platt called up the President and, on instructions of Washington, expressed American support and willingness to assist the government. The President expressed her thanks for the supportive gesture of US President Bush and informed Ambassador Platt that in order to facilitate communication, Secretary Ramos would get in touch with him directly.

Ambassador Platt took the initiative and, contacted him straight away. Ramos, assessing the need of the hour to keep rebel planes away from Metro Manila, asked for a “couple of persuasion flights.” This, was done by US Phantom jets from about 2:00 p.m. to the evening of 1 December.

Attack of Malacañang from Ground Forces

Before midnight of 30 November, thirty rebel Scout Rangers were sighted on Quezon Bridge and 80 soldiers in civilian attire were reported at the foot of Sta. Mesa bridge.⁷⁶³

As Malacañang was bombed by rebel planes, rebel soldiers with most of them in civilian clothes, and civilians, armed with high caliber firearms such as M-16, M203, M60 and anti-tank weapons placed roadblocks and checkpoints in various strategic places in Sta Mesa. The rebels blocked the approaches leading to Malacañang in order to isolate it from friendly government troops coming to its defense.⁷⁶⁴

At one point, these rebel soldiers intercepted at their checkpoint PC Lt Wilbur Naldo of the CAPCOM West Sector Command, holding him hostage for an hour until he was able to trick his captors by pretending to have joined them. He was even introduced to the leader of the rebels at the vicinity of Stop and Shop, as Col de la Cruz.⁷⁶⁵

In the afternoon, Col Gazmin began offensive operations against rebel ground forces threatening Malacañang. He designated Maj Agustin Dema-ala, CO of HHSB PSG, as Task Group Green Commander to lead a company of Scout Rangers under Capt Jessie Dellosa, and a reserve platoon under Capt Nestor Castro, augmented by seven AIFV to assault the rebel soldiers in Sta Mesa.⁷⁶⁶ They were to join the forces of P/Col Diokno in fighting the rebels.

Police and military forces conducted a mopping-up operation along Magsaysay Blvd. In the afternoon, this was augmented by the troops under Maj Dema-ala.⁷⁶⁷ At about 7:00 p.m., Sta Mesa area was cleared of rebel

soldiers.⁷⁶⁸ The only casualty on the government side was one unidentified tank gunner who was wounded during the Sta Mesa encounter.⁷⁶⁹

While the fighting to secure Malacañang was going on, the President stayed in Malacañang and went on the air confirming the government's acceptance of the US offer of assistance, and acknowledging expressions of support from friendly governments. She cautioned against complacency, since the enemy "is routed but he is not yet vanquished."

Mobilization of Police Forces

By morning, contingents from Chinatown Sub-Station and Police Station No. 6 of the WPD were dispatched to the Metropolitan Theater to neutralize rebel soldiers atop the Quezon Bridge. Members of the City Hall Police Detachment were ordered to establish a roadblock at Concepcion-San Marcelino, Arroceros, and P Burgos Sts to defend the Manila City Hall from possible enemy attack.

H.3. 2 December

Earlier in the afternoon, the operatives of the Operations Bureau and Intelligence Division of the WPD, apprehended Clifford Cobsilen Yequitán, 27 years old, single and native of Bontoc Province from whose possession one Ultimex rifle, cal 5.56 mm with serial number 102260 and several rounds of ammunitions were recovered.⁷⁷⁰

H.4. 3 December

P/Maj Gen Alfredo Lim, WPD Superintendent, arrived in Manila via Clark Air Base from an Interpol conference abroad. He immediately called for an emergency meeting of all WPD officers and issued orders to provide round-the-clock security detail at the Senate, Supreme Court, Manila Pavilion, Bay View Hotel and the Manila Hotel, where the Chief Justices of Asia and Western Pacific were holding a conference.

I. North and South Harbor Incidents

The RAM-HF also sought to control the Manila North and South harbors as docking facilities for vessels presumably loaded with rebel troops.

I.1. 30 November

Recruitment at North and South Harbors

The coup plotters wanted to win to their side the police forces guarding the harbors particularly the North Harbor Police stationed at the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) Building. Billy Bibit⁷⁷¹ telephoned P/Capt Job Gavino, Station Commander (STACOM), North Harbor Port Police at 7:30 a.m. to say that he would send his representatives to see him regarding some important matters. At 11:00 a.m., 20 men in civilian clothes, presumably military men, arrived at the North Harbor Police Station, on orders of Bibit, looking for Gavino. They tried to convince Gavino to join the rebel forces but he allegedly refused.⁷⁷²

Calling of Guardian Center Foundation, Inc Members

At about 7:00 a.m., Elmer Sagsago, 4th Assistant City Prosecutor of Baguio City, was informed by his niece, Nena Duba, that an unidentified soldier, who showed his Guardian tattoo, came earlier to his residence at Naval Base, Baguio City with a message about an emergency meeting of the Guardian Center Foundation, Inc (GCFI) to be held that day at Pier 8, North Harbor, Manila. Being the President of the GCFI Region I Chapter, he felt bound to attend the meeting but decided to verify it first.⁷⁷³

Eito Ikeuchi, a full time martial arts instructor at the Department of Physical Education in PMA since August 1979 and a GCFI member, confirmed to Sagsago that there indeed was going to be a general meeting of the GCFI at Pier 8, North Harbor, Manila.⁷⁷⁴ They agreed to go to Manila. They left Baguio at about 9:30 a.m. on board a private jeep.⁷⁷⁵

Declaration of Red Alert at Harbor Area

By late morning, the different military and police units at the Port Area started receiving information of a forthcoming coup. The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) Intelligence Unit received reports of the movement of armed men from Bataan to Manila on board an unidentified vessel.⁷⁷⁶

P/Capt Gavino declared red alert at 4:00 p.m., although as early as 7:30 a.m., he was already approached by Bibit to join the rebel forces.

At about 10:00 p.m., Capt Esmaralda Saplada, Staff Duty Officer of the Enforcement and Security Services (ESS), Bureau of Customs, received information from Antonio Tigno of the WPD that rebel troops known as “RAM boys” coining from Northern Luzon would be passing by South Harbor by boat. The information was immediately relayed to the Headquarters Philippine Coast Guard (HPCG).⁷⁷⁷

Meeting of the Guardian Center Foundation, Inc

Sagsago and Ikeuchi arrived at Pier 8, North Harbor, Manila, at about 6:30 p.m. They entered a restaurant where they saw Sgts Rodolfo Mendez and Rodolfo Ocon and some 15 GCFI member soldiers from the PMA in civilian clothes sitting inside the restaurant. Ocon informed Mendez that there would be a national meeting of the GCFI.⁷⁷⁸ Their number later increased to about 30.⁷⁷⁹

Sagsago asked Sgts Ocon and Mendez what the meeting was all about. He was told by Ocon that they were supposed to wait for other GCFI members from Manila.⁷⁸⁰ At that time, there were already about 40 persons in the restaurant, including Sgt Jaime Camacho, Sgt Alimbuyao, and other members from the PMA.⁷⁸¹

That evening, somebody whom Sagsago did not recognize, fetched his group and led them to a nearby building which he later on learned was the PPA office. There, he saw about 50 people, some in military uniform and armed, and others in civilian attire. Sagsago observed that not all of those gathered bore the GCFI tattoo. These individuals were in a festive mood. Some were saying it was the birthday of someone for which a goat was butchered and drinks were served. Sagsago identified Cagurangan, a retired soldier who went by the GCFI name of “Founder Barorot” and a certain Morit,⁷⁸² a businessman who went by the GCFI name of “Magic Hermes”.⁷⁸³

Unidentified persons inside the PPA building told Mendez and other GCFI members of the “good news”. The unidentified persons declared that they would change the Government. Concluding that the gathering was not really a meeting, Sagsago claimed he called Mendez and Ocon, and other members of the Baguio Chapter, and told them he had decided to leave the place.⁷⁸⁴

Ocon informed Sagsago that there was going to be a coup and that they (GCFI-Baguio Chapter) were being asked to join. Sagsago, Ocon and Mendez and Ikeuchi discussed the matter. Sagsago claimed they all decided to leave. They passed the word around, among their other members, with instructions to leave in groups of two or three so as not to attract the attention of the rebel soldiers.⁷⁸⁵

Sagsago and Ikeuchi said they could not take their jeep out of the Port Area because by about 11:00 p.m. the gates were already blocked by the rebels. Both went back to the restaurant where they earlier met and stayed there until the next day leaving the premises only when the RAM-HF forces abandoned the harbor areas.⁷⁸⁶

I.2. 1 December

Attack at North Harbor/South Harbor Areas

Bibit's troops started attacking the different units at the Harbors. The RAM-HF forces simultaneously took over entry and exit gates of South and North Harbors, the HPCG and the Customs Police Station located at the PPA building.

Twenty men in civilian clothes led by TSgt de la Cruz arrived at the PPA at 1:00 a.m. and tried to convince Gavino to join the rebel forces. Gavino claims he again refused. TSgt de la Cruz requested that they be allowed to stay at the North Harbor Area. Gavino relented to this request.⁷⁸⁷

As of 2:00 a.m., at the South Harbor Gate 3, soldiers in full battle gear, armed with high powered weapons, were already deployed all over the area. Their strength was estimated to be around 200 and were commanded by Bibit.⁷⁸⁸

Capt Esmeraldo Saplala with several customs policemen proceeded to Gate 3 of the South Harbor to alert the guards regarding the arrival of rebel soldiers. Upon reaching Gate 3 they saw that Bibit's men had taken it over. Bibit asked Saplala to relay his message to the HPCG to "lay down their arms and join them on their mission". Saplala contacted the HPCG but they refused. Saplala and his men were told to stay at Gate 3.⁷⁸⁹

At the PCG Station at the North Harbor (PCGS), a group of more than ten armed soldiers in camouflage uniform accompanied by PPA policeman Arturo Navarro arrived at 2:10 a.m. One of them, with a Philippine Marine insignia, ordered the PCGS personnel to place their firearms and ammunitions at the side of the gate. When OIC Jaime Daquilanes refused, a certain Capt Tapitan confiscated their arms consisting of: three M-16 Armalite rifles, four long and short magazines and one US caliber .45 pistol with two magazines and 14 rounds of ammunition. Tapitan told the PCGS personnel to deposit the firearms at Bibit's office in the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Services (CIIS). They also tried to convince the personnel to join the rebel forces but they allegedly refused. RAM-HF soldiers barricaded the Lauro de la Cruz gate with commandeered dump trucks and left.⁷⁹⁰

The RAM-HF group at the Harbor was initially composed of some 60 fully armed soldiers and six Customs personnel namely: Bibit, Audie Serrano, Benjamin Cepe of CIIS, Arthur Garcia, Catalino Bondoc of ESS and Crisostomo Balneg, storekeeper. This complement later increased to about 300.⁷⁹¹

Takeover of North Harbor

At about 3:00 a.m., PCGS personnel conducted discreet investigation of rebel forces who took control of the Zaragoza and Moriones gates of the North Harbor. The rebels were based at PPA Headquarters.⁷⁹²

At 3:00 a.m., RAM-HF soldiers took control of the South and North Harbors. They raided the ESS Headquarters, disarmed the personnel on duty and carted away 16 handguns and eight long firearms of various caliber. Using a bolt cutter, they also forced open Security Warehouse No. 9 and took 25 cartons of corned beef and several cartons of Marlboro cigarettes. They closed down the piers and barricaded Gate Nos. 3, 4 and 6 of the Port of Manila with container vans.⁷⁹³

At about 4:00 a.m., Capt Rafael Crisol, North Harbor Section Commander, arrived at Gate 1 and found it barricaded by container vans and manned by heavily armed men in military uniform, with some in civilian clothes, and PPA Police with white headbands. He estimated the number of the rebels at 200.⁷⁹⁴

The PCGS at the North Harbor received reports that PPA Police and heavily armed men had barricaded the Moriones Gate (Gate 2) and Zaragoza Gate (Gate 1) with container vans and cargo trucks. The PPA Police and the heavily armed persons prevented the entry and exit of vehicles at these gates.⁷⁹⁵

The North Harbor gates were secured apparently in preparation for the landing of reinforcements for the rebel forces. Elements of 339 PC Coy based in Bacolod tried to commandeer a vessel to take them to North Harbor.⁷⁹⁶

Many persons, some in civilian clothes, and others in fatigue uniforms, but all wearing white headbands, were seen converging at the PPA Headquarters which is just four meters away from the PCGS. PPA Policemen allegedly constantly seen with rebel forces were P/Capt Job Gavino, Augusto Pilapil, Manuel Coching, Danny Fonbuena, Renato Villanueva, Ernesto Domingo, Matias Tamayo, Jesus Tolosa, Ronnie Abunao, Wilfredo Lira, Francisco Casio, and two persons known only by their nicknames Vanguard and Bogard.⁷⁹⁷

RAM-HF Sets Up HQ at PPA Building, North Harbor

A group of about 30 RAM-HF soldiers went to the PPA Building on the night of 30 November. The group increased to about 150 persons by 4:00 a.m. Some soldiers, armed with Galil, M203 grenade launchers, armalites and all kinds of assorted firearms, went to the nearby PCGS. The leader who introduced himself as Capt Pilapil, said he was sent by Bibit. However, when STACOM of the Coast Guard. Cmdr Velasco later talked to Gavino, Velasco said that Pilapil was really ex-Capt Dante Pimentel, a GCFI member.

At about 8:00 a.m., Pimentel asked his brother GCFI, P/Capt Gavino, to join them in the fight against the Government. In his testimony, Gavino admitted joining the GCFI in January 1986.⁷⁹⁸ There were two media men present at this time. Gavino claimed he refused to join their group.⁷⁹⁹ Pimentel then asked the number of firearms stored in the armory. Gavino informed him that all the firearms had been issued to PPA police personnel. Pimentel requested that he and his group be allowed to stay at the Headquarters.⁸⁰⁰ The RAM-HF soldiers roamed around the area and closed the Zaragosa and the Moriones Gate.⁸⁰¹ Pimentel ordered some of his personnel to man these gates. Then, he proceeded to the PCGS.⁸⁰²

Recruitment at the Coast Guard Station

Pimentel, Sgt Willy Lira and others identified as Bibit's agents, entered the PCGS at 9:00 a.m.⁸⁰³ There, Pimentel tried, without success, to convince Velasco, to join the rebel forces.⁸⁰⁴

Meanwhile, Gavino, by telephone, informed his immediate superior, Port Manager Atty Salialam, about the presence of almost 300 rebels at the area near the PPA Police Station. Atty Salialam gave instruction for the men to stay put and to secure the place particularly the Cashier's Office and the armory.⁸⁰⁵

Pedro Salazar, Arnold Navarette, and Hilconido Oira, members of the Law Enforcement Team, Coast Guard Station, noticed several uniformed armed men and civilians with white headbands, together with P/Capt Gavino and PPA policemen Ronnie Abundo, Ernesto Domingo, Augusto Pilapil, and Renato Villanueva standing, in front of the PPA Station.⁸⁰⁶ The Coast Guard Station Manila under Velasco monitored the actions of Gavino.⁸⁰⁷

RAM-HF Soldiers Withdraw from North Harbor

The RAM-HF soldiers under Pimentel stayed at the North Harbor area near the PPA police and PCGS from about 1:00 a.m. until late afternoon. At 5:30 p.m., they started to leave the PPA Police station bringing with them one shotgun from the station. Atty Salialam reported that the reinforcements of the RAM-HF, from the AFP LOGCOM, did not arrive.⁸⁰⁸

By early evening, the North harbor had been cleared of about 100 RAM-HF soldiers.⁸⁰⁹ At 8:00 p.m., the remainder of the RAM-HF men reportedly left the area. Government troops immediately took over and established checkpoints.

Assessing the Situation at the South Harbor

Lt Col Virgilio Danao, Acting Chief of the Customs Police, received information at about 3:00 a.m. that a coup d'etat was in progress, and VAB had been taken by rebel forces. To assess the extent of rebel deployment, he checked the NAIA District Command under Maj Alpapara, who told him that his area was not bothered by the

rebels. Danao also called POM Command, and was advised by Desk Officer Customs Policeman (Cpm) Felix Simangan, that everything was normal and quiet in their area of responsibility.⁸¹⁰

Danao went to South Harbor at 5:45 a.m., and was surprised to see the vicinity of ESS HQ surrounded by men in uniform with white arm bands and fully armed with high powered weapons. He made rounds in the area to assess the situation and found that all his men on duty had been overwhelmed by Bibit's soldiers. The rebels were atop the new ESS Building with a .50 cal machine gun aimed at the HPCG Building.⁸¹¹

During the rounds at the Customs Police Division, the Desk Officer reported to Danao that their firearms were confiscated by the rebels led by Cpm Arthur Garcia. The office of Lt Antonio de Guzman of Logistics was also ransacked and firearms were carted away. Danao tried to get in touch with Bibit at 6:30 a.m. but the latter refused to talk to him.⁸¹²

Danao called a staff meeting at about 7:00 a.m. for briefing and assessment of the situation. He learned that the entire South Harbor was occupied by the rebels led by Bibit as early as 1:30 a.m. and that most of the zone gates were barricaded. He received a report that Garcia and other RAM-HF men commandeered the blue pick-up of the Customs Police Division. To avoid damage to said vehicle, Danao ordered Cpm Lino Bondoc to drive the vehicle and to keep him (Danao) informed on activities on the rebel side.⁸¹³

Customs Commissioner Salvador Mison, a retired LtGen and former Vice Chief of Staff of the AFP, called up Danao at 7:30 a.m. and asked for developments. Danao informed Mison of the loss of P400,000.00 in cash from the Cashier's Office. Mison gave instructions to secure the area to prevent looting, pilferage and damage to government properties. Danao also received a report that Capt Saplala, his Deputy Staff Officer, was being detained and held hostage at Gate 3 by the rebels. He sent Cpm Eugenio Monforte to take custody of Saplala from the rebels.⁸¹⁴

At 10:30 a.m., Danao received a report that the Office of the Customs Commissioner at South Harbor was ransacked. When he, Cpm Ely Abiog, and Eugenio Monforte went there, they found no sign that the office had been ransacked, although there were some tell-tale signs of break-in. Danao called up Bibit and together, they conducted an inventory. Bibit took two portable transceivers and, after talking to Mison over the phone, left a note acknowledging custody of the transceivers.⁸¹⁵

Government Forces Arrive at South Harbor

At 10:00 p.m., the HPCG received unconfirmed reports from BGen (Ret) Benjamin Cruz, ESS Chief, of rebel troops landing at South Harbor.⁸¹⁶

I.3. 2 December

At 4:00 a.m., RAM-HF troopers abandoned the ESS HQ compound and regrouped at the Commissioner's Office Building.⁸¹⁷

At noontime, CAPCOM and WPD elements led by P/Col Diokno arrived at the South Harbor with the intention of assaulting rebel groups there. Being unfamiliar with the area, Diokno decided to call for reinforcements. He then conferred with the HPCG Battle Staff at the HPCG regarding the joint operations to be conducted against the rebels.⁸¹⁸

Two patrol cars from the CAPCOM, with sirens blowing, unexpectedly entered the Port Area through Gate 1. This prompted the HPCG to sound the General Quarters alarm even before the scheduled arrival of reinforcements from the WPD. A RAM-HF unit withdrew through Gate 6 where they boarded waiting vehicles and trucks parked at the area fronting the Lusteveco Office.⁸¹⁹

Later, Diokno and his group, composed of P/Col Proceso Almando, P/Lt Col Robert Barbers, P/Capt SA Straebel and other WPD Officers and men, in coordination with BGen (Ret) Cruz, drove away 30 to 40 soldiers headed by

Bibit. The rebels escaped through Gate 6 of South Harbor on board different vehicles. A box containing 140 dynamite sticks and four vehicles used by the rebels were recovered.⁸²⁰

At 1:00 p.m., the expected reinforcement led by BGen (Ret) Cruz arrived at the ESS HQ. Majs Generoso Halican, Maglipon, Capt Rolando Sacramento, and some policemen of POMDC checked the area and confirmed that the area was clear of rebels.⁸²¹

The North and South Harbor areas were clear of RAM-HF forces by 2:00 p.m.⁸²²

J. Other Hostile Events in Luzon

J.1. Solcom Incident (RSAF 4)

At around 7:00 p.m. of 30 November, 2Lt Eliseo Rasco, CO, ISAC, RSAF 4 stationed at Brgy Sto Cristo, Sariaya, Quezon, together with Lts Herminio Cantaco, Jonas Calleja and 47 enlisted personnel, commandeered a Philtranco Bus and proceeded to Sangley Point upon instructions given to Rasco by an army officer two days earlier. Arriving at Sangley at around 6:00 a.m. of 1 December, they beefed up the group of Navy Capt Turingan in guarding the gate, port and airstrip. After the rebels' air assets were destroyed in the afternoon, Rasco and his men joined Lt Col Tecson and Maj Oliveros in boarding a fishing vessel, with Mariveles, Bataan as destination.⁸²³

Maj Rosalio Magsino, Battalion Commander of RSAF 4, explained that although Rasco's unit was under him, its operational control was under Col Miguel Fontanilla, head of Task Force Hunter. Magsino failed to arrive at Camp Bagong Diwa, Taguig, despite orders from BGen Evaristo Carino because along the way he received conflicting orders from Lt Cols Nicetas Katigbak and Aglipay.⁸²⁴

J.2. Legazpi City Incident

At 9:30 a.m., 1 December, Capt Florencio Flores, CO 3 SRB, with two V-150s and a whole compliment of 3 SRB occupied Legazpi City Airport.

Elements of his unit simultaneously took over DZRC radio station and PLDT office. Upon receiving a report of Flores's activities, Col Marino Filart, RECOM 5 Commander, constituted a provisional brigade under Col Ernesto Maristela to cope with the situation.⁸²⁵

At 10:00 a.m., 1 December, Maristela met with Flores, Lts Jay Tindoy, Marcel Mercado and Emmanuel Martin to convince them to return to barracks. They would not accede because according to Flores: "I am here in compliance to a directive from the regimental commander of the 1st Scout Ranger Regiment which I belong." However, Maristela succeeded in having Flores agree to vacating the premises of DZRC and PLDT, consolidating his forces at and confining them to one end of the airport. In return, Maristela confined his troops to the other end of the airport.⁸²⁶

Maristela then ordered his battalion commander, Maj Julius Ovilla, CO RSAF 5, to position his men in strategic places and park two dump trucks on the runway. As Ovilla was deploying his men, Capt Reynaldo Rafal, Deputy R1, RECOM 5, arrived at 2:00 p.m., with his men and some soldiers from 3 SRB on board a 6 x 6 truck driven by Sgt Asistio Cerillo. They joined the forces of Flores at the airport.⁸²⁷

At 6:00 p.m., 1 December, Col Filart ordered Maristela to disengage his troops at the airport. He met with Flores to advice him that he was disengaging to avoid a confrontation but he asked Flores to continue confining his troops to the airport.⁸²⁸

At 6:00 a.m. of 2 December, Maristela, Rafal, Tindoy and Martin met at the Mayon Restaurant inside the airport terminal and again Maristela tried to persuade them to vacate the airport for the sake of public convenience. The rebel officers left to confer with Flores who arrived shortly and told Maristela that he has to consult BGen Blando.

When Flores returned, he said he was unable to reach Blando. Maristela continued his dialogue with Flores because he could sense that Flores was starting to weaken.

At 9:30 a.m., 2 December, Gov Romeo Salalima arrived followed by Capt (PN) Rex Robles, both of whom were given permission to talk to Flores and his men. At 10:00 a.m., the rebels received an ultimatum from Col Filart. One of the rebel officers asked through Maristela for an hour's extension which was granted. Gov Salalima returned with Msgr Quiambao and Msgr Sarte of the Legazpi Diocese to intercede with the rebels. At the same time, Flores requested a one-on-one meeting with Maristela which culminated in Flores and his men returning around 12:30 p.m. to their camp in Villahermosa, Daraga, Albay.⁸²⁹

J.3. Sorsogon

On 1 December at around 6:30 a.m., Col Rene Bautista, Provincial Commander of Sorsogon, assembled his men inside Camp Escudero, Sorsogon, Sorsogon. During the briefing, Capt Leovic Dioneda, an officer previously implicated for leading with Capt Rafal the siege of Legazpi Airport during the August 1987 coup, spoke to Col Bautista's men. Capt Ruben Liwanag, OIC, 253rd PC Company, and his EX-O, Lt Gualberto Macalos, decided to join the rebel side. They commandeered two passenger buses, a Philtranco and a JB Liner. With 100 men, they boarded the buses at around 8:30 a.m. bound for Manila. Col Bautista did not report the troop movement to RECOM headquarters.⁸³⁰

The blocking force of P/Lt Jacinto Sison, Field Force Commander stationed at Brgy Binogsocan, Guinobatan, Albay, failed to stop this troop movement since they received the order ten minutes after the rebels passed by them. At around 11:30 a.m., the two buses were intercepted by the blocking force established by Camarines Sur Constabulary Command in Camarines Sur, however, the rebels were able to proceed as planned. The Provincial Commander of Camarines Sur tried but failed to convince the rebels to turn back.⁸³¹ However, in Camarines Norte, the Provincial Commander, after seven hours of negotiation, successfully convinced the rebels to return to Camp Escudero which they reached before midnight.⁸³²

In the late evening of 2 December, Capts Liwanag, Dioneda and Lt Macalos organized a second troop movement this time originating from Villahermosa, Daraga, Albay where the 3 SRB is based. It fizzled out because the rebel Rangers would no longer follow.⁸³³

When asked while testifying before the Commission if he had heard that Capt Dioneda had the reputation of being something of a Robin Hood, BGen Filart (who was promoted to BGen sometime after December 1989) replied

Yes sir, as a matter of fact, . . . that was one of the reasons why he [Dioneda] should be transferred out of the region because he or his family was operating a jueteng operation in Sorsogon.⁸³⁴

Filart also added

. . . during my interview with Capt Liwanag about any money involved, he told me, according to Capt Dioneda, he [Dioneda] was given P500.000 to support the Bicol operation . . . to defray expenses for the movement.⁸³⁵

K. Mactan Incident

Historic Mactan Island, site of the alternate international airport and Mactan Air Base (MAB), was in the public eye for a period of nine days during the December 1989 attempted coup d'état, as rebel forces led by BGen Jose Comendador, Commanding General 2nd Air Division (CG 2 AD) took control of MAB and the airport, including aircrafts belonging to the Philippine Air Lines (PAL).

Of specific interest were the PAF air assets, particularly the F-5 jets and the Sikorsky helicopter gunships, which could provide ample air support to whomsoever controlled MAB. There were 27 PAF aircrafts at MAB at the time: four F5s, three C130s, one T-28, one T-33, seven Nomads, two S-76s (Sikorsky), and nine Hueys. The C 130s and

the Hueys are capable of moving troops. There were also 13 commercial aircrafts at the Mactan alternate international airport; two 747s (which were diverted to Cebu since NAIA was closed to air traffic), two BAC-111s, six Sunrisers, two Fokkers, and one LBC AVRO. Apparently, the intended use of the base, the airport, and the PAF and PAL air assets would have provided a convenient means of moving combat troops to Luzon from Visayas and Mindanao and vice versa.⁸³⁶

K.1. 30 November

BGen Comendador Briefs his Men

At about 8:00 p.m., red alert was declared at the MAB. Thirty minutes later, Comendador talked to his personnel at the 2 AD and told them “You have got to put your trust in me, get orders from me, and follow the chain of command.” At that particular time, 2 AD personnel thought that BGen Comendador was still their legitimate commander and was receiving orders from BGen Renato Palma, COMVISCOM.⁸³⁷

Meanwhile, at 11:00 p.m., of the same evening, some elements of the 23 IB 4 ID in Bayugan, Agusan del Sur were told by Lt Gerry Amante that they would go to Nasipit, Butuan City for a security mission.⁸³⁸ Cpl Elmer Barrientos drove Lt Col Ericson Aurelio, CO 23 IB, in his service jeep for Nasipit, followed by two 6 x 6 trucks loaded with soldiers and one V-150. At Nasipit, Barrientos was informed that they were going to secure MAB.⁸³⁹

At about the same time, Lt Pedro Sumayo informed his men, a segment of 23 IB personnel at their Headquarters in Bidcor Compound, Bayugan, Agusan del Sur, that they would be proceeding to MAB to secure government facilities there. After the briefing, they were issued firearms, given a basic load of ammunitions, and proceeded to Nasipit wharf, where they boarded the M/V Our Lady of Lourdes and sailed for Mactan. Aside from Lt Sumayo, the officers included Aurelio, Amante and 2Lt Ramos.⁸⁴⁰ At about 11:00 p.m., members of the Alpha Coy, 30 IB 4 ID, based in Bad-as (Placer) Surigao del Norte, were told by Lt Ricardo Nepomuceno that they will proceed to Mactan to secure the air base. Forty three enlisted personnel boarded a 6 x 6 truck. Nepomuceno with his escort boarded a mini cruiser and all of them, together with a V-150 commando vehicle, left their Command Post and proceeded to Surigao pier where they boarded M/V Sweet Pearl and left for Mactan.⁸⁴¹

K.2. 1 December

Upon BGen Comendador’s instructions, Lt Rodolfo de la Torre, Junior Aide-de-camp of Comendador and Intelligence Officer of 2 AD, with about 20 enlisted personnel, manned a checkpoint at the foot of the Mactan bridge (Lapu-Lapu side) at about 2:00 a.m. to prevent any Cebu City troops from reaching Mactan.⁸⁴²

Troop Movements Toward Cebu

VISCOM headquarters received information of unauthorized troop movements of the 23 IB and 30 IB, which were on their way to the Cebu Headquarters, 4 ID and Headquarters PC/INP RECOM 7. They learned that 23 IB was headed by Aurelio, while 30 IB elements, identified as A Coy was headed by Nepomuceno. Their combined strength was estimated at 550-600 soldiers, with two V-150s, 90 mm recoilless rifles and 81 mm mortars.⁸⁴³

With the confirmation that the Mindanao troops were in fact bound for Cebu, BGen Palma contacted Naval District V Headquarters and instructed them to intercept the two vessels by all means. BGen Comendador was also called upon to help the Navy in preventing the ships from docking and to coordinate directly with Capt Vicente Escala, Jr, of Naval District V.⁸⁴⁴

Request for PAF F-5 Planes

At around 7:00 a.m., Col Filamer Artajo, EX-O for Operations, talked to Lt Col Romeo Lood, Director for Operations of 2 AD, to release four F-5 aircrafts for Basa Air Base.⁸⁴⁵ Not getting any result, MGen Jose de Leon,

Jr, CG PAF, personally called and ordered Comendador to give clearance for the four F-5 jets to take off from MAB. The latter answered in the affirmative but did not comply with the instruction.⁸⁴⁶

At around 9:00 a.m., Col Artajo again called Lood to follow the direct order of de Leon to Comendador for the release of the four F-5 jets, but was informed that Comendador had countermanded the order.⁸⁴⁷

Interception of M/V Sweet Pearl

PO1 Restituto Baring, Captain of Naval Gunboat DF 338, received instructions at around 9:00 a.m., from his Operations Officer, Lt Jimenez, to intercept M/V Sweet Pearl. The vessel was seen inside Cebu Harbor and was contacted by radio to drop anchor. Instead, M/V Sweet Pearl maneuvered and headed for the General Milling Corporation (GMC) wharf. From the Operations Center, DF 338 fired warning shots but M/V Sweet Pearl nevertheless proceeded. DF 338 was then instructed to fire directly at the propeller of the vessel to disable the same, but due to the presence of civilian passengers on board M/V Sweet Pearl, DF 338 just fired another warning shot. Upon seeing a bazooka aimed at its direction, DF 338 moved to a safer distance, but continued to guard the ship.⁸⁴⁸

M/V Sweet Pearl was able to dock at the GMC wharf at around 9:10 a.m. M/V Our Lady of Lourdes followed suit at past 10:00 a.m. that morning by shipsiding with M/V Weasel, a vessel owned by Load Star Shipping which was discharging bulk grain white corn. When soldiers in full battle gear started disembarking, Security Guard Norvie Craus observed that the soldiers had no name patches, while guard Ceferino Lopez testified that PAF soldiers led by ex-Lt Col Ebuen with 6 x 6 trucks from the PAF, with plate numbers SAG 961, SCV 676, SCV 677, SBY 931, BBY 843, SBY 483 and a civilian truck with plate number CAW 436, fetched the soldiers at around 1:30 p.m. that day, and brought them inside MAB near the office of 2 AD.

Some soldiers immediately proceeded to the ramp where the air assets were. Other soldiers were left on board M/V Sweet Pearl and M/V Our Lady of Lourdes to guard the heavy armaments and vehicles which could not be unloaded from the vessels because of low tide. They were finally unloaded the following day, 2 December.⁸⁴⁹

Comendador Instructs Pilots Not to Fly

Before the arrival of the vessel in the morning, BGen Comendador held a conference with some 25 pilots, instructing them to follow the chain of command, not to go near the aircrafts, and not to take off without his prior clearance.⁸⁵⁰

Lt Col Fusilero was at the headquarters of the 348 PC Coy located at the foot of the Mactan bridge (Mandaue City side) at about 8:00 a.m. carrying a hand-held radio. While there, Fusilero informed Maj Rolando Irizari of the arrival of the troops from Mindanao on board two commercial vessels, and gave instructions for Irizari's troops to be on standby position. Irizari then proceeded to the METRODISCOM Headquarters where an updated briefing on the coup was held. Irizari informed Col Wahing, the Acting METRODISCOM Commander and Maj Ernesto Padua, METRODISCOM Intelligence Officer, of the presence of Fusilero at the 348 PC Coy.⁸⁵¹

At about the same time that Fusilero was at the 348 PC Coy HQ, Ebuen, together with Maj Ricardo Mutya, PAF, were at the middle of the Mactan bridge monitoring the arrival of the two vessels from Mindanao through their hand-held radios. Airmen Dominino Recla and Efren Tabanas testified that Fusilero was seen inside MAB in the morning of 30 November 1989. Ebuen was also seen with Comendador and Col Pablo Regullano at about 5:00 p.m. of the same date, near the office of the 2 AD.⁸⁵²

After BGen Comendador's meeting with the pilots at around 8:00 am., he ordered Lt Col Antonio Anciano, PAF, Commander of the Mactan-based 208 Tactical Helicopter Squadron of the 205 HW (under the over-all command of BGen Loven Abadia), to report to him. BGen Comendador asked Lt Col Anciano if they can possibly work together, apparently as a way of gauging the latter's loyalty.⁸⁵³

During all this time, Palma was trying to contact Comendador without success. He was informed that Comendador was at the ramp.⁸⁵⁴ This was only a ploy as MAB was already preparing for the arrival of troops from Mindanao.

At about 11:15 a.m., Maj Almario Hilario, Lt Col Anciano's PMA classmate and Intelligence Officer of VISCOM, called up the latter and asked him (Anciano) to remind Comendador to call up VISCOM Headquarters. Comendador told Anciano that he would call VISCOM, particularly Palma in due time. By this time, Anciano doubted Comendador's loyalty.⁸⁵⁵

In the afternoon, Ebuén suggested that C130 pilots be located for the purpose of ferrying the Mindanao troops to Manila. Lt Col Romeo Lood, Operations Director of the 2 AD was informed by the Wing Operations Center of 220 Airlift Wing that there were no available pilots. The alternative plan, to utilize the PAL BAC-111 aircraft for the same purpose, met the same fate — no PAL pilot could be found. It was clear at this point that the troops from Mindanao had nowhere to go. At sundown, Aurelio wanted the aircrafts at the ramp crippled or destroyed, as they had become useless inasmuch as there were no pilots to fly them. Besides, it was so cumbersome for the troops to guard the aircrafts, and they might as well concentrate on guarding the Mactan Bridge. Lood was able to convince Comendador that destroying the aircrafts would be senseless. Heeding Lood's advise, Comendador instead ordered the removal of the batteries and starting units of the aircrafts.⁸⁵⁶

Meanwhile, Fusilero was again seen in the afternoon at the Headquarters of the 348 PC Coy. This time, there was merriment and clapping among PC soldiers and some Navy personnel, while the Philippine flag at the headquarters flagpole hung inverted, i.e., red side up and blue side down, a sign of a declaration of war.⁸⁵⁷ It took an order coming from the RECOM 7 Chief of Staff, Col Superable, to have the flag returned to its normal position.⁸⁵⁸ It would appear that the soldiers at the 348 PC Coy had been misled by Fusilero that the chain of command of RECOM 7 had sided with the rebels. Seen in the company of Fusilero were LCdr Danilo Abinoja, LtSG Napoleon Estilles, Lt Reynaldo Esquerre, and LtJG Leodegardo Acebedo of the Coast Guard, PN.⁸⁵⁹

Inversion of the Philippine Flag

At this juncture, it is worth mentioning that Irizari, during the August 28, 1987 coup attempt, had also allowed the inversion of the flag in his Headquarters in Siquijor for which offense he was found guilty, reprimanded, and his salary for one month forfeited.⁸⁶⁰

In the afternoon, Comendador was seen fuming mad, after having monitored through commercial radio that Phantom jets of the US Air Force flew persuasion flights in Metro Manila. Around this time, Comendador openly admitted to all and sundry, including the media, BGen Imperial and BGen Palma that he was supporting the rebels.⁸⁶¹

K.3. 2 December

In the early morning, Lts Sumayo and Amante led teams of the 23 IB from MAB to the foot of the Mactan-Mandaue bridge instructing them to check movements of vehicles and people coming in and out of Mactan Island.⁸⁶²

Inside MAB that morning, Anciano, clad only in shorts and T-shirt, jogged around the base, slipped out surreptitiously and went to VISCOM Headquarters. Anciano briefed Palma on what transpired inside the base and assured him that not one of his pilots would fly for Comendador. Anciano later returned to the pilot's quarters at MAB with Palma's instructions for the pilots to immediately leave the base. The pilots left on board a convoy of an ambulance, a private car, and a tricycle and proceeded directly to VISCOM HQ.⁸⁶³

At about 2:00 p.m., Cerge Remonde, Radio Station DYLA broadcaster and Cebu City newspaperman, received a telephone call from former PC RECOM 7 Commander BGen Abenina requesting that he be allowed to air a statement over the radio station. Abenina went on the air expressing support for the RAM-HF.⁸⁶⁴

Negotiations with BGen Palma

Negotiations between COMVISCOM and BGen Comendador began at about 8:00 p.m. Comendador told Palma that he would surrender only when rebel forces in Manila gave up the struggle. At that time also, the Mindanao Independence Movement, led by former Assemblyman Reuben Canoy, expressed firm support for the rebels' cause and distributed anti-government materials in Cebu City.⁸⁶⁵

Later that evening, Gen de Villa ordered Palma to take Mactan. However, VISCOM at that time was seriously handicapped by lack of manpower and firepower as they had but one company of infantry from the 57 IB, based in Negros Oriental, which only arrived earlier in the morning.⁸⁶⁶

K.4. 3 December

BGen Cesar Go, Wing Commander of the 220 Airlift Wing based in Mactan, who was in Manila when the coup started, was designated by MGen de Leon as Acting Commander, 2 AD, vice Comendador, because the latter had publicly announced his support for the rebel forces. Upon his designation, Go proceeded to Cebu using the old Lahug Airport and, upon arrival immediately proceeded to VISCOM HQ and reported to Palma. Although Go had at first intended to proceed to MAB, he was prevailed upon by Palma not to do BO, since he might be taken hostage by the rebels.

While at VISCOM headquarters, Go contacted Comendador and attempted to convince him to give up in order to avoid a bloody confrontation. Comendador refused, and advised Go not to enter MAB nor initiate an air assault upon his forces; otherwise, he (Comendador) would blow up all the aircraft in the base. Comendador also told Go that despite the lack of pilots to fly the aircraft in MAB, they could still avail of it for strategic purposes. In another talk with Comendador, the latter told Go that he would submit himself to Palma, once the rebel forces in the Manila area had surrendered. Even after the surrender of rebel troops in Makati's Commercial District, however, Comendador still clung to the belief that this was only a ruse played by government forces on him.⁸⁶⁷

K.5. 4 December

Comendador Establishes Command Post

In the early morning, Comendador left MAB and established a command post at Heidelberg Restaurant situated at the foot of the Mactan-Mandaue Bridge, Lapulapu City side.⁸⁶⁸ Comendador had no more troops to command as most 2 AD personnel had deserted him and had reported to the newly-installed 2 AD Commander, BGen Go. The rebels, therefore, had to consolidate their forces at the foot of the bridge because of continuing threats of invasion from the government forces coming from the other end of the bridge.

At 6:30 a.m., combined elements of R2 Division, RECOM 7, NISC and NDV took into custody former Assemblyman Canoy. After due investigation, Canoy was charged with the crime of rebellion before the local RTC. Earlier, Canoy was seen conferring with Comendador and other rebel soldiers at the former's office at 2 AD.⁸⁶⁹

Armed with the necessary clearance from COMVISCOM and RECOM 7 Commander, Mayor Alfredo Ouano of Mandaue City, Vice Mayor Paterno Canete, Acting Mayor Camilo Eyas of Lapulapu City, ABC President Paulino Dy and Councilor Manuel Masangkay spoke to Comendador inside MAB at about 6:00 p.m. about the latter surrendering peacefully. Comendador assured the group he would not fire the first shot but he would not surrender. He complained that the country was "prostituted" when help was sought from the US Air Force in fighting the rebels, adding that the people surrounding the President were communist-leaning and should be dismissed. He also stated that the present leadership was not sincere with the armed forces and that he wants a snap election.⁸⁷⁰

K.6. 5 December

At 3:00 p.m., Palma informed de Villa, that the ultimatum given for the surrender of rebel forces in Mactan Island had lapsed and that he was preparing for a military offensive against the rebels. This time, augmentation troops from nearby islands had arrived, enhancing the capability of VISCOM to retake Mactan.⁸⁷¹

Efforts by Mediators

Earlier efforts made by Cardinal Vidal, Msgr Achilles Dakay, and some public officials for the surrender of Comendador proved futile. Authorities consequently got in touch with relatives of Comendador as a last ditch effort to persuade the latter to give up peacefully. At around 5:00 p.m., Cardinal Vidal and Msgr Dakay, this time in the company of Ruth Comendador, daughter Pinky and son Dexter, himself an air force pilot with the rank of captain, in a tearful reunion at Heidelberg Restaurant tried to convince Comendador to surrender, but without success.⁸⁷²

K.7. 7 December

After his arrival from Hongkong, Cebu Governor Emilio Osmena joined Cardinal Vidal, Msgr Dakay and Ernest Weigel in a series of talks with Comendador that started about 2:20 p.m. of 7 December at the Heidelberg Hotel. As the discussion progressed, Comendador made clear his refusal to recognize the Constitution. Hence, the negotiators felt that there was no point in further talks. Besides, Comendador asked, as a pre-condition for his surrender, the resignations of President Aquino and the entire Cabinet. Given such demands, the negotiators informed President Aquino and Palma that the negotiations had bogged down.⁸⁷³

K.8. 8 December

At about 8:00 p.m., Comendador and his seven close-in security men left Heidelberg Hotel and checked-in at the Traveller's Inn, Reclamation Area, Cebu City.

K.9. 9 December

In the early morning of 9 December Comendador, with Sgt Ursal left Traveller's Inn for an undisclosed place.⁸⁷⁴ At 10:35 a.m., Palma announced that rebel soldiers were willing to give up and return to their barracks. It was about this time also that de Villa instructed Palma to proceed to Mactan and accept the surrender.

Fusilero relayed certain conditions for their meeting at the Mactan Bridge. There were to be no troop movement at the bridge, no one should carry long arms, each party to be made up of only nine persons should meet each other at the middle of the bridge for final negotiations, and the time of the meeting to be at 1:30 p.m.⁸⁷⁵

At 12:01 p.m. of 9 December, negotiations between the government side led by Palma and Imperial and the rebel side led by Fusilero, Aurelio and Nepomuceno began. The government guidelines for the surrender issued by de Villa were: "for the rebel forces to subject themselves to military control of their respective commanders, to turn in their firearms, to return to barracks; and to meet the consequences of their actions."⁸⁷⁶

Negotiations at the bridge were concluded at 2:00 p.m. Comendador submitted himself to Palma and was placed under the custody of Go, while Fusilero was placed under the custody of Imperial. All others were brought to VISCOM HQ. Army soldiers boarded M/V Our Lady of Lourdes bound for Cagayan de Oro City with their two V-150s and APC, accompanied by Congressman Vicente de la Cerna of Cebu. Ebuena eluded the military cordon around Mactan Island and continues to be at large.⁸⁷⁷

K.10. 10 December

Surrender of Comendador

At around 12:40 a.m. of 10 December, M/V Our Lady of Lourdes left Cebu for Cagayan de Oro with five officers, 114 enlisted personnel, two V-150s, two 6 x 6 trucks and jeeps.⁸⁷⁸

The following day, at 12:18 p.m., Comendador and Fusilero were brought to Manila aboard Fokker plane NR 210⁸⁷⁹ and thus ended the saga of Mactan Air Base.

L. Hostile acts in the province

L.1. Bacolod (NICOM) Incident

On 1 December at around 2:00 a.m., a group of 50 fully armed soldiers under Capt Leonardo Villanueva, Company Commander of the 339th PC Company, stationed at Victorias, Negros Occidental and later joined by MSgt Felizardo Espinosa, Patrol Base Commander of the 331st PC Company, assigned in Brgy Granada, Bacolod City and Lt Emil Ong, PA Team Leader of the 7 Riverine Assault Company 3rd Special Forces Battalion, and four of his men, occupied the Bacolod Airport.⁸⁸⁰ Their presence there, together with some civilians, was confirmed from footages taken by the crew of the local station, Channel 4 of ABS CBN.⁸⁸¹

Apparently, the rebels went to the airport to wait for a plane expected to come from MAB, to ferry them to Manila. With the development in Mactan, the rebels decided to secure other means of transportation. At around 2:00 p.m., 103 rebels proceeded to Banago wharf to board a vessel there. Lt Col Miguel Coronel, Negros Occidental Provincial Commander, prevented the sailing of a ship by not making the master and crew available and at the same time feigning that certain parts of the ship were malfunctioning. At 5:00 p.m., after negotiations, the rebels capitulated.⁸⁸²

At around 10:00 a.m., two platoons of the 11 IB under Lt Fidelino Agustin were sent to Pulupandan, Negros Occidental, where a port of entry is situated. They were later augmented by two more platoons under Capt Augusto Go. At around 11:00 a.m., Lt Ong and his men tried but failed to persuade Lt Agustin to side with them.⁸⁸³

To secure the V-150 of the 332nd PC Company under the command of Capt Rolando Lopez, Coronel had it parked at the police station in Bago City on 1 December between 1:00 and 2:00 p.m.⁸⁸⁴

L.2. Fernando Air Base

At about 8:30 in the morning of 1 December 1989, Col Hector M. Tarrazona called a meeting of 26 officers stationed at the Fernando Air Base. Those who attended included the Wing Chaplain, the Legal Officer, the Medical Officer, the members of the Wing staff and some junior officers. The purpose of the meeting was to sound out their concern about the ongoing coup attempt.⁸⁸⁵ In the course of the meeting, Col Tarrazona stepped out and, by phone, informed the Wing Commander that some junior officers wanted to fly two of the Marquette aircrafts in the Base as a show of support for the rebels. The Marquette aircraft is essentially a training plane and is not armed. The Wing Commander, Col Felipe Abando Jr, instructed Col Tarrazona to dissuade the officers from carrying out their plan, and instead, follow the chain of command.⁸⁸⁶

As Col Tarrazona proceeded to try and change the minds of the junior officers sympathetic to the rebels, Col Abando directly contacted the maintenance officers of the 443 Field Depot and Maintenance Squadron to place all the aircrafts inside the hangar and remove from the planes all batteries and parts needed to make them operational, keep the planes in a secured place, and otherwise prevent the planes at all costs from flying.⁸⁸⁷

After about an hour and a half of an open and candid discussion, to which Col Tarrazona promised confidentiality, the meeting was adjourned with the group deciding to stay loyal to the government. During that meeting, only five junior officers were very vocal and sympathetic to the rebels, although Col Tarrazona observed, “if we go by head count, most of the pilots were sympathetic to [the] rebels”.⁸⁸⁸ Nevertheless, after the meeting, these same five outspoken officers assisted in strengthening the security of the base.⁸⁸⁹

L.3. Davao Incident

On 30 November at around 9:30 p.m., BGen Mariano Baccay, Jr, PC INP Region XI Commander, convened and directed his commanders to uphold the Constitution and follow the chain of command. It was gathered from Col Franco Calida of the Davao METRODISCOM that some junior officers were conducting clandestine meetings in Davao City and that one of these officers was 2Lt Cesar Mancao III assigned to PC CIS, District XI. Baccay ordered Mancao to cease and desist from trying to recruit PC/INP junior officers for the rebel cause.⁸⁹⁰

On 1 December at around 8:00 a.m., Baccay assembled his men and reiterated the need to follow the chain of command. At around 11:40 a.m., he received information that elements of the 25 IB stationed in Pintatagan, Banaybanay, Davao Oriental were about to commandeer passenger buses to go to Davao City, and from there on to Manila. However, the soldiers abandoned their plan after their commander talked to them.⁸⁹¹

On 2 December at around 5:00 p.m., a group of company grade officers numbering about 25, accompanied by Lt Col Teodorico Viduya, Provincial Commander Davao del Norte, went to Baccay at Camp Panacan in Catitipan, Davao City, to seek guidance regarding the ongoing coup and other issues such as violence and US intervention. For two and a half hours, Baccay emphasized the theme that an abrupt change in the government was not the cure to the present problems. Apparently, the officers were convinced so they promised to adhere to the Constitution, observe the chain of command and return to their respective stations.⁸⁹²

In the morning of 3 December, Capt Gregory Ramos, CO Alpha Coy 2 LABde PALAR stationed in Tuburan, Mawab, Davao del Norte, left his station with 20 of his men and proceeded to Davao City. He had with him five armored vehicles consisting of two V-150, two AIFV and one APC. The vehicles were commanded by Lt Oscar Singson, Company EX-O, Sgts Leon Admachelo, Feliciano Gayla, Magin Montalban, and Nereo Macabenta. In Brgy Sasa, Davao City at around 10:00 a.m., they encountered a roadblock often wheeler trucks manned by elements of the PC METRODISCOM. They turned around and met Col Danilo Olay, CO 602 Bde, 6 ID, the immediate superior of Ramos. Olay observed that while they were at the roadblock, several junior officers from RSAF, CIS, METRODISCOM, and RSU spontaneously arrived. When Olay learned what the movement was all about, he brought Ramos and the whole group to Baccay at Camp Panacan. Some junior officers had prepared a manifesto expressing support and sympathy for the rebels' cause and sentiments against the AFP,⁸⁹³ which Ramos handed to Baccay. There were two other armored vehicles from Calinan, Davao which arrived in Panacan. After a dialogue, the officers returned to barracks at 5:40 p.m.⁸⁹⁴

L.4. Nasipit

On 3 December 1989, the rebels tried to put on board the M/V Nasipit Princess and the M/V Don Calvino four armored personnel vehicles and an undetermined number of men from 402 Bde.⁸⁹⁵

Sometime during the day, Lt Anito Alfajardo, station commander, received a report that the radio operator of the M/V Nasipit Princess, while it was docked at the Nasipit wharf in Agusan del Norte, was approached by a man in civilian clothes and told to turn off all communications equipment. Later, at about 6:00 p.m., the Coast Guard sighted armed soldiers aboard six 6 x 6 trucks in the Nasipit wharf area. Lt Alfajardo forthwith motored from Butuan to Nasipit and, upon arrival, ordered elements of the Nasipit detachment to look for the ship master of M/V Nasipit Princess. The ship master, Capt David Escalera, Jr was found at about 8:00 p.m. When he was informed of the situation, he voluntarily placed himself under the protection of the Coast Guard which hid him in a safehouse somewhere in Nasipit.⁸⁹⁶ He remained there until the situation normalized in Metro Manila. This prevented the rebel group, of about 50 enlisted men of 30 IB, led by Lt Generoso Bolina, from using the vessel to proceed to Mactan.⁸⁹⁷

On the same day 3 December, a group of about 11 rebel soldiers commandeered the WV La Lealtad, while it was docked at the Lumbacan pier in Butuan City, and forced its master, Capt Antonio Ambray, to proceed to the entrance of the Nasipit wharf, possibly to rendezvous with the MA7 Nasipit Princess had the latter been able to set sail, or at least pick up some troops if for some reason the latter could not proceed. However, upon reaching the vicinity of the Nasipit pier, the master deliberately ran the vessel aground thereby disabling it.⁸⁹⁸

A third vessel which the rebels tried to board was the M/V Don Calvino. Their plans were likewise frustrated when the captain and the key crew members abandoned it.⁸⁹⁹

L.5. Resignations at Cagayan de Oro

In the late afternoon of 7 December, a number of officers of the 4 ID met somewhere in Gusa, Cagayan de Oro City. A few of those who were at the meeting claimed that they were invited by Lt Amador Tabuga "to meet some of our classmates and co-peemayers in a get-together party."⁹⁰⁰ Nonetheless, it appears that on account of their concern with

news reports of a possible bloody confrontation of rebel and government forces in Cebu as well as the media accounts of US military intervention in Metro Manila, the participants decided to arrange a dialogue with their CG, BGen Rogelio Villanueva. For this purpose, Maj William Dormitorio was told to see the General at his office.⁹⁰¹

Villanueva advised Dormitorio that, because a dialogue will involve a confrontation with his junior officers in Camp Evangelista away from their posts, he would talk to them only if they resigned.⁹⁰² Maj Dormitorio relayed the General's response to Lt Col Reynaldo Rivera who informed the rest.⁹⁰³

Accordingly, the officers individually signed resignation letters. The resignations were not filled out in the official form but simply in a preprinted half-sheet of paper with blanks for their names distributed by one of the officers under Rivera.⁹⁰⁴ Since Rivera was the most senior officer in the group, he was requested to carry the letters of resignation. Just before he left to see the General, Rivera requested Capt Santiago Pascual to accompany him and carry all the resignations except Rivera's, which he carried himself.⁹⁰⁵

Villanueva, upon being presented the letters of resignation, met with the officers from 9:00 p.m. of 7 December up to 3:00 a.m. of 8 December. The dialogue, though centering on the grievances of the officers, consisting mostly of national issues, was described as "conducted in a cordial manner."⁹⁰⁶ At the end, Villanueva told the officers that he was not accepting their resignations and ordered them to return to their posts.

Before the officers could do so, they were told to stay because MGen (Ret) Mariano Adalem and BGen Arturo Enrile were en route from Metro Manila to see them. At 8:00 a.m. of 8 December, a second dialogue was thus held. The officers repeated their grievances to Adalem and Enrile and thereafter were told to return to their respective stations.

The affidavits submitted by the officers uniformly maintain that the affiants did not intend to resign and that they did so only to fulfill the condition precedent set by their CG for a dialogue. Thus, Capt Ruben Clarito claimed to have torn up his resignation letter after it was returned to him.⁹⁰⁷

M. Possible US Involvement

Newspaper accounts every now and then have appeared since 1986 reporting the alleged presence of American intelligence personnel on the occasion of past coup attempts. For example, the US Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) was reported to have promised to deliver food and aviation fuel to the RAM in case they launched a coup against then President Marcos in 1986. DIA, it was said, did not keep its promise.⁹⁰⁸

Thereafter, a US Embassy spokesman by the name of Allan Croughan, confirmed that a US Vice Consul, in the absence of Ambassador Stephen Bosworth who was then on leave, privately conferred with Arturo Tolentino when the latter and other Marcos loyalists occupied the Manila Hotel in July 1986. Croughan justified his actions by saying that: "We do it everytime [something like this develops] to get an appraisal of the situation."⁹⁰⁹

In early January 1987, Col James Nicholson, officially a US Military Attache, was photographed talking with the rebels at the GMA-7 during the occupation of the station.⁹¹⁰

Then Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Fidel Ramos, officially wrote to former Secretary of National Defense, Rafael Ileto, that several Americans were said to have been seen closely following the 28 August 1987 coup attempt. Lt Col Victor Rafael, who was formerly a US Military Attache to the Philippines, allegedly tried to dissuade Col Dado from attacking Camp Aguinaldo, where Gregorio Honasan was at the time. Col Rafael was said to be the godfather of Honasan's son. Also, Maj Dennis Faylor was supposedly seen at the perimeter of the Villamor Air Base on board his armored car, monitoring the events there. Finally, a certain Stephen Herry was purportedly observed monitoring the August 1987 coup attempt.⁹¹¹

In the December 1989 coup attempt, the rebels took advantage of the Balikatan Exercise (Balikatan), a RP-US military exercise, to provide cover for their troop involvements. According to BGen Lisandro Abadia, Balikatan is a

regular annual joint RP-US activity. It was scheduled for 4 December 1989. The Balikatan consisted of field exercises, where actual troops were involved, and command post exercises where simulated war games were conducted. It is normal for the JUSMAG people, particularly the American officers, to participate. The American participants usually billeted themselves in hotels (in December 1989, in Nikko) from where they are bussed every morning and every night to and from Fort Bonifacio and Villamor Air Base. The Americans participating normally arrive one week before the scheduled opening. Thus, these American military personnel were already in the Philippines prior to 1 December 1989.⁹¹²

A noteworthy part of Balikatan 1989 was the use of sophisticated communications equipment by the American participants. The communications equipment are such that from where they are or from where, they were, “You can lift up the phone and you can call anywhere in the world.”⁹¹³

Col Samson Mahimer, 1989 Director of Balikatan, testified that the intended role of the US military personnel, was “as tutors for group training”. Col Mahimer also stated that the communications system held by the Americans at that time were “state of the art communications system, either wired or wireless.”⁹¹⁴

Upon inquiry by the Commission, BGen Cardones stated in a letter that, during the period, 1 September 1987 to 1 December 1989, American military personnel participated in communications training activities for the appropriate units in the entire PA, including FSSR personnel and FSSR HQ communication facilities at Fort Bonifacio.⁹¹⁵ Furthermore, Col Urgello confirmed in a letter to the Commission that “11 special communications courses had been evaluated by five US instructors at the FSRR Compound in Fort Bonifacio from 1987 to 1989.”⁹¹⁶

At Sangley, during the morning of 1 December, there were two US Navy ships anchored, reportedly as part of Balikatan.

It is reasonable to suppose, regardless of whether or not US military persons were in Philippine military camps only coincidentally because of Balikatan, that they were, at least, closely monitoring the developments of the December 1989 coup attempt.

During his testimony before the Commission, Press Secretary Tomas Gomez mentioned an H Natzke as supposedly having been a CIA agent attached to the US Embassy in Manila during the early '70s and now working for Lucio Tan in San Francisco. Secretary Gomez remembered Natzke because a photograph of his daughter with rebel soldiers in Makati appeared in one of the Honolulu newspapers. According to Secretary Gomez, he inquired and was told that Natzke was here during the last coup.⁹¹⁷ The Commission, on the other hand, discovered that Apt 19-C in Twin Towers, Ayala Ave., Makati, is listed as occupied by Helbert Natzke and owned by Arithmos International.⁹¹⁸

A video tape provided the Commission shows a helicopter load of US Marines landing and deploying at the US Embassy grounds on 2 December.⁹¹⁹

While the Commission does not believe that the foregoing events constitute proof of US involvement in past coup attempts, the Commission, nevertheless, urges the government to look deeper into this matter. Considering American strategic interests in the Philippines, it is both logical and prudent for the government to do so. The Commission, not having any military intelligence capability or recourse to diplomatic channels, is neither equipped nor possessed of the necessary authority to effectively pursue such an investigation. For example, when the Commission sought to interview US Naval Attache Capt Thomas Mann in connection with his having reported to AFP GHQ that a wall of Camp Aguinaldo had been breached by the rebels during the last attempted coup, the US Embassy invoked, pro forma, his diplomatic immunity.

N. Some of the Damages Due to the Coup

N.1. Coup Casualties

As of 18 January 1990, the Department of National Defense Special Investigating Committee (DNDSIC) reports 669 confirmed casualties.

Table V-1—DNDSIC Record of Casualties

	KIA*	WIA**	TOTAL
	31	252	283
	17	79	96
	1	0	1
	50	239	289
	99	570	669

The casualties from the military (government and rebels) came from the following units:

Table V-2—DNDSIC Military Casualty Breakdown

SERVICE	KIA*	WIA*	
	21	126	
	2	11	
	5	33	
	2	44	
	2	22	
	1	0	
	33	236	

On the other hand, the Philippine National Red Cross reported on 26 April 1990 a total of 575 casualties.⁹²⁰

Table V-3—PNRC Record of Casualties

	KIA*	WIA**	TOTAL
	34	265	299
	42	234	276
	76	499	575

N.2. Armed Forces

According to Gen de Villa's report dated 17 January 1990⁹²¹ the total damage sustained by the AFP is estimated at P469 million.

Table V-4—Summary of Losses/Damages in Peso Value

Facilities	Equipment	Armaments	Critical Items
12,500	5,681,476	17,279,609	165,280
15,583,000	104,717,358	14,234,000	82,016,516
16,872,000	10,498,200	8,750	403,148
4,933,413	26,708,318	11,273,259	126,592,146
12,533,347	5,059,973	5,262,839	9,092,884
49,934,260	152,665,325	48,058,457	218,269,974

N.3. Philippine Airlines

Levy Rebanal, vice president of PAL for Risk and Insurance Management, testified that the net revenue loss due to the coup amounted to P112 million plus P9 million attributable to the takeover of Mactan. The loss of revenue after the coup for the months of January to March, based on a projected growth rate of 10 percent to 12 percent, was estimated at P226 million.⁹²²

N.4. Tourism

At the time, right after the coup, Tourism Secretary Peter Garrucho estimated that the hotel occupancy in Metro Manila could plunge to a low 40 percent.⁹²³

N.5. Stock Trading, Investments, and Prices

Stock trading slumped to a volume of 2.6 billion shares from 3.9 billion shares in 29 November 1989. Since then, volume and value of stock traded generally remained on the low side reflecting the reluctance of investors to raise their market exposure.⁹²⁴

A marked drop in the initial paid-up capital investments was recorded during the week of the coup. Investments declined by 83.7 percent, from P297.8 million during the week of 7 November to 1 December, to P48.4 million after 1 December. For the month of December, initial paid-up capital investments dropped to P343.86 million from P963.77 million recorded during November.⁹²⁵

N.6. Total Losses

Combined financial losses due to the December 1989 failed coup attempt, based on the figures above, would be in the order of P800 million to P1 billion. But the loss of lives, loss of confidence and damage to our international image are worth far more than the financial losses.

ENDNOTES

- (1) Except for Abenina, Honasan and Zumel were at large at this time. Honasan escaped from detention in April 1988 while Zumel was already the object of a manhunt ordered by then CSAFP Gen Ramos as early as January 1987. Both were subsequently dropped from the military rolls.
- (2) Sworn Testimony of Gen Renato de Villa, CSAFP, given before the Fact-Finding Commission (FFC) on 7 April 1990; Sworn Testimony of BGen Galileo Kintanar, former Chief, ISAFP, given before the FFC on 26 July 1990.
- (3) Sworn Testimony of Capt Oscarlito Mapalo, former security officer of BGen Alejandro Galido, given before the FFC on 9 August 1990; Exh. "B-5-Cardones", Memorandum Re: Alleged Involvement of BGen Edgardo Abenina (Table C of Enclosure 2, AFPSIC) submitted by BGen Rene Cardones, former Commanding General, FSRR, dated 16 April 1990.
- (4) Exh. "B-1-BGen Lisandro Abadia", Intelligence Developments on the Sixth Coup Attempt, submitted by Gen Renato S. de Villa, CSAFP, to President Corazon C. Aquino, dated 3 January 1989.
- (5) Exh. "KKKKK-8"-Commission, Sinumpaang Salaysay ni Capt Oscarlito Mapalo, dated 27 January 1990; Exh. "KKKKK-10"-Commission, Supplemental Sworn Statement of Capt Mapalo, dated 17 March 1990; Affidavit of Capt Mapalo, dated 12 January 1990 and 17 March 1990, respectively; Mapalo Testimony, op. cit.
- (6) Exh. "KKKKK-2"- Commission, Sworn Statement of BGen Alejandro Galido, former CG SOLCOM AFP, given before Col Benjamin Libarnes PC at AFPCIC, dated 17 January 1990.
- (7) Exh. "B-BGen Raul Aquino", Letter of BGen Raul Aquino (Ret) addressed to MGen Mariano Adalem, CG PA, dated 5 May 1989, photocopy.
- (8) Mapalo Testimony, op. cit.
- (9) Sworn Testimony of Col Juan Mamorno, Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations and Command Info Office, SOLCOM, given before the FFC on 9 August 1990.
- (10) Ellen Gallardo, "US Embassy Confirms Magleo, Galido Meeting," Philippine Star, 4 April 1990, pp. 1-2; "US Confirms Magleo Was Here," Manila Bulletin, 4 April 1990, p. 1.
- (11) Exh. "B-5-Cardones", op. cit.; Exh. "KKKKK-2"- Commission, op. cit.
- (12) Exh. "KKKKK-2"- Commission, Ibid.
- (13) Exh. "B-5'Cardones", op. cit.; Exh. "KKKKK-2"- Commission, Ibid.
- (14) Ibid.
- (15) Sworn Testimony of BGen Artemio Tadiar, Jr, Deputy CG, Subic Naval Base, given before the FFC on 15 June 1990.
- (16) Exh. "KKKKK-2"- Commission, op. cit.
- (17) Exh. "B-5-Cardones", op. cit.; Exh. "KKKKK-2"- Commission, ibid.
- (18) Tadiar Testimony, op. cit.
- (19) Sworn Testimony of Cmdr Bernardo Patino, Chief of Staff, Naval District VI, given before the FFC on 15 June 1990.
- (20) Exh. "KKKKK-2"- Commission, op. cit.
- (21) Ibid.

- (22) Exh. "KKKKK-8"- Commission, op. cit.
- (23) Exh. "B-Diana Aguas", Letter of Diana Z. Aguas addressed to the Chairman of FFC, dated 7 August 1990.
- (24) Sworn Testimony of Diana Z. Aguas, given before the FFC on 16 August 1990.
- (25) Exh. "A-1-Cobarrubias", Philippine Village Hotel's registration cards of occupants of Room 317 from the period of 1 November 1989 to 7 December 1989, photocopies.
- (26) Exh. "KKKKK-2"-Commission, op. cit.
- (27) Ibid.
- (28) Mamorno Testimony, op. cit.
- (29) Ibid.
- (30) Exh. "KKKKK-6"- Commission, Affidavit of Col Juan Mamorno, given at AFPCIC, dated 1 February 1990; Mamorno Testimony, Ibid.
- (31) Exh. "KKKKK-2"- Commission, op. cit.
- (32) Sworn Testimony of Luis Tabuena, given before the FFC on 7 May 1990.
- (33) Exh. "KKKKK-2"- Commission, op. cit.
- (34) Tabuena Testimony, op. cit.
- (35) Exh. "KKKKK-3"- Commission, Additional Sworn Statement of BGen Galido, dated 23 January 1990.
- (36) Exh. "KKKKK-2"- Commission, op. cit.
- (37) Exh. "B-5-Cardones", op. cit.
- (38) Exh. "KKKKK-2"-Commission, op. cit.
- (39) Ibid.
- (40) Ibid.
- (41) Ibid.
- (42) Exh. "21-LOGCOM", Sworn Statement of Lt Col Gimeno C. Villanueva, dated 8 December 1989.
- (43) Sworn Testimony of Col Manuel Mariano, Commander, LOGCOM AFP, Camp Aguinaldo, given before the FFC on 28 May 1990.
- (44) Ibid.
- (45) Sworn Testimony of BGen Oswaldo Villanueva, CG 6 ID, given before the FFC on 21 May 1990.
- (46) Exh. "B-4-Villanueva", also marked as Exh. "B-Fortich", colored photograph showing former Gov Fortich, dated 26 February 1990; Exh. "B-7-Villanueva", also marked as Exh. "C-Fortich", colored photograph showing Gov Fortich (marked Exh. "C-1-Fortich"), Reuben Canoy (marked Exh. "C-2-Fortich"), Alexander Noble (marked Exh. "C-3-Fortich"), and Atty Romeo Montalban (marked Exh. "C-4-Fortich"), dated 26 February 1990.
- (47) Exh. "B-Dejarome", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni Sgt Asterio Dejarome, given before SSgt Domingo Doctor, dated 29 December 1989.

- (48) Sworn Testimony of Sgt Asterio Dejarme, given before the FFC on 24 March 1990.
- (49) Ibid.
- (50) Ibid.
- (51) Ibid.
- (52) Ibid.
- (53) Ibid.
- (54) Ibid.
- (55) Exh. "C-Dejarme", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni Sgt Asterio Dejarme, dated 3 January 1990.
- (56) Exh. "G-3-Dejarme", Real Property Tax Declaration No B-067-01962 issued by the City Assessor of Quezon City, dated 29 June 1990.
- (57) Exh. "G-2-Dejarme", Sworn Statement of Emmanuel Lao given before Special Counsel Alejandro Bijasa at the FFC, dated 5 July 1990.
- (58) Dejarme Testimony, op. cit.
- (59) Ibid.
- (60) Ibid.
- (61) Ibid.
- (62) Ibid.
- (63) Exh. "C-BGen Ruiz", Swom Testimony of BGen Federico Ruiz, Jr, CG 8 ID, Camp Lukban, Catbalogan, Samar, given before the FFC on 13 March 1990; Exh. "B-BGen Flores", Special Report on the December 1 Coup and Involvement of AFP Units in Mindanao submittedby BGen Guillermo Flores, CGSOUTHCOM, dated14 December 1989.
- (64) Sworn Testimony of Salvador Mison, Commissioner, Bureau of Customs, given before the FFC on 22 February 1990.
- (65) Ibid.
- (66) Sworn Testimony of Fe de los Reyes, given before the FFC on 16 April 1990.
- (67) Ibid.
- (68) Exh. "L-Holiday Inn", Report in response to the request for verification made by the FFC submitted by Lt Col Reynaldo V. Velasco, PC Provincial Commander of Negros Occidental, dated 25 June 1990.
- (69) Ibid.
- (70) Sworn Statement of Eladio D. Fasinal (with attached logbook entries), a security guard at Holiday Inn, dated 6 April 1990.
- (71) Exh. "C-1-Salialam", Incident Report submitted by P/Capt Job Gavino, dated 4 December 1989.
- (72) De los Reyes Testimony, op. cit.
- (73) Exh. "B-5-Cardones", op. cit.

(74) Exh. "A-SOLCOM", Special Report on the Actions Taken by COM SOLCOM regarding the 1989 coup d'etat, made by BGen Galido.

(75) Sworn Testimony of BGen Javier Carbonell, CG 2 ID, given before the FFC on 7 August 1990.

(76) Manila Chronicle, 13 September 1986, as shown by the NBI records check on ex-Lt Col Tiburcio Fusilero (PRO File No F-246, dated 24 November 1986).

(77) Sworn Testimony of Maj Anacleto Chagas, CO 347 PC Coy, Toledo City, given before the FFC on 4 April 1990.

(78) Exh. "D-Maj Crucero", Special Report to the Chief of Staff, 3 ID, COMNICOM, by Maj Alphonsus Crucero, Chief of Intelligence, 3 ID, Camp Peralta, Capaz, Tarlac, dated 18 September 1989.

(79) Sworn Testimony of Rogelio Osmena, given before the FFC on 29 March 1990.

(80) Ruiz Testimony, op. cit.

(81) Osmeña Testimony, op. cit., p. 6.

(82) Exh. "A-Mactan", After Mactan Crisis Report, submitted by BGen Renato Palma, CG VISCOM, dated 19 December 1989.

(83) Sworn Testimony of Lt Augusto Marquez, Jr, Chief of Operations, R3 Division, RECOM 7, Cebu City, given before the FFC on 28 March 1990.

(84) Chagas Testimony, op. cit.

(85) Sworn Testimony of Capt Cecil Ezra Sandalo, CO 342 PC Coy, Cebu City, given before the FFC on 28 March 1990.

(86) Marquez Testimony, op. cit.

(87) Sandalo Testimony, op. cit.

(88) Chagas Testimony, op. cit.

(89) Sandalo Testimony, op. cit.

(90) Marquez Testimony, op. cit.

(91) Ibid.

(92) Ibid.

(93) Ibid.

(94) Chagas Testimony, op. cit.

(95) Sandalo Testimony, op. cit.

(96) Marquez Testimony, op. cit.

(97) Sworn Testimony of Col Andres Superable, Chief of Staff, PC/INP RECOM 7, Cebu City, given before the FFC on 28 March 1990.

(98) Chagas Testimony, op. cit.

(99) Marquez Testimony, op. cit.

(100) Sworn Testimony of BGen Victor Natividad (Ret), former Deputy Chief, PC, given before the FFC on 17 April 1990.

(101) Sworn Testimony of BGen Rene Cardones, CG FSRR, given before the FFC on 9 March 1990.

(102) Exh. "A-Salac", Memorandum prepared by the office of Col Dominador Salac, Chief A2, Villamor Air Base, as an aid for his testimony before the FFC, dated 24 February 1990.

(103) Exh. "JJJJ-4" – Commission, Confidential Intelligence Report Re: Ambassador Eduardo Cojuangco, prepared by NBI Senior Agent Isabelo Cerna, dated 22 January 1987, photocopy.

(104) Exh. "A-3-Executive and Tourist Aviation, Inc", Aircraft Flight Log Book entry made by Capt Adriano Morales, dated 20 November 1989, photocopy; Exh. "B-Executive and Tourist Aviation, Inc"; Sworn Statement of Capt Adriano Morales, dated 25 July 1990.

(105) Sworn Testimony of ex-Capt Adriano Morales, General Manager, Executive and Tourist Aviation, Inc, given before the FFC on 10 August 1990.

(106) Supplementary Sworn Statement of Capt Adriano Morales, dated 7 September 1990.

(107) Exh. "A-4-Executive Tourist and Aviation, Inc", Aircraft Flight Log Book entry for RP-C 585, dated 23 November 1989.

(108) Morales Testimony, op. cit.: Sworn Testimony of Capt Loreto Vergeire, given before the FFC on 22 August 1990; Supplemental Sworn Statement of Capt Adriano Morales, dated 31 August 1990.

(109) Exh. "A-2-Agricultural Investors, Inc", Aircraft Flight Log Book Report No. 6249, submitted by Armando S. Narciso, dated 21 November 1989.

(110) Exh. "A-Agricultural Investors, Inc", Affidavit of Armando S. Narciso, General Manager of Agricultural Investors, Inc, dated 9 July 1990; Exh. "A-2-Agricultural Investors, Inc", op. cit.;

Exh. "A-3-Agricultural Investors, Inc", Aircraft Flight Logbook Report No 6250, submitted by Armando S. Narciso, dated 22 November 1989; Exh. "A-4-Agricultural Investors, Inc", Aircraft Flight Logbook Report No 6301, submitted by Armando S. Narciso, dated 23 November 1989.

(111) Sworn Testimony of Capt Jose Castillo, given before the FFC on 17 August 1990.

(112) Morales Testimony, op. cit.

(113) Exh. "A-4-Executive Tourist Aviation", op. cit.

(114) Sworn Testimony of BGen Rodolfo Biazon, CG NCRDC, given before the FFC on 21 December 1989.

(115) Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", Intelligence After-Operations Report, submitted by Col Benjamin Libarnes, GSC PC, dated 29 December 1989.

(116) Ibid.

(117) Sworn Testimony of Col Raul Urgello, Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, PA, given before the FFC on 9 February 1990.

(118) Sworn Testimony of Col Rene Dado, Brigade Commander, 702 Bde PA, Bataan, given before the FFC on 12 February 1990.

(119) Cardones Testimony, op. cit.

(120) Exh. "A-Salac", op. cit.

(121) Ibid.

(122) Ibid.

(123) Ibid.

(124) Ibid.

(125) Exh. "B- 1-BGen Lisandro Abadia", op. cit.

(126) Sworn Testimony of Capt Melito Mabilin, PC Station Commander, San Pedro, Laguna, given before the FFC on 20 June 1990.

(127) Sworn Testimony of Capt Felizardo Serapio, Jr, Company Commander, 74 PC Coy, Angeles City, given before the FFC on 8 May 1990.

(128) Marquez Testimony, op. cit.

(129) Exh. "D-Crucero", op. cit.

(130) Ibid.

(131) Sworn Testimony of BGen Renato Palma, Commander, VISCOM, given before the FFC on 15 January 1990.

(132) Exh. "D-Crucero", op. cit.

(133) Ibid.

(134) Exh. "B-NICOM", Investigation Report submitted by Lt Col Wilfredo Alejaga (GSC) to AFPSIC, dated 23 January 1990.

(135) Exh. "A-NICOM", After-Coup Report submitted by Maj Alphonsus Crucero, dated 10 December 1989.

(136) Ibid.

(137) Exh. "B-NICOM", op. cit.

(138) Ibid.

(139) Exh. "JJJJ-5"- Commission, Pertinent Documents Re: Coup-Related Incidents in Davao, submitted by Special Counsel Amor Sunodan to the FFC (containing the report of BGen Mariano Baccay, Jr on coup related incidents in Region XI, submitted by BGen Baccay to Chief, PC/Director General INP, Camp Crame, Quezon City), dated 9 December 1989.

(140) Exh. "B-Villanueva", Summary Report on December 1989 Coup Attempt, submitted by BGen Rogelio Villanueva, CG 4 ID, Cagayan de Oro City, dated 23 February 1990.

(141) Sworn Statement of Constantino Alcaraz, Mayor of the Municipality of Moncayo, Davao del Norte, given before Special Counsel Amor Sunodan at FFC, dated 24 February 1990.

(142) Exh. "JJJJ-5"- Commission, op. cit.

(143) Exh. "B-Flores", op. cit.

(144) Exh. "A-Ilano", Special Report on the December Coup, submitted by Col Cesar Ilano, Office of the Chief of Staff, PA, Fort Bonifacio, dated 8 December 1989.

(145) Exh. "A-Dado", Report to CG PA submitted by Col Rene Dado, CO 4 IBde, dated 4 December 1989; Exh. "B-Tagaytay", Sworn Statement of SSgt Angeles Pascual given before Maj Mario Abundo (JAGS), dated 30 November 1989.

(146) Ibid.

(147) Exh. "C-Tagaytay", Sworn Statement of SSgt Mario Maitim, given before Maj Mario Abundo (JAGS), dated 29 November 1989.

(148) Exh. "A-Dado", op. cit.

(149) Cardones Testimony, op. cit.

(150) Sworn Testimony of BGen Loven Abadia, CG, 205th Helicopter Wing, Villamor Air Base, given before the FFC on 3 August 1990.

(151) Cardones Testimony, op. cit.

(152) Ibid.

(153) Exh. "B-BGen Cardones", Report with Respect to Involvement of Scout Rangers in the December 1989 coup, submitted by BGen Rene Cardones, CG FSRR, dated 20 December 1989.

(154) Kxh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.

(155) Exh. "O-VP Laurel", "Chronology of Events," The Philippine Star, 3 December 1989, p. 3.

(156) Exh. "D-Makati", Affidavit of Capt Jaime Yangzon, given before Capt Mauro Abalos (INF) PA at OG3, HPA, Fort Bonifacio, dated 19 December 1989.

(157) Exh. "C-Makati", Affidavit of Capt Edgardo Gurrea, given before Capt Mauro Abalos (INF) PA at OG3 HPA, Fort Bonifacio, dated 19 December 1989.

(158) Exh. "A-Ilano",

(159) Sworn Testimony of Col Cesar Ilano, Group Commander, SISG, given before the FFC on 8 February 1990.

(160) Sworn Testimony of Capt Danilo Estropia, Special Activity Unit, Fort Bonifacio, given before the FFC on 12 February 1990.

(161) Sworn Testimony of BGen Manuel Cacanando, CG PA, given before the FFC on 1 February 1990.

(162) Sworn Testimony of Col Abraham Paray, Commander, Light Armor Brigade, given before the FFC, dated 12 February 1990; Exh. "A-Paray", Sworn Statement of Col Abraham Paray, dated 8 December 1989.

(163) Exh. "C-Makati", op. cit.

(164) Exh. "A-Ilano", op. cit.

(165) Exh. "A-Lagman", Sworn Statement of Col Ferdinand Lagman, dated 14 February 1990.

(166) Ilano Testimony, op. cit.

(167) Exh. "A-Ilano", op. cit.

(168) Exh. "A-1-Ilano", Memorandum Re: Planned Coup Attempt, from Col Cesar Ilano, dated 30 November 1989.

(169) Ilano Testimony, op. cit.

(170) Exh. "B-Makati", Sworn Statement of Capt Jose Cruz, given before Maj Mario Abundo at NCRDC, AFP, Camp Aguinaldo, dated 4 December 1989.

(171) Exh. "A-17-NCRDC, After-Operations Report of the 1st Marine Brigade (Annex "P" of the After-Operations Report of the NCRDC) submitted by BGen Cesar Abella, dated 5 January 1990.

(172) Exh. "A-Ilano", op. cit

(173) Exh. "C-Makati", op. cit

(174) Cacanando Testimony, op. cit.

(175) Exh. "B-Ligot", Letter of Lt Col Jacinto C. Ligot, former Deputy and Executive Officer, G3, PA, sworn to before Col Francisco Paredes, dated 11 December 1989, photocopy.

(176) Exh. "A-3-Ligot", Affidavit of Lt Col Jacinto C. Ligot, dated 6 February 1990.

(177) Exh. "B-5-Cardones", op. cit.

(178) Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.

(179) Exh. "C-Crame", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni SSgt Gabriel Alecojole, dated 18 December 1989.

(180) Exh. "B-5-Cardones", op. cit.

(181) Exh. "A-Ilano", op. cit.; Estropia Testimony, op. cit.

(182) Exh. "A-Ilano", op. cit.; Cacanando Testimony, op. cit.

(183) Ilano Testimony, op. cit.

(184) Exh. "A-Paray", Report Re: Personal Observations During the Coup submitted by Col Abraham Paray, CO LABde, PA, to CG PA, dated 4 December 1989.

(186) Paray Testimony, op. cit.

(186) Exh. "Q-Makati", Report to CSAFP, submitted by Col Reynaldo Gopilan, G4, AFP, dated 6 December 1989.

(187) Estropia Testimony, op. cit.

(188) Cacanando Testimony, op. cit.

(189) Estropia Testimony, op. cit.

(190) Exh. "Q-Makati", op. cit.

(191) Exh. "QQQQQ"- Commission, "Recapitulation Summarizing the Number of Officers and EP of Different Units of PA Allegedly Involved in the December 1989 Coup," undated.

(192) Exh. "A-1-Ligot", op. cit.

(193) Ibid.

(194) Exh. "C-Makati", op. cit.

(195) Exh. "A-Gutierrez", Narrative Report Re: Activities of 71st Infantry Battalion During the Coup d'Etat, submitted by Maj Pedro Gutierrez, dated 8 December 1989.

(196) Ibid.

- (197) Exh. "B-1-Cardones", op. cit.
- (198) Cacanando Testimony, op. cit.
- (199) Ilano Testimony, op. cit.
- (200) Exh. "A-1-BGen Lisandro Abadia", Affidavit of BGen Lisandro Abadia, dated 10 February 1990.
- (201) Exh. "A-1-Ligot", op. cit.
- (202) Sworn Statement of Lt Col Efren Fernandez, Provincial Commander, PC/INP, San Fernando, Pampanga, dated 17 February 1990.
- (203) Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (204) Exh. "A-1-Ligot", op. cit.
- (205) Dado Testimony, op. cit.
- (206) Estropia Testimony, op. cit.
- (207) Ibid.
- (208) Exh. "C-Sangley", Affidavit of Capt Jose T. Agudelo (with narrative events from 30 November 1989 to 4 December 1989), dated 13 December 1989.
- (209) Ibid.
- (210) Ibid.
- (211) Sworn Testimony of Lt Col C. Jacinto Ligot, Deputy Executive Officer for Operations, G3, PA, given before the FFC on 7 March 1990.
- (212) Exh. "A-3-Ligot", op. cit.
- (213) Sworn Testimony of Lt Col Salvador S. Limsiaco, Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations, G3, Light Armor Brigade, given before the FFC on 13 February 1990.
- (214) Sworn Testimony of Capt Danilo Lim, Operations Training Officer, FSRR, given before the FFC on 20 February 1990.
- (215) Dado Testimony, op. cit.
- (216) Paray Testimony, op. cit.
- (217) Exh. "C-Makati", op. cit.
- (218) Paray Testimony, op. cit.
- (219) Ibid.
- (220) Ilano Testimony, op. cit.
- (221) Sworn Testimony of Capt Eugenio de los Santos, Head of the Battery Command, given before the FFC on 12 February 1990.
- (222) Exh. MA-Col Abraham Paray", op. cit.
- (223) Ibid.

- (224) Exh. "C-Makati", op. cit.
- (225) Exh. "QQQQQ-2"- Commission, Sworn Statement of Pfc Pedro Daga, dated 3 January 1990.
- (226) Exh. "S-Aguinaldo", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni Pfc Romualdo D. Timupig, dated 16 December 1989.
- (227) Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (228) Exh. "A-15-NCRDC", NCRDC COC Journal (Annex "N" of the After-Operations Report of the NCRDC), dated 5 January 1990.
- (229) Sworn Testimony of BGen Eduardo Cabanlig, CO Philippine Marines, given before the FFC on 20 December 1989.
- (230) The Rangers thought that BGen Galido's troops would come from SOLCOM and go to Fort Bonifacio to defend the same against the rebels.
- (231) Exh. "A-de los Santos", Affidavit of Capt Eugenio de los Santos, dated 12 February 1990.
- (232) Exh. "A-Col Abraham Paray", op. cit.
- (233) Ibid.
- (234) Exh. "A-de los Santos", op. cit.
- (235) Exh. "C-Makati", op. cit.
- (236) Exh. "QQQQQ-2"- Commission, op. cit.
- (237) Exh. "A-Dado", op. cit.
- (238) Exh. "C-Makati", op. cit.
- (239) Exh. "A-Dado", op. cit.
- (240) Exh. "D-Makati", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni Capt Jaime C. Yangzon, dated 19 December 1989.
- (241) Exh. "A-1-Ligot", op. cit.
- (242) Exh. "D-Makati", op. cit.; Exh. "A-1-Ligot", op. cit.
- (243) Urgello Testimony, op. cit.
- (244) Exh. "A-1-BGen Lisandro Abadia", op. cit.
- (245) Dado Testimony, op. cit.
- (246) Exh. "A-Col Ilano", op. cit.
- (247) Affidavit of Lt Col Efren Fernandez, op. cit.
- (248) Exh. "A-Dado", op. cit.
- (249) Exh. "A-1-BGen Lisandro Abadia", op. cit.
- (250) Ibid.
- (251) Exh. "A-Gutierrez", op. cit.
- (252) Sworn Testimony of BGen Alexander Aguirre, CG CAPCOM, given before the FFC on 15 January 1990.

(253) Sworn Testimony of Jejomar Binay, Mayor of the Municipality of Makati, given before the FFC on 15 January 1990.

(254) Maj Abraham Purugganan, Interview by Sheila Coronel, 14 January 1990, transcript submitted to the FFC by the latter.

(255) Exh. "A-15-NCRDC", op. cit.

(256) Exh. "34-LOGCOM", Sworn Statement of Capt Manuel Ison, dated 12 December 1989 (also marked as Exh. "A-1-Ison").

(257) Binay Testimony, op. cit.

(258) Sworn Testimony of Bias Ople, former Commissioner, Constitutional Commission of 1986, given before the FFC on 7 May 1990.

(259) Sworn Testimony of Emelinda Santos, given before the FFC on 28 February 1990.

(260) Exh. "A-Intercon Hotel", Hotel Intercontinental Manila Action Reservation Form for Nacionalista Party Meeting, dated 2 December 1989, photocopy.

(261) Sworn Statement of Ramon Isberto, given before the FFC on 9 May 1990.

(262) Ople Testimony, op. cit.

(263) Sworn Testimony of Gloria Diaz, given before the FFC on 29 January 1990.

(264) Sworn Testimony of Pedro Rojo, Chief Security Officer, Hotel Intercontinental, Manila, given before the FFC on 25 June 1990.

(265) Sworn Testimony of Jean Pierre Etroit, Resident Manager, Hotel Intercontinental, Manila, given before the FFC on 28 February 1990.

(266) Ibid.

(267) Rojo Testimony, op. cit.

(268) Ibid.

(269) Lim Testimony, op. cit.

(270) Exh. "SSSSS"- Commission, Edited Radio Reports on the Attempted Coup from 1-7 December 1989, submitted by the Loyola House of Studies.

(271) Exh. "A-1-NCRDC", After-Operations Report of the NCRDC, submitted by BGen Rodolfo Biazon, CGNCRDC, dated 5 January 1990.

(272) Exh. "I-DND", Final Report of the Department of National Defense Special Investigating Committee, submitted by Leonardo A. Quisumbing, Chairman, DNDSIC, dated 22 March 1990.

(273) Exh. "A-27-de la Peña", Transcript of Radio Broadcast over Station DZNC from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. on 1 December 1989, submitted by Lilia de la Peña, Director of the National Telecommunications Commission, NCR.

(274) Sworn Testimony of MGen Ramon Montano, former Chief of the Philippine Constabulary and Director General of the INP, given before the FFC on 25 January 1990.

(275) Ibid.

(276) Aguirre Testimony, op. cit.

(277) Exh. "B-Maganto", After-Operations Report, submitted by P/Lt Col Romeo B. Maganto, Commander, Metropolitan Police Field Force, dated 9 December 1989.

(278) Sworn Testimony of P/Lt Col Romeo Maganto, given before the FFC on 22 January 1990.

(279) Exh. "A-2-B-NCRDC", Annex "A" to After-Operations Report of NCRDC by BGen Rodolfo Biazon, dated 5 January 1990.

(280) Aguirre Testimony, op. cit.

(281) Ibid.

(282) Exh. "A-27-de la Peña", op. cit.

(283) Exh. "A-Montano", Report of BGen Ramon Montano, former Chief, Philippine Constabulary and Director General, INP, dated 12 January 1990.

(284) Exh. "SSSSS"-Commission, op. cit.

(285) Ibid.

(286) Ibid.

(287) Exh. "B-Maganto", op. cit.

(288) Ibid.

(289) Exh. "A-Montano", op. cit.

(290) Aguirre Testimony, op. cit.

(291) Ibid.

(292) Exh. "A-21-NCRDC, After-Operations Report submitted by BGen Alexander Aguirre to the PC Chief, dated 11 December 1989.

(293) Exh. "A-1-J-Montano", Re: Incident Report (Annex "I" to the Report of MGen Ramon Montano), dated 12 January 1990.

(294) Ibid.

(295) Exh. "A-1-NCRDC", op. cit.

(296) The Philippine Star, 10 December 1989.

(297) Exh. "A-Montano", op. cit.

(298) Sworn Testimony of Peter Garrucho, Jr, Secretary, Department of Tourism, given before the FFC on 20 December 1989.

(299) Exh. "A-21-NCRDC", op. cit.

(300) Sworn Testimony of Virgilio Poblete, Chief Security Officer, Rustan's Commercial Corporation, given before the FFC on 13 June 1990.

(301) Garrucho Testimony, op. cit.

(302) Exh. "A-21-NRCDC", op. cit.

- (303) Exh. "A-17-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (304) Ibid.
- (305) Ibid.
- (306) Exh. "C-Crame", op. cit.
- (307) Exh. "A-Montano", op. cit.
- (308) Exh. "A-27-NCRDC", Chronology of Events during the December 1989 Failed Coup, submitted by Commo Antonio Empedrad, AFP, dated 18 December 1989.
- (309) Garrucho Testimony, op. cit.
- (310) Exh. BA-21-NCRDC, op. cit.
- (311) Exh. "00000-2"- Commission, op. cit.
- (312) Exh. "A-17-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (313) Exh. "A-21-NCRDC", op. cit.; Exh. "A-Montano",
- (314) Sworn Testimony of BGen Arturo Enrile, PMA Superintendent, given before the FFC on 5 March 1990.
- (315) Exh. "A-27-de la Peña", op. cit.
- (316) Exh. "D"-Commission, Initial Report on the Attempted Coup d'Etat, submitted by BGen Eduardo Cabanlig, dated 20 December 1989.
- (317) Exh. "A-21-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (318) Exh. "A-Montano", op. cit.
- (319) Sworn Testimony of Rafael Alunan, Undersecretary, Department of Tourism, given before the FFC on 20 December 1989.
- (320) Ibid.
- (321) Garrucho Testimony, op. cit.
- (322) Exh. "L-Makati", Report to CSAFP on the Negotiations with AM-SFP Rebel Forces in Makati, submitted by BGen Arturo Enrile, dated 16 December 1989; Exh. "A-17-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (323) Garrucho Testimony, op. cit.
- (324) Exh. "A-Montano", op. cit.
- (325) Ibid.
- (326) Aguirre Testimony, op. cit.
- (327) Sworn Testimony of BGen Cabanlig, op. cit.
- (328) Exh. "LLLLLL-6-A"- Commission, Amended List of Red Alert Status Declarations of the Philippine Marines Headquarters, Fort Bonifacio for the period 1 September 1987 to 1 December 1989, submitted by Lt Col Armenio Cristal, Jr. AC of S, G3, dated 5 September 1990.
- (329) Cabanlig Testimony, op. cit.

- (330) Sworn Testimony of Capt Jonathan Martir, Deputy Operations Officer, PM, given before the FFC on 19 April 1990.
- (331) Ibid.
- (332) Ibid.
- (333) Ibid.
- (334) Ibid.
- (335) Ibid.
- (336) Exh. "D"- Commission, op. cit.
- (337) Cabanlig Testimony, op. cit.
- (338) Ibid.
- (339) Martir Testimony, op. cit.
- (340) Ibid.
- (341) Exh. "DD-V Luna", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni 3CT Felipe Bernabe PN (M), dated 7December 1989.
- (342) Exh. "48-Marines", Sworn Statement of 3CT Gilbert Alejandro, dated 7 December 1989; Exh. "61-Marines", Sworn Statement of 3CT Arsenio Rivera, dated 8 December 1989.
- (343) Exh. "61-Marines", op. cit.
- (344) Exh. "81-Marines", Sworn Statement of Pfc Danny Palaruan, dated 9 December 1989.
- (345) Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (346) Exh. "NN-V Luna", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni Pfc Alibundin S. Maing PN (M), dated 16 December 1989.
- (347) Cabanlig Testimony, op. cit.
- (348) Sworn Testimony of Col Romeo Daranchang, Chief of Staff, Philippine Marines, given before the FFC on 26 February 1990.
- (349) Cabanlig Testimony, op. cit.
- (350) Exh. "D"- Commission, op. cit.
- (351) Cabanlig Testimony, op. cit.
- (352) Exh. "D"- Commission, op. cit.
- (353) Exh. "A-6-B-de Leon", Chronology of Events at the Headquarters of the PAF, submitted by MGen Jose de Leon, CGPAF, dated 7 December 1989.
- (354) Exh. "A-26-NCRDC", After-Operations Report, submitted by BGen Rogelio Estacio to CG, NCRDC, dated 15 December 1989.
- (355) Exh. "A-6-de Leon", op. cit.
- (356) Exh. "A-26-NCRDC", op. cit.

(357) Exh. "C-Tarrazona", Special Report on the December 1989 Coup Attempt, submitted by Col Felipe Abando, Jr, Wing Commander, 100th Training Wing, PAF, Fernando Air Base, to the Commanding General, PAF, dated 7 December 1989, photocopy.

(358) Exh. "A-6-BGen de Leon", Narrative Report of PAF Activities During the Failed Coup, submitted by MGen Jose de Leon, Jr, dated 22 December 1989.

(359) Time ranged from 11:00 p.m. to 12:00 midnight.

(360) Sworn Testimony of BGen Loven Abadia, Wing Commander, 205th Helicopter Wing, given before the FFC on 3 August 1990.

(361) Exh. "A-1-Ligot", op. cit.

(362) Sworn Statement of TSgt Armando Padilla, given before the FFC on 30 December 1989.

(363) Exh. "A-6-de Leon", op. cit.

(364) Loven Abadia Testimony, op. cit.

(365) Sworn Testimony of BGen Rogelio Estacio, CG PAFSECOM, given before the FFC on 7 August 1990.

(366) Exh. "A-de la Torre", Narrative Report Re: Attempted Coup d'Etat, submitted by Maj Julius de la Torre, Squadron Commander, 529th Special Operations Squadron, 520 ABW, dated 7 December 1989.

(367) Ibid.

(368) Sworn Statement of TSgt Padilla, op. cit.

(369) Exh. "A-de la Torre", op. cit.

(370) Sworn Statement of TSgt Padilla, op. cit.

(371) Exh. "A-de la Torre", op. cit.

(372) Sworn Statement of TSgt Padilla, op. cit.

(373) Exh. "A-6-de Leon", op. cit.

(374) Ibid.

(375) Loven Abadia Testimony, op. cit.

(376) Exh. "A-6-de Leon", op. cit.

(377) Exh. "B-5-Cardones", op. cit.

(378) Exh. "M-Aguinaldo", Sinumpaang Salaysay niSgt Benjamin T. Taton, dated 16 December 1989.

(379) Loven Abadia Testimony, op. cit.

(380) Ibid.

(381) This captain was later identified as Capt Dante Grafil.

(382) Exh. "A-Maceda", Sworn Statement of Capt Jose Z. Maceda, dated 14 December 1989.

(383) Exh. "A-6-B-de Leon", op. cit.

- (384) Ibid.
- (385) Exh. "O-VP Laurel", op. cit.
- (386) Sworn Statement of TSgt Padilla, op. cit.
- (387) Exh. "A-6-B-de Leon", op. cit.
- (388) Exh. "A-15-NCRDC".
- (389) Exh. "A-6-B-de Leon", op. cit.
- (390) Ibid.
- (391) Sworn Statement of TSgt Padilla, op. cit.
- (392) Sworn Statement of Lt Lopito Gonzales, Aide-de-camp of Col Iletto, given before the FFC on 29 June 1990.
- (393) Exh. "A-de la Torre", op. cit.
- (394) Exh. "B-5-Cardones", op. cit.
- (395) Loven Abadia Testimony, op. cit.
- (396) Ibid.
- (397) Sworn Testimony of Col Roberto Sabularse, EX-O, Office of Air Comptroller, VAB, given before the FFC on 27 February 1990.
- (398) Exh. "A-2-Bulos", Affidavit of Col Roberto Sabularse, EX-O, Office of Air Comptroller, VAB, dated 28 December 1989.
- (399) Exh. "A-6-B-de Leon", op. cit.
- (400) Ibid.
- (401) Ibid.
- (402) Ibid.
- (403) Sworn Statement of TSgt Padilla, op. cit.
- (404) Exh. "11-Marines", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni Sgt Rolando Ridao, dated 11 December 1989.
- (405) Exh. "32-Marines", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni Cpl Danilo O. Bernaid, dated 19 December 1989.
- (406) Exh. "M-Aguinaldo", op. cit.
- (407) Sworn Statement of TSgt Padilla, op. cit.: Exh. "3-Marines". Sworn Statement of 3CT Nelson Marino, dated 4 December 1989.
- (408) Exh. "O-VP Laurel", op. cit.
- (409) Exh. "A-1-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (410) Exh. "I-V Luna", Affidavit of Pfc Victorio V. Botulan, dated 7 January 1990.
- (411) Exh. "A-6-de Leon", op. cit.
- (412) Ibid.

(413) Ibid.

(414) Exh. "A-de la Torre", op. cit.

(415) Exh. "A-OCS", Operations Report on December 1989 Coup, submitted by BGen Pedro Juachon, dated 11 January 1990.

(416) Exh. "D-DND", Third Progress Report of the Department of National Defense Special Investigating Committee, submitted by Leonardo A. Quisumbing, dated 15 January 1990.

(417) Exh. "A-Raquion", Sworn Statement given by P/Lt Romeo Raquion before the FFC, dated 20 August 1990.

(418) Rodolfo Morit, Jr is one of the incorporators of the GCFL. Job Gavino, an official of the Philippine Ports Authority, is reportedly also one of the incorporators. The latter is known to have contributed P1,000 for hospitalization expenses of one Guardian prison guard named Nicolas who got injured while trying to foil an escape attempt of some prisoners for the New Bilibid Prisons. See Sworn Testimony of Meliton Goyena, Director, Bureau of Corrections, given before the FFC on 15 June 1990.

(419) Goyena Testimony, op. cit.

(420) Sworn Testimony of Manuel Garces, Jr, Prison Guard, Bureau of Corrections, given before the FFC on 15 June 1990.

(421) Goyena Testimony, op. cit.

(422) Exh. "F-13-DND", op. cit.

(423) Ibid.

(424) Exh. "121-LOGCOM", Sworn Statement of PO3 Dante B. Cruz, dated 15 December 1989.

(425) Exh. "C-4-Dumlao", Letter of BGen Pantaleon Dumlao to the Secretary of Justice, submitted by BGen Pantaleon Dumlao, Chief CIS (PC), dated 11 April 1990.

(426) Garces Testimony, op. cit.

(427) Exh. "3-Maganto", op. cit.

(428) Exh. "A-26-NCRDC", op. cit.

(429) Garces Testimony, op. cit.

(430) Body number F-301.

(431) Sworn Testimony of TSgt Armando Padilla, given before the FFC on 23 February 1990.

(432) Exh. "A-I-J-Montano", op. cit.

(433) Padilla Testimony, op. cit.

(434) Loven Abadia Testimony, op. cit.

(435) Rogelio Estacio Testimony, op. cit. However, the manager of DHL, Jose Feliciano, said that he was not aware of the use of the facilities by Col Bibit during the coup. See testimony of Jose Feliciano, given before the FFC on 15 August 1990.

(436) Feliciano Testimony, op. cit.

(437) Exh. "KKKKK-3"- Commission, op. cit.

(438) Exh. "A-26-NCRDC", op. cit.

(439) Exh. "A-22-NCRDC", Report on Command Preliminary Activities from 30 November to 7 December 1989, submitted by Lt Col Jose Bandung PC, CO South Sector Command, dated 12 December 1989.

(440) Ibid.

(441) Ibid.

(442) Maganto Testimony, op. cit.

(443) Exh. "A-22-NCRDC", op. cit.

(444) Exh. "O-VP Laurel", op. cit.

(445) Goyena Testimony, op. cit.

(446) Garces Testimony, op. cit.

(447) Goyena Testimony, op. cit.

(448) Ibid.

(449) In Re: Urging the Department of Justice to take Appropriate Administrative and/or Criminal Actions Against Prison Guards at the New Bilibid Prison who were Possibly Involved in the Attempted Coup of December 1989.

(450) Exh. "O-VP Laurel", op. cit.

(451) Exh. "A-1-J-Montano", op. cit.

(452) Exh. "G-Ch 2/4", Sworn Statement of MSgt Jesus de Guzman, dated 15 December 1989.

(453) Exh. "F-Ch 2/4", Sworn Statement of 2Lt Alfredo Javillonar PC, dated 13 December 1989.

(454) Exh. "G-Aguinaldo", Sworn Statement of Sgt Augusto Borbe PA, dated 27 December 1989.

(455) Exh. "B-5-Cardones", op. cit.

(456) Exh. "A-de la Cruz", op. cit.

(457) Ibid.

(458) Exh. "A-30-NCRDC", After-Operations Report of Security Battalion, NCRDC, (as Annex "CC" of BGen Rodolfo Biazon's Report), dated 1 January 1990.

(459) Ibid.

(460) Ibid.

(461) Exh. "F-Ch 2/4", op. cit.

(462) Exh. "A-30-NCRDC", op. cit.

(463) Exh. "F-Ch 2/4", op. cit.

(464) Exh. "A-30-NCRDC", op. cit.

(465) Exh. "F-Ch 2/4", op. cit.

(466) Exh. "A-30-NCRDC", op. cit.

- (467) Exh. "O-CH 2/4", op. cit.
- (468) Exh. "A-30-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (469) Exh. "B-5-Cardones", op. cit.
- (470) Exh. "W-Ch 2/4", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni Arturo Bilbao, Housekeeper/Janitor of PTV-4, dated 14 December 1989.
- (471) Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (472) Exh. "A-15-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (473) Exh. "KK-V Luna", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni Sgt Mario Cabigin PN (M), dated 19 December 1989.
- (474) Exh. "E-Aguinaldo", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni SSgt Nolasco Aloquina, dated 26 December 1989; Exh. "K-Aguinaldo", Affidavit of Sgt Pecilo Dancalan PN (M), dated 20 December 1989.
- (475) Exh. "S-V Luna", Affidavit of Pfc Adelaido Tironez, dated 3 January 1990.
- (476) Exh. "B-Ch 2/4", op. cit.
- (477) Exh. "L-V Luna", Affidavit of Cpl Ruben C. Rivera, dated 2 January 1990.
- (478) Exh. "A-1-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (479) Exh. "KK-V Luna", op. cit.
- (480) Exh. "I-1-Isleta", "Unit Situation Assessment in the Aftermath of the Failed Coup, submitted by BGen Tereso Isleta, Wing Commander, 15th Strike Wing, Sangley, Cavite, to CG PAF, dated 9 December 1989.
- (481) Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (482) Annex "A" of Exh. "A-30-NCRDC", After-Operations Report of Security Battalion, NCRDC, submitted by Capt Alfredo Javillonar, OIC Security Platoon, Channels 2 and 4, dated 5 December 1990.
- (483) Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (484) Exh. "A-30-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (485) Exh. "B-5-Cardones", op. cit.
- (486) Exh. "A-27-de la Peña", op. cit.
- (487) Ibid.
- (488) Exh. "O-VP Laurel", op. cit.
- (489) Exh. "B-Fontanilla", Sworn Statement of Capt Orlando Fontanilla, dated 4 January 1990.
- (490) Sworn Testimony of Capt Orlando Fontanilla, PVSEA, given before the FFC on 14 May 1990.
- (491) Ibid.
- (492) Exh. "C-1-Fontanilla", p. 2 of Capt Orlando Fontanilla's Sworn Statement in Filipino, dated 13 December 1989.
- (493) Exh. "B-Ch 2/4", op. cit.

- (494) Exh. "9-Marines", Sworn Statements of Philippine Marine personnel involved in December 1989 Coup Attempt, dated 19 December 1989.
- (495) Exh. "A-30-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (496) Exh. "H-Ch 2/4", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni TSgt Ramon P. Mendoza PAF, dated 13 December 1989.
- (497) Exh. "F-Ch 2/4", op. cit.
- (498) Exh. "A-17-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (499) Ibid.
- (500) Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (501) Exh. "O-VP Laurel", op. cit.
- (502) Exh. "KK-V Luna", op. cit.
- (503) Sworn Testimony of Col Edgardo Batenga, CO 701 IBde, VAB, given before the FFC on 25 January 1990.
- (504) Exh. "A-Salac", op. cit.
- (505) Ibid.
- (506) Sworn Testimony of Maj Nardito Yoro PC, Chief FEU, given before the FFC on 1 June 1990.
- (507) Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (508) Ibid.
- (509) Ibid.
- (510) Sworn Testimony of Cmdr Proceso Maligalig PN, Former Deputy Commander, AFP LOGCOM, given before the FFC on 12 March 1990.
- (511) Exh. "A-Aguinaldo", Evaluation of the Evidence of the Camp Aguinaldo/White Plains Incident during the Last Failed Coup in December 1989, submitted by Capt Nilo Villarte, dated 3 January 1990.
- (512) Exh. "T-Aguinaldo", Sworn Statement of Pfc Marcelino Peralta, dated 20 December 1989.
- (513) Exh. "N-Aguinaldo", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni Sgt Macario B. Mabazza, dated 27 December 1989.
- (514) Sworn Testimony of Commo Virgilio Marcelo, Commander, HQS and HQS Service Group, AFP, given before the FFC on 5 May 1990.
- (515) Exh. BA- 14-NCRDC", op. cit.; Cardones Testimony, op. cit.
- (516) Cardones Testimony, op. cit.
- (517) Biazon Testimony, op. cit.
- (518) Batenga Testimony, op. cit.
- (519) Exh. "A-1-NCRDC", op. cit.
- (520) Exh. "B-Aguinaldo", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni SSgt Domingo M. Cuenco, dated 26 December 1989.
- (521) Exh. "H-Aguinaldo", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni Benjamin B. Asuncion, dated 26 December 1989.

(522) Ibid.

(523) Exh. "E-Aguinaldo", op. cit.

(524) Exh. "H-Aguinaldo", op. cit.

(525) Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.

(526) Ibid.

(527) Sworn Testimony of BGen Oscar Florendo, CO, Civil Relations Service, AFP, given before the FFC on 15 February 1990.

(528) Exh. "N-Aguinaldo", op. cit.

(529) Exh. "M-V Luna", Affidavit of SN1 Danilo Tolentino, dated 4 January 1990.

(530) Exh. "E-Aguinaldo", op. cit.

(531) Exh. "A-1-NCRDC", op. cit.

(532) Ibid.

(533) Exh. "A-1-NCRDC", op. cit.

(534) Exh. "A-1-NCRDC", op. cit.; Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.

(535) Exh. "A-Montano", op. cit.

(536) Exh. "A-20-NCRDC", op. cit.

(537) Exh. "22-LOGCOM", Sworn Statement by Maj Nelson Albano, given at AFP Logistics Training Command, dated 15 December 1989.

(538) Exh. "6-LOGCOM", Affidavit by BGen Javier Carbonnel and Col Jovencio Mendoza, given before Col Manuel Mariano at Camp Aguinaldo, dated 3 December 1989.

(539) Sworn Testimony of Col Manuel Mariano, Commander, AFP LOGCOM, Camp Aguinaldo, given before the FFC on 28 May 1990.

(540) Exh. "A-1-NCRDC", op. cit.; Exh. "6-LOGCOM", op. cit.

(541) Exh. "188-LOGCOM", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni Pfc Antonio Cabigting, dated 19 December 1989.

(542) Exh. "34-LOGCOM." op. cit.

(543) Ibid.

(544) Exh. "A-18-NCRDC", After-Operations Report of the 701 IBde, submitted by Col Edgardo Batenga, dated 5 January 1990.

(545) Exh. "A-1-NCRDC", op. cit.

(546) Batenga Testimony, op. cit.; Sworn Testimony of Lt Col Alejandro Lasan, CO 72 IB, given before the FFC on 22 December 1989; Lisandro Abadia Testimony, op. cit.

(547) Batenga Testimony, op. cit.

(548) Ibid.

(549) Exh. "13-LOGCOM", Sworn Statement of Ramon Palad, dated 9 December 1989.

(550) Exh. "34-LOGCOM", op. cit.; Exh. "A-1-Ison", op. cit.

(551) Affidavit of Maj Nelson Albano, dated 15 December 1989.

(552) Exh. "5-LOGCOM", op. cit.

(553) Exh. "A-17-NCRDC", After-Battle Report, submitted by BGen Cesar Abella, dated 16 December 1989.

(554) Exh. "A-19-NCRDC", After-Operation Report Re: Counter-Coup Operation, submitted by Col Clemente Mariano, dated 22 December 1989.

(555) Exh. "A-Montano", op. cit.

(556) Exh. "DD-V Luna", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni 3CT Felipe Bernabe, dated 8 January 1990.

(557) Exh. "I-Aguinaldo", Sinumpaang Salaysay ni Sgt B. Orena, dated 20 December 1989.

(558) Exh. "B-5-Cardones", op. cit.

(559) Ibid.

(560) Exh. "A-Aguinaldo", op. cit.

(561) Exh. "A-17-NCRDC", op. cit.

(562) Ibid.

(563) Ibid.

(564) Ibid.

(565) Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.

(566) Exh. "N-Aguinaldo", op. cit.; Exh. "V-Aguinaldo", Affidavit of 3CT Ernesto Cancheta, dated 20 December 1989.

(567) These V-150s are the same ones which came from VAB; Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.

(568) Exh. "A-1-NCRDC", op. cit.

(569) Ibid.

(570) Ibid.

(571) Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.

(572) Sworn Testimony of Col Thelmo Cunanan, CO 202 Bde, given before the FFC on 29 January 1990.

(573) Exh. "NN-V Luna", op. cit.

(574) Exh. "A-Padilla", Sworn Statement of TSgt Armando Padilla, dated 30 December 1989.

(575) Exh. "Q-Aguinaldo", Affidavit of Pfc Donato C. Ildefonso PN, dated 20 December 1989.

(576) Exh. "A-1-NCRDC", op. cit.

(577) Exh. "SSSSS"-Commission, op. cit.

(578) Exh. "A-20-NCRDC", op. cit.

(579) Ibid.

(580) Exh. "W-Aguinaldo", Sworn Statement of 3CT Romeo R. Recosana, dated 20 December 1989, at the AFP Medical Center.

(581) Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.

(582) Exh. "A-1-NCRDC", op. cit.

(583) Exh. "A-20-NCRDC", op. cit.

(584) Exh. "G-V Luna", Joint Affidavit of Sgt Castor Wagan, Sgt Victor Flores, et al, dated 2 January 1990.

(585) Exh. "KK-V Luna", op. cit.

(586) Exh. "B-Ch 2/4", op. cit.

(587) Exh. "C-V Luna", Sworn Statement of MSgt Jaime Ranopa, given at the AFP Medical Center, dated 4 December 1989.

(588) Exh. "A-17-NCRDC", op. cit.

(589) Exh. "A-19-NCRDC", op. cit.

(590) Ibid.

(591) Exh. "B-Ch 2/4", op. cit.

(592) Exh. "A-1-NCRDC", op. cit.

(593) Daranchang Testimony, op. cit.

(594) Exh. "B-5-Cardones", op. cit.

(595) Exh. "A-1-NCRDC", op. cit.

(596) Ibid.

(597) Sworn Testimony of BGen Marcelo Blando PA, former CG 7 ID, Fort Magsaysay, Palayan City, Nueva Ecija given before the FFC on 5 March 1990.

(598) Dado Testimony, op. cit.

(599) Exh. "B-1-BGen Villanueva", Special Report on Coup Attempt Participated in by 7 ID PA, dated 4 December 1989.

(600) Ibid.

(601) Sworn Testimony of BGen Oswaldo Villanueva, CG 6 ID, given before the FFC on 21 May 1990.

(602) Ibid.

(603) Ibid.

(604) Exh. "D-DND", op. cit.

(605) Oswaldo Villanueva Testimony, op. cit.

(606) Oswaldo Villanueva Testimony, op. cit., the result of the investigation is not known.

(607) Oswaldo Villanueva Testimony, op. cit.

(608) Exh. "A-Lagman", Sworn Statement of Col Ferdinand Lagman, dated 14 February 1990.

(609) OPLAN Regal was the setting up of roadblocks along the major roads in Nueva Ecija to check the movement of rebel troops. See Sworn Testimony of Col Ferdinand Lagman, PC, Provincial Commander, Nueva Ecija given before the FFC on 15 March 1990.

(610) Lagman Testimony, op. cit.

(611) Ibid.

(612) Exh. "A-Undan", op. cit.

(613) Sworn Testimony of Col Alejandro Trespeces, Jr, former Chief of Staff, 7 ID, Fort Magsaysay, Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, now CO, Task Force Reserve Service, Q-46, Fort Bonifacio, given before the FFC dated 14 March 1990.

(614) Exh. "A-15 NCRDC", op. cit.

(615) Trespeces Testimony, op. cit.

(616) Exh. "A-15-NCRDC", op. cit.

(617) Ibid.

(618) Sworn Testimony of Capt Herbert Avinante, former Deputy Commander of Scout Ranger Training Center, Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija, given before the FFC on 21 March 1990.

(619) Blando Testimony, op. cit.

(620) Avinante Testimony, op. cit.

(621) Sworn Testimony of Maj Pedro Gutierrez, Chief, Research and Special Studies Branch, G7 Division, PA, given before the FFC on 13 March 1990.

(622) Exh. "A-Gutierrez", op. cit.

(623) Ibid.

(624) Exh. "A-Undan", op. cit.

(625) Exh. "A-Gutierrez", op. cit.

(626) Oswaldo Villanueva Testimony, op. cit. He said that the rumor came from his neighbor Maj Ricardo Brillantes, assigned at the JI GHQ.

(627) Trespeces Testimony, op. cit.

(628) Sworn Statement of Capt Richard Parcon, AUH-76 Pilot assigned at 20th ACS station, 15 Strike Wing, Sangley Air Base, dated 18 December 1989.

(629) Ibid.

(630) Trespeces Testimony, op. cit.

(631) Exh. "A-Trespeces", Affidavit of Col Alejandro Trespeces, CO, Task Force Reserve Service, dated 15 January 1990.

(632) Ibid.

(633) Ibid.

(634) Exh. "A-Gutierrez", op. cit.; Exh. "A-Trespeces", op. cit.; Sworn Testimony of BGen Orlando Antonio, COMNOLCOM, given, before the ETC on 2 February 1990; Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.

(635) Exh. "A-Gutierrez", op. cit.

(636) Exh. "A-Lagman", op. cit.

(637) Gutierrez Testimony, op. cit.

(638) Erasmo Testimony, op. cit.

(639) Gutierrez Testimony, op. cit.

(640) Erasmo Testimony, op. cit.

(641) Blando Testimony, op. cit.

(642) Avinante Testimony, op. cit.

(643) Gutierrez Testimony, op. cit.

(644) Blando Testimony, op. cit.

(645) Erasmo Testimony, op. cit.

(646) Quote from a sworn statement submitted by Lt Col Erasmo during his testimony before the FFC (see Erasmo Testimony op. cit.).

(647) Erasmo Testimony, op. cit.

(648) Ibid.

(649) Oswaldo Villanueva Testimony, op. cit.

(650) Gutierrez Testimony, op. cit.

(651) Exh. "A-17-NCRDC", op. cit.

(652) Erasmo Testimony, op. cit.

(653) Avinante Testimony, op. cit.

(654) Dejarne Testimony, op. cit.

(655) Oswaldo Villanueva Testimony, op. cit.

(656) Exh. "B-1-Gen Villanueva", op. cit.

(657) Ibid.

(658) Oswaldo Villanueva Testimony, op. cit.

(659) Exh. "B-1-Cardones", op. cit.

- (660) Antonio Testimony, op. cit.
- (661) Exh. "A-Gordula", Sworn Statement of Capt Lauro Gordula dated 15 December 1989.
- (662) Exh. "A-Undan", op. cit.
- (663) Sworn Testimony of Lt Jose Rene Jarque, 4SRB, given before the FFC on 22 March 1990.
- (664) Ibid.
- (665) Jose Rene Jarque Testimony, op. cit.
- (666) Antonio Testimony, op. cit.
- (667) Exh. "B-1-Cardones", op. cit.
- (668) Antonio Testimony, op. cit.
- (669) Undan Testimony, op. cit.
- (670) Ibid.
- (671) Exh. "B-10-Cardones", Special Report, to CG PA submitted by BGen Manuel Dizon, dated 20 December 1989.
- (673) Jose Rene Jarque Testimony, op. cit.
- (674) Ibid.
- (675) Ibid.
- (676) Ibid.
- (677) Ibid.
- (678) Exh. "A-Undan", op. cit.
- (679) Exh. "B-10-Cardones", op. cit.
- (680) Oswaldo Villanueva Testimony, op. cit.
- (681) Sworn Testimony of Lt Col Efren Fernandez, Provincial Commander PC/INP, San Fernando, Pampanga, given before the FFC on 17 February 1990.
- (682) Ibid.
- (683) Ibid.
- (684) Lagman Testimony, op. cit.
- (685) Efren Fernandez Testimony, op. cit.
- (686) Ibid.
- (687) Exh. "A-Trespecies", op. cit.
- (688) Exh. "A-Montano", op. cit.
- (689) Exh. "C-BGen Villanueva", Affidavit of Col Oswaldo Villanueva, dated 30 March 1990.

(690) Exh. "D-Trespeces", Report of Lt Col Dumag submitted by Col Alejandro Trespeces, dated 9 December 1989.

(691) Exh. "A-Trespeces", op. cit.

(692) Ibid.

(693) Exh. "A-Undan", op. cit.

(694) Exh. "A-27-Dir De la Peña", op. cit.

(695) Antonio Testimony, op. cit.

(696) Exh. "A-27-Dir De la Peña", op. cit.

(697) Ibid.

(698) Antonio Testimony, op. cit.

(699) Exh. "I-1-Isleta", op. cit.; Exh. "GGGG"- Commission, Intelligence Report submitted by the Director for Intelligence, 15 Strike Wing, PAF, dated 14 December 1989; Exh. "A-Sangley", Narrative Report of the Failed Coup submitted by Commo Proceso Fernandez, dated 11 December 1989.

(700) Exh. "V-Sangley", Letter Re: Suspected Leaders, submitted by Amado D. Espino, dated 14 December 1989.

(701) Sworn Testimony of 2Lt Siegfried Mison, given before the FFC on 16 March 1990.

(702) Ibid.

(703) Exh. "A-Trespeces", op. cit.

(704) Sworn Testimony of Lt Col Ramsey Ocampo, PC Provincial Commander of Bataan, given before the FFC on 16 April 1990.

(705) Ibid.

(706) Ibid.

(707) Ibid.

(708) Ibid.

(709) Ibid.

(710) Ibid.

(711) Ibid.

(712) Blando Testimony, op. cit.

(713) Ocampo Testimony, op. cit.

(714) Ibid.

(715) Ibid.

(716) Ibid.

(717) Ibid.

(718) Exh. "H-Rufino Tiangco", a copy of the telegram sent by the FFC to the Station Commander of the INP of Puerto Princesa, dated 13 August 1990; Exh. "H-1- Rufino Tiangco", Puerto-Princesa City Treasurer's telegram received by the FFC on 20 August 1990; Exh. "I-Rufino Tiangco", the telegram of the Station Commander which was received by the FFC on 25 August 1990; Exh. "M-Rufino Tiangco", reply telegram sent by the Election Registrar to the FFC.

(719) Exh. "I-Rufino Tiangco", op. cit.

(720) Sworn Testimony of Capt Pepito Dalivenancio, Ship Captain, M/V Lady Vi-T-1, given before the FFC on 16 August 1990.

(721) Ibid.

(722) Exh. "132-LOGCOM", Sinumpaang Salaysay of Capt Jacinto Sanga, dated 11 December 1987.

(723) Ibid.

(724) Exh. "A-Sangley", op. cit.

(725) Sworn Testimony of LCdr FredTuvilla PN, Phil Marines Brigade, given before the FFC on 18 June 1990.

(726) Sworn Testimony of BGen Tereso Isleta, Wing Commander, 15th Strike Wing, Sangley, Cavite, given before the FFC on 29 January 1990.

(727) Affidavit of Capt Artemio Orozco, dated 6 December 1989.

(728) Exh. "A-14-NCRDC", op. cit.

(729) Exh. "GGGG'-Commission. op. cit.

(730) Exh. "I-Isleta", op. cit.

(731) Exh. "GGGG"-Commission, op. cit.

(732) Exh. "I-I-Isleta", op. cit.

(733) Exh. "A-Sangley", op. cit.

(734) Ibid.

(735) Sworn Testimony of LCdr Damian Carlos, Commander, Naval Intelligence Security Group II, given before the FFC on 27 March 1990.

(736) Sworn Testimony of Commo Antonio Empedrad, Commander, Naval District II, given before the FFC on 26 March 1990.

(737) Sworn Testimony of Capt Romeo Meana, Deputy Commander, Naval District II and Commander, Task Force 21, given before the FFC on 4 April 1990.

(738) Sworn Testimony of Commo Proceso Fernandez, Philippine Fleet Commander, given before the FFC on 14 February 1990.

(739) Exh. "A-Sangley", op. cit.

(740) Sworn Statement of Col Arsenio Tecson, former CO, 68 IB, PA,

given before the FFC, dated 1 March 1990; Exh. "I-Sangley", Sinumpaang Salaysay of Manolito Caquitta, dated 19 December 1989.

(741) Isleta Testimony, op. cit.

(742) Sworn Testimony of Capt Jesus Durian, Base Commander, Cavite Naval Base, given before the FFC on 8 March 1990.

(743) Exh. "AA-Sangley", Sworn Statement of Lt Fernando C. Romero dated 8 December 1989.

(744) Exh. "A-28 NCRDC", After-Operations Report of Task Group RECOM IV (Annex "AA" of Exh. "A-1-NCRDC").

(745) Exh. "11-Isleta", op. cit.

(746) Exh. "V-Sangley", op. cit.

(747) Exh. "A-Sangley", op. cit.

(748) Dalivenancio Testimony, op. cit.

(749) Ibid.

(750) Sworn Testimony of Rufino Tiangco, given before the FFC on 10 August 1990.

(751) Exh. "B-1-B-Rufino Tiangco", copy of pp. 381-382 of the police blotter where entry on alleged hijacking appears it was reported on 4 December 1989.

(752) Tiangco Testimony, op. cit.

(753) Tiangco Testimony, op. cit., Sighting of Don Honasan, Fat Puzon and Rico Puno at the PPSA c/o video by a CIS operative.

(754) This is the 68 IB and the 42 IB forces led by Lt Col Arsenio Tecson and Maj Alfredo Oliveros.

(755) Affidavit of P/Col Ernesto L. Diokno, op. cit.

(756) Exh. "B-Sec Azcuna", Statement No. 1 of the series of statements of President Corazon Aquino issued at 7:40 a.m. of 1 December 1989.

(757) Ibid.

(758) Exh. "C-Malacañang", Sworn Statement of Capt Rolando D. Medrano, PAF, dated 27 December 1989.

(759) Exh. "C-2-Lucas", Resolution of the Department of Justice against LCdr Lucas for the December 1989 coup.

(760) Exh. "A-Malacañang", Affidavit of Col Voltaire T Gazmin PA, dated 19 December 1989.

(761) Ibid.

(762) Exh. "C-Sec Azcuna", Statement No. 2 of President Corazon C. Aquino issued at 7:40 a.m. of 1 December 1989.

(763) Exh. "A-5-Aguirre", After-Battle Report of the Western Sector Command submitted by Maj Ricardo Quinto PC, Sector Commander, dated 12 December 1989.

(764) Exh. "B-Malacañang", Affidavit of Maj Agustin Dermaala, dated 15 December 1989.

(765) Exh. "H-Malacañang", Sworn Statement of Lt Wilbur Naldo, dated 20 December 1989.

(766) Exh. "B-Malacañang", op. cit.

(767) Exh. "A-Malacañang", op. cit.

(768) Ibid.

(769) Exh. "B-Malacañang", op. cit.

(770) Sworn Statement of P/Col Ernesto L. Diokno, op. cit.

(771) Ex-Lt Col Billy Bibit, PMA '72, was the classmate of ex-Lt Col Rodolfo Aguinaldo. Maj Crisolito Balaoing and Capt Rodolfo Tor.

(772) Exh. "C-1-Salialam", op. cit.

(773) Sworn Testimony of Fiscal Elmer Sagsago, 4th Assistant City Prosecutor, Baguio City, given before the FFC on 5 May 1990.

(774) Sworn Testimony of Eito Ikeuchi, Martial Arts Instructor, PMA, Fort del Pilar, Baguio City, given before the FFC on 17 April 1990.

(775) Sagsago Testimony, op. cit.

(776) Exh. "B-Garrido" Special Report of Commo Pio H. Garrido, Commandant of Philippine Coast Guard, dated 13 December 1989.

(777) Exh. "C-2-Mison", Memorandum Re: Staff Duty Officer's Spot Report of Entry of Rebel Troops at South Harbor, Port Area, Manila, from Capt Esmeraldo Saplala to the Commissioner of Customs, dated 4 December 1989.

(778) Sworn Testimony of Sgt Rodolfo Mendez, given before the FFC on 31 May 1990.

(779) Exh. "E-Sagsago", Sworn Statement by Elmer Sagsago, 4th Assistant City Prosecutor, Baguio City, dated 9 May 1990.

(780) Sagsago Testimony, op. cit.

(781) Mendez Testimony, op. cit.

(782) "Morit", or Rodolfo Morit, Jr is the person alleged to have organized the Guardians at the Bureau of Corrections. See Garces Testimony, op. cit.

(783) Sagsago Testimony, op. cit.

(784) Mendez Testimony, op. cit.

(785) Sagsago Testimony, op. cit.

(786) Ibid.

(787) Ibid.

(788) Exh. "C-2-Mison", op. cit.

(789) Ibid.

(790) Exh. "E-Salialam", op. cit.

(791) Exh. "A-Mison", Letter of Commissioner Salvador Mison to President Corazon Aquino reporting the incident on 1 December 1989 at the Bureau of Customs, dated 4 December 1989.

(792) Exh. "A-27-NCRDC", op. cit.

(793) Exh. "A-Mison", op. cit.

(794) Exh. "C-Crisol", Letter of Capt Rafael Crisol, dated 4 December 1989, photocopy.

(795) Exh. "A-27-NCRDC", op. cit.

(796) Exh. "A-NICOM", After-Coup d'Etat Report by BGen Raymundo Jarque, Negros Island Command, VISCOM, dated 16 December 1989; Affidavit of Lt Col Miguel Coronel, Provincial Commander, Iloilo PC/INP, dated 14 December 1989.

(797) Exh. "B-3-Garrido", Annex "3" of Special Report of Pio Garrido, Commandant, Philippine Coastguard, dated 19 March 1990; Exh. "A-27-NCRDC", op. cit.

(798) Sworn Testimony of P/Capt Job Gavino, Customs Police, PPA, North Harbor, Manila, given before the FFC on 31 May 1990.

(799) P/Capt Job Gavino organized the Guardian PPA Chapter in June 1986, after joining the Guardian Centre Foundation in January 1986. He was recruited by his brother, Sgt Allan Gavino, BGen Templo's driver. P/Capt Gavino identified Maj Pimentel as a member of Guardian-Luzon by his mark on the left hand between the thumb and the pointer. See Gavino Testimony, op. cit.

(800) Exh. "E-Salialam", Resolution in the case of "Philippine Ports Authority vs Job Gavino, et al," I.S. No DOJ-SC-90-007, dated 7 March 1990, photocopy.

(801) Gavino Testimony, op. cit.

(802) Exh. "C-1-Salialam", op. cit.

(803) Exh. "C-Crisol", op. cit.

(804) Exh. "B-3-Garrido", op. cit.; Exh. "A-27-NCRDC", op. cit.

(805) Gavino Testimony, op. cit.

(806) Exh. "E-Salialam", op. cit.

(807) Gavino Testimony, op. cit.

(808) Exh. "B-3-Garrido", op. cit.

(809) Exh. "B-Garrido", op. cit.

(810) Exh. "C-1-Mison", Re: Sequence of Events and Courses of Action Taken during the period 1-2 December 1989, from Lt Col Virgilio M. Danao, Acting Chief, Customs Police Division, to Commissioner of Customs, dated 4 December 1989.

(811) Ibid.

(812) Exh. "C-1-Mison", op. cit.

(813) Ibid.

(814) Ibid.

(815) Ibid.

(816) Exh. "B-Garrido", op. cit.

(817) Exh. "C-1-Mison", op. cit.

(818) Exh. “B-Garrido”, op. cit.

(819) Ibid.

(820) Sworn Statement of Diokno, op. cit.

(821) Exh. “C-1-Mison”, op. cit.

(822) Exh. “A-Mison”, op. cit.

(823) Sworn Statements of Lts Eliseo Rasco, Herminio Cantaco & Jonas Calleja, given before the FFC on 21 March 1990.

(824) Sworn Statement of Maj Rosalio D. Magsino.

(825) Exh. “NNN”-Commission, Report of FFC Special Counsels Gubaton and ByasaRe: Interviews Conducted With Witnesses Concerning Legaspi City and Sorsogon Incidents, dated 15 March 1990.

(826) Sworn Statement of Col Ernesto Maristela, dated 9 December 1989.

(827) Ibid.

(828) Sworn Testimony of BGen Marino Filart, Regional Commander, RECOM 5, given before the FFC on 13 March 1990.

(829) Ibid.

(830) Exh. BA-Filart”, After-Operations/Activity Report by Gen Marino Filart, Regional Commander, RECOM 5, dated 8 December 1989.

(831) Exh. “NNN”-Commission, op. cit.

(832) Exh. “A-Filart”, op. cit.

(833) Filart Testimony, op. cit.

(834) Ibid.

(835) Ibid.

(836) Exh. “A-Mactan”, op. cit.

(837) Exh. “LLL-3”- Commission, Sworn Statement of Lt Col Diosdado Docdocil, dated 3 April 1990.

(838) Exh. “R-Mactan”, Sworn Statement of TSgt Ramon Famolera, dated 4 January 1990.

(839) Sworn Statement of Cpl Elmer Barrientos, dated 5 January 1990.

(840) Sworn Statement of TSgt Normito Pacaldo, dated 4 January 1990.

(841) Ibid.

(842) Sworn Statement of 2Lt Rodolfo de la Torre, dated 18 December 1989.

(843) Exh. “A-Mactan”, op. cit.

(844) Ibid.

(845) Sworn Statement of Col Filamer Artajo, dated 5 January 1990.

- (846) Sworn Statement of MGen Jose L. de Leon, dated 10 January 1990.
- (847) Sworn Statement of Artajo, op. cit.
- (848) Sworn Statement of PO1 Restituto Baring, dated 4 January 1990.
- (849) Sworn Statements of Ceferino Lopez & Norvie Craus.
- (850) Exh. "C-Lood", Sworn Statement of Lt Col Romeo Lood, Assistant Chief, Division Staff for Operations, 2nd Air Division, Mactan Air Base, dated 20 December 1989.
- (851) Sworn Testimony of Maj Rolando Irizari, CO, 347 PC Coy, given before the FFC on 29 March 1990.
- (852) Sworn Statement of AM Dominino Recla, dated 1 June 1990; Exh. "A-Tabanas", Sworn Statement of AM Efren Tabanas, dated 1 June 1990.
- (853) Sworn Testimony of Lt Col Antonio Anciano, Squadron Commander, 208 Tactical Helicopter Squadron, given before the FFC on 30 March 1990.
- (854) Exh. "A-Mactan", op. cit.
- (855) Anciano Testimony, op. cit.
- (856) Sworn Statement of Lood, op. cit.
- (857) Exh. "FFF"- Commission, Sworn Statement of Sgt Emerson Gallos, dated 21 December 1989.
- (858) Irizari Testimony, op. cit.
- (859) Sworn Statement of Gallos, op. cit.
- (860) Irizarri Testimony, op. cit.
- (861) Sworn Statements of Sgt Cecilio Ural, MSgt Virgilio Gongora and BGen Raul Imperial, dated 17 December 1989.
- (862) Sworn Statement of Pacaldo, op. cit.
- (863) Anciano Testimony, op. cit.
- (864) Sworn Testimony of Cerge Remonde, Manager of Radio station DYLA in Cebu City, taken at RECOM 7, Camp Osmefla, Cebu City, given before the FFC on 21 February 1990.
- (865) Exh. "J-Mactan", Report on Mactan Air Base Crisis, submitted by the Office of the AC of S AC2 at Camp Lapu-Lapu, Cebu, to COMVISCAM, dated 12 December 1989.
- (866) Exh. "A-Mactan", op. cit.
- (867) Sworn Statement of BGen Cesar L. Go, Wing Commander of the 220th, Air Lift Wing, dated 19 January 1990.
- (868) Exh. "H-Mactan", After-Operations Report submitted by Lt Col Ernesto Lumaug, Jr, Group Commander, Military Intelligence Group 7, ISAFP to COMVISCAM, dated 13 December 1989.
- (869) Exh. "A-Mactan", op. cit.; Exh. "C-Mactan", op. cit.
- (870) Affidavit of Alfredo Ouano, Mayor of Mandaue City, dated 26 December 1989.
- (871) Exh. "A-Mactan", op. cit.

(872) Exh. "H-Mactan", op. cit.

(873) Affidavit and Supplemental Affidavit of Gov Emilio Osmeña, dated 22 January 1990.

(874) Sworn Statement of Sgt Francisco Balondo, dated 20 December 1989.

(875) Exh. MA-Mactan", op. cit.

(876) Sworn Testimony of BGen Raul Imperial, Regional Commander, Regional Director, INP RECOM 7, Camp Osmeña, given before the FFC on 18 April 1990.

(877) Exh. "H-Mactan", op. cit.

(878) Ibid.

(879) Exh. "A-Mactan", op. cit.

(880) Exh. "A-NICOM", op. cit.

(881) Exh. "A-NICOM", ojuat; Affidavit of Lt Col Wilfredo B. Alejada; Affidavit of Lt Col Miguel Coronel, Provincial Commander, Iloilo PC/INP, dated 14 December 1989.

(882) Affidavit of Coronel, op. cit.

(883) Sworn Statement of Antonio Suatengco, Mayor of the Municipality of Pulupandan, Negros Occidental, dated 25 April 1990.

(884) Sworn Statement of Capt Rolando Lopez, given at the NBI Regional Office, Iloilo City, dated 23 April 1990.

(885) Sworn Testimony of Col Hector M. Tarrazona, Director for Operations, 100th Training Wing, given before the FFC on 12 March 1990.

(886) Ibid.

(887) Exh. "C-Tarrazona", Special Report on the 1 December 1989 Coup Attempt submitted by Col Felipe R. Abano, Jr to the Commanding General, PAF, dated 7 December 1989.

(888) Tarrazona, op. cit.

(889) Ibid.

(890) Exh. "B-Baccay", Sworn Statement of BGen Mariano Baccay, Jr, dated 26 February 1990; Sworn Testimony of BGen Mariano Baccay, Jr, Regional Commander, PC/INP RECOM 11, Camp Catitipan, Davao City, given before the FFC on 29 March 1990.

(891) Exh. "C-Baccay", Memorandum from Lt Col Manolo Gorospe to the FFC Chairman, dated 21 May 1990.

(892) Exh. "A-Viduya", Sworn Statement of Lt Col Teodorico Viduya, dated 23 February 1990.

(893) Sworn Statement of Capt Gregory Ramos, dated 12 March 1990; Sworn Testimony of Capt Gregory Ramos, CO, "A" Coy, 2 LABde PALAR, given before the FFC on 27 March 1990.

(894) Affidavit of Col Danilo Olay, dated 18 December 1989; After-Battle Report, submitted by BGen Mariano Baccay, Jr, Regional Commander, PC/INP RECOM 11, Camp Catitipan, Davao City, dated 9 December 1989.

(895) Exh. "LLLLL"- Commission, Report of the Flag-Officer-in-Command, Rear Admiral Carlito Y. Cunanan PN, dated 6 February 1990.

(896) Affidavit of Lt Anito A. Alfajardo, dated 21 February 1990.

(897) Exh. "A-Villanueva", Summary Report of Lt Col Manuel O. de Leon, Chairman Investigation Team, 4 IB, PA, dated 23 February 1990.

(898) Affidavit of Alfajardo, op. cit.

(899) Ibid.

(900) Affidavit of Lt Arnulfo Matanguihan, dated 13 February 1990.

(901) Affidavit of Maj William V. Dormitorio, dated 5 February 1990.

(902) Sworn Testimony of BGen Rogelio Villanueva, Commander, 4 ID, given before the FFC on 26 February 1990.

(903) Affidavit of Dormitorio, op. cit.

(904) Joint Affidavits of Lt Amador T. Tabuga and Lt Rene V. Fernal, dated 12 February 1990; Joint Affidavits of Lt Macatoon M. Bobong and 2Lt Manolo M. Samarita, dated 10 February 1990.

(905) Affidavit of Santiago P. Pascual, dated 27 January 1990.

(906) Affidavit of Capt Ernesto S. Monteros, dated 27 February 1990.

(907) Affidavit of Capt Ruben Clarito, dated 29 January 1990.

(908) Jarius Bondoc, "Setting Things Straight", Daily Globe, 5 December 1989, p. 7.

(909) Rey Arquiza, "No Sanctuary for Turing and Henchmen," Philippine Daily Inquirer, 8 July 1986, pp. 1-2.

(910) Arquiza, op. cit.

The Final Report of the Fact-Finding Commission: VI: The Failed December 1989 Coup: Who?

VI

THE FAILED DECEMBER 1989 COUP: WHO?

Who staged it?

This is the first question that is asked when a coup d'état occurs. In the Philippines, because the same groups of plotters led by the same key conspirators surfaced again and again in the seven coup attempts after the historic EDSA People Power Revolt, this question is no longer asked with a sense of urgency. Media have served to satisfy the curiosity of the public. However, the conclusions that one can derive from media reports are not sufficient for purposes of establishing legal accountability or for recommendations to deter coups in the future.

The Fact-Finding Commission's mandate includes the identification of military personnel and civilian personalities, including public officials and employees, who may be involved in the failed December 1989 coup attempt. The Commission is tasked to turn over to the appropriate prosecutorial authorities all pertinent evidence when in the course of its investigation it finds that there is reasonable ground to believe that an individual appears to be liable for a criminal offense in connection with the coup.

This chapter provides statistical data for a general profile of the coup participants, particularly the military rebels. It also focuses on the leaders. Civilian personalities who were probably involved in the coup are discussed separately. The chapter ends with the Commission's recommendations on what in its judgment should be the appropriate action in each case.

It is not, however, the duty of the Commission to determine whether they are guilty of participating in the coup. The Commission is required under RA No. 6832 to find out if the evidence in its possession is sufficient to create a reasonable ground to believe that one appears to be liable for an offense in connection with the coup. Reasonable ground exists when there is a rational basis to conclude that an individual was indeed involved. The function of the Commission is neither to prosecute, indict nor convict, but only to provide leads for investigatory and prosecutorial agencies to pursue them in accordance with the requirements of due process.

A. Sourcing of Evidence

To fulfill its mandate, the Commission took the testimonies of 332 witnesses in open or closed-door sessions, and received the sworn statements or affidavits, or caused the re-affirmation of sworn statements or affidavits earlier executed, of 226 witnesses. The Commission also obtained various records and documents, produced before it either during its sessions or in the taking of the sworn statements, or by virtue of *subpoenas duces tecum* or official requests, which were then marked as Exhibits. The latter included documents from, but not limited to, (1) the Office of the AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (J1), (2) the Office of the AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence (J2), (3) the AFP Office of The Inspector General (AFPTIG), (4) the Investigating Committees of the Major Service Commands, (5) the AFP Special Investigating Committee (AFPSIC), and (6) the Department of Justice (DOJ).

From the above oral and documentary evidence, the names of individuals probably involved in the failed December 1989 coup were gathered and classified either as military or civilian participants.

B. Creating the Data Base for Military Participants

Considering the sheer number of military personnel involved, two types of computer data bases were made to facilitate evaluation and analysis. The first, described as **Masterlist of Military Officers Probably Involved in the Failed December 1989 Coup**, is attached to this Report as Appendix J. The other, known as the **Masterlist of Enlisted Personnel Probably Involved in the Failed December 1989 Coup**, is attached as Appendix K of this Report. Appendix K-1 is the **Masterlist of OCS Students Probably Involved in the Failed December 1989 Coup**.

An analysis of the officers' data base was undertaken to obtain a better profile of the principal leaders and unit heads involved in the coup.

The computer data base for the officers includes the name listing and the particulars for each name such as rank, serial number, service command, unit of assignment, personnel status, source of commission, present disposition, category of involvement, nature of participation, reference, and the status of investigation with recommendations of the Commission whenever appropriate.

Present Disposition shows the present whereabouts of the subject—whether at-large, detained, released, resigned, or cleared after investigation.

Category of Involvement identifies the individual listed as any of the following:

(a) **Implicated** means that the Commission's records show that the individual participated in the coup by direct action;

(b) **Sympathizer** means that the individual indirectly supported the coup by some outward act such as orally expressing support for the rebel cause, e.g., by tendering his resignation or by inverting the flag;

(c) **Suspected** means that the name of the individual appeared in one or more documents submitted to the Commission showing some involvement in the coup but his specific participation is not clear.

Under the column of Nature of Participation, the Commission describes the acts committed by the military personnel involved. The descriptions were made on the basis of testimonies, sworn statements and affidavits, and other exhibits submitted to the Commission. This column is the basis for the Commission's recommendations as to what further action should be taken, if any, for each military personnel listed as probably involved. It must be noted that other government agencies, particularly the military and the DOJ, have already taken steps towards the prosecution, or the release of some of those in the list.

Reference indicates the basis for the involvement or the nature of the participation.

The action taken by military authorities on each of those appearing in the list are indicated under the column Status of Investigation. This column shows the status of the military's investigation. There are four Masses under this category:

(1) For PTI (Pre-Trial Investigation) means that the case has been transmitted to the Trial Judge Advocate General (TJAG) for PTI pursuant to Article of War (AW) 71¹ and Section 35(a), Manual for Courts-Martial (MCM)² and for trial before a General Court-Martial (GCM) for violation of AW 67,³ AW 94⁴ in relation to Articles 6 and 248 (Murder) of the Revised Penal Code (RPC), and AW 96⁵ and for such other violations and crimes as may be found during the course of the PTI;

(2) For GCM (General Court-Martial) means that a PTI had been conducted and that violation/s liable to a GCM had been committed;

(3) Released with Reprimand means that the case was closed and the person released was given a reprimand by his commanding officer and/or a forfeiture of base pay in favor of the government pursuant to Section [a] [1] [b] [4] MCM as amended;⁶

(4) Cleared means that the case has been dropped or closed by AFPSIC and approved by the Chief of Staff;

(5) Under Investigation means that the person is currently detained either in stockade, house arrest, or camp arrest by order of a Commanding Officer and/or a General Order of the most senior officer while his case awaits resolution; and

(6) Referred to DOJ means that the case of the person, being a retired or dismissed military personnel, has been referred to the Justice Department.

Those released with reprimand and cleared would have to (a) undergo a seminar on military discipline (AFPRG 131 dated 7 November 1974) and on crimes against public order (Article 134 – 142, RPC), and (b) pledge support to the Constitution, the duly constituted authorities, and the AFP chain of command verbally and in writing and in appropriate ceremonies before they are restored to duty status.

C. General Profile of Coup Participants

The report from the AFPSIC dated 30 April 1990⁷ gives a total number of 2,290 (470 officers and 1,820 enlisted men) military personnel allegedly involved in the December 1989 failed coup. For consistency in comparison, the number of enlisted personnel deemed cleared by the AFPSIC was not included as the Commission's own figures already excluded such data. The Commission's own tally sheet, which includes retired, resigned, and dismissed officers, has a total of 2,911 (469 officers, 70 officer candidates and 2,372 enlisted men), which is 27.1 percent more than the listing of the military referred to in the above. Of the 469 officers, 238 were classified as implicated, 40 of whom have been released after study of their cases by the AFPSIC or the AFPTIG and the meting out of appropriate penalties, where necessary. Majority of those classified as sympathizers, about 40 of the total of 69, were from the 4 ID. More than one-third (162) of the officers remain in the suspected category. The Commission did not include in its list those cleared without penalties, except for 20 cleared cases where the Commission recommends that they be reviewed.

The above total of 2,911 military personnel is 130.5 percent more than those in the August 1987 episode which had 1,263 participants.⁸ The total number in the December 1989 incident exceeds the combined rebel manpower of 1,683 for of all the four coup attempts in 1987⁹ as shown in Table VI-1.

Table VI-1 — Comparison of the Total Number of Probable Participants in the 1987 and 1989 Coup Attempts and AFP Population Profile in 1987 and 1989

Service Command	No. of Military Personnel Probably Involved in the 1987 & 1989 Coup Attempts	
	1987* (all four attempts)	1989
PA	928	1,61
PN	64	84
PC	353	32
PAF	218	11
Not Identified	120	1
TOTAL	1,683	2,91

*Figures do not include the cleared enlisted personnel.

**Summary of the Historical Profile of the AFP from 1987-1990, Exh. "SSSSSS" – Commission.

Among the major service commands, the Philippine Army (PA) contributed the biggest number to the rebel military group. As shown in Table VI-1 above, the Army accounted for 55 percent of military personnel probably involved (MPPI) in both the 1987 and 1989 incidents. Such a result could be expected since the Army has the largest population in terms of personnel as shown in the same table. The reverse is true with respect to the Philippine Air Force (PAF). It has the least number of men, which therefore accounts for the smallest number of MPPI in 1989. Operationally, the coup plotters will naturally target the Army for its vast number of infantry men and the Air Force for the destructive power of its fighter planes with only a small number of pilots needed to fly them.

Much more revealing are the data on the service command which has the lowest number of MPPI. In the 1987 coup attempts, the Philippine Navy (PN) had the least number of MPPI. In 1989, however, the Navy had the second highest number of MPPI due to the involvement of the Philippine Marines.

An interesting comparison is the increase of MPPI in the 1987 and 1989 failed coup attempts as shown in Table VI-2. The MPPI from the Army almost doubled. The main cause is the direct participation of the First Scout Ranger Regiment (FSRR), several Ranger companies, and several Ranger battalions. The participation of rebel Marines gave rise to a 1,218.8 percent increase in MPPI from the Navy. There is also the notable decrease in Air Force MPPI in the December 1989 failed coup. This highlights the steadfastness of most of the Air Force officers and men in resisting rebel attempts to use them and their aircrafts against the government.

Table VI-2 — Increase of MPPI and Number of Military Personnel, 1987 – 1989

Service Command	1987			No. of Men
	No. of Men	No. of MPPI	% of Participants Over Men	
PA	61,907	928	1.5	67,531
PN	21,811	64	0.3	23,887
PC	38,860	353	0.9	47,352
PAF	14,536	218	1.5	14,901
Not Identified	—	120	—	—
TOTAL	137,114	1,683	1.2	153,671

It is obvious that the December 1989 coup plotters targeted the Scout Rangers and the Marines for recruitment. The plotters were only too aware of the distinct culture of cohesiveness of these units, and their extreme loyalty to their commanders.

Table VI-3 below provides a breakdown of the aggregate number of military personnel probably involved in the December 1989 coup.

Table VI-3 — Total Number of MPPI in the Failed December 1989 Coup, by Service Commands

Service Command	Officer	Enl Pers
PAPNPC	255	
PAF	101	
Not Identified	75	
	33	
	5	
TOTAL	469	2,

As thus shown, out of the 2,911 MPPI, 469 were officers. More than half were from the Army. As stated earlier, the list includes officers who had retired, resigned, or been dismissed. The ratio of officers to the total number of military personnel is 1:5, i.e., one out of every six MPPI was an officer. This is a marked increase in officer participation when compared to 1987 which had one officer out of ten MPPI.¹⁰

Majority of the OPI in the last coup, 304 or 64.8 percent, are under detention. Seventy three, however, remain at-large. The rest have been cleared, released or resigned; a number have yet to be investigated.

Of the officers involved in the 1989 coup, 77 were repeaters meaning they were involved in at least one other previous coup attempt. Among the enlisted personnel, at least 123 were found to have been involved in the 1987 coup attempts. Repeaters among officers and men comprise 6.9 Percent of the total MPPI in 1989.

An observation made in the Commission's first Interim Report was that the operational execution of the failed coup attempts before 1989 was in the hands of junior officers. A similar case is noted for the December 1989 incident where officers with ranks of lieutenants and captains form 73.8 percent of the total number of officers probably involved (OPI). This confirms the reports that the recruiters were concentrating on battalion and company commanders as part of the strategic and tactical mobilization and deployment of forces plan for the coup.

Table VI-4 — Rank Profile of Military Officers Probably Involved in the December 1989 Coup

Rank		
	PA	PN (PNM)*
BGen/CommodoreColonel/CaptainLt Col/Cmdr	3	
Maj /LCdr	6	
Capt/LTSG	16	
1LT/LTJG	21	
2LT/Ens	78	2
	79	2
	52	1
TOTAL	255	

*Figures are abstracted from that of the Philippine Navy.

Table VI-5 — Source of Commission of Military Officers Probably Involved (OPI) in the December 1989 Coup, PMA or Non-PMA

Service Command	PMA			T
	Total No. of Officers from PMA	No. of OPI From PMA	% of PMA	
PAPNPC	1,044	108	10.3	
PAF	602	39	6.5	
Not Identified	220	44	20.0	
	370	16	4.3	
	—	3	—	
TOTAL	2,236	210	9.4	

Another interesting data is the comparison of figures of OPI who are either PMA or non-PMA graduates. Although PMA alumni comprise only 15 percent of the AFP officer corps, a segment of them were very visible and quite active in the past coup attempt.¹¹

A little over nine percent of officers from the PMA are listed as OPI in the December 1989 coup attempt while only 2.2 percent of officers who are non-PMA are OPI (See Table VI-5).

While indeed the major players of the December 1989 coup came from the country's premiere military school, the figures bear out the fact that rebel PMA alumni is an aberration, not the norm. Nevertheless, the figures should provide directions for the national and military leadership in concentrating their efforts in reforms.

Table VI-6 below shows a list of officers involved in at least two of the seven post-EDSA coup attempts.

**Table VI-6 — Officers Involved or Investigated in At Least
Two of the Seven Failed Coup Attempts
after the EDSA Revolt**

NAME		JULY	NOV	JAN	
		1986	1986	1987	
1.	ABADILLA, ROLANDO	X		X	
2.	ABENINA, EDGARDO M.				
3.	AGUINALDO, RODOLFO	X			
4.	ALBANO, JERRY				
5.	AMARILLE, ROLAND C.				
6.	AMON, ELMER		X		
7.	APOLINARIO, RAMON C.				
8.	AROMIN, SAULITO		X		
9.	AVENIDO, ANSELMO JR. S.				
10.	AVENIDO, PACIFICO JR. A				
11.	BAILEN, ROSALJNO R.				
12.	BALTAZAR, FERNANDO E.				
13.	BATAC, VICTOR		X		
14.	BAYANGOS, TITO			X	
15.	BERNARTE, DANTE				
16.	CABAUATAN, REYNALDO	X		X	
17.	CAPAYCAPAY, MARIO G.				
18.	CARAIG, HERNANDO JR. D.				
19.	CRUZ, JOSE S.				
20.	DACLAN, ROMEO			X	
21.	DARIO, PAUL POMPEYO M.				
22.	DE GUZMAN, ROLANDO	X			
23.	DELA CRUZ, ANTONIO				
24.	DIONEDA, LEOVIC R.				
25.	DROMAL, WILHELM				
26.	DUQUE, SERGIO JR. S.				
27.	EBUEN, NEON D.				
28.	ECHEVARRIA, JAIME	X			
29.	ELEFANTE, ROMEO G.				
30.	ESCCTO, ARMANDO				
31.	FUSILERO, TIBURCIO				
32.	GAURAN.ANDY				
33.	GENETE.WILFREDO M.				

34.	HONASAN, GREGORIO		X		
	NAME	JULY	NOV	JAN	
		1986	1986	1987	
35.	IRIZARI, ROLANDO				
36.	JAVIER, AGRIPINO B.				
37.	KAPUNAN, EDUARDO		X		
38.	LAZARO, RODOLFO S.				
39.	LEGASPI, OSCAR B.		X		
40.	LEGIRALDE, FIDEL JR. E.				
41.	UNA, DOMINADORA				
42.	LUCAS, JAIME T.				
43.	LUMIBAO, RENATO V.		X		
44.	MALABANJOT, EDMUNDO D.				
45.	MALAJACAN, MARCELINO		X		
46.	MAUGAUG, PROCESO L.				
47.	MAMARIL, DANIEL V.				
48.	MANAED, DEMETRIO S.				
49.	MARANON, ROQUE JR. S.				
50.	MATILLANO, EDUARDO S.				
51.	NICOLAS, PEDRO V.				
52.	NOVERAS, CLIFORDO				
53.	OCHOSA, JOSE REYNALDO				
54.	ORDONEZ, REYNALDO O.				
55.	ORQUINA, RODOLFO L.				
56.	PABALE, ELMER C.				
57.	PANELO, GREGOR MENDEL		X		
58.	PANTE, CONSTANCE V.				
59.	PURUGGANAN, ABRAHAM				
60.	QUERUBIN, ALLEN TEODORO				
61.	RAFAL, REYNALDO S.				
62.	RAFANAN, ABRAHAM				
63.	RANAY, ROMEO				
64.	RASCO, EUSEO T				
65.	RIVERA, REYNALDO D.				
66.	ROBLES, REX		X		
67.	SAMPOL, JESUS			X	
68.	SANARES, NESTOR B.				
69.	SANCHEZ, LUISITO G.				
70.	SANDALO, CECIL EZRA				
71.	SANTOS, MANUEL D.				
72.	SARMENTA, CEFERINO JR.				
73.	SILVA, ELY T.				
74.	TOR, RODOLFO A.				
75.	TURINGAN, FELIX		X		
76.	VALEROSO, DIOSDADO T.				
77.	ZUMEL, JOSE MARIA	X			

Sixty-six officers participated twice, nine officers thrice, one was implicated in four attempts, while another, ex-Col Rolando Abadilla, the current Vice Governor of Ilocos Norte, was allegedly involved in five coup attempts, but excluding December 1989. Sixty-three officers were involved in both the August 1987 and 1989 attempts. Seventy-one officers implicated in 1989 were also involved in previous coups.

D. The Leaders of the December 1989 Failed Coup

The December 1989 failed coup is no doubt the most serious and costliest attempt against the Aquino government, involving the most number of troops. This could be attributed to the tactical alliance forged between the RAM – Honasan Faction (RAM-HF) and the Loyalists. The latter refer to officers identified with the group of BGen Zumel and Gen Fabian Ver.

D.1. RAM-HF/MND Connection

The overall planning and plotting of the December 1989 coup appear to have been principally handled by ex-Lt Col Gregorio Honasan PA. The operational, tactical, and implementation responsibilities appear to have been placed in the hands of the core group of the RAM-HF, namely, Lt Cols Victor Batac PC and Eduardo Kapunan PAF, ex-Capt (PN) Felix Turingan, Ex-LCmr (PN) Jaime Lucas, ex-Lt Cols Oscar Legaspi PAF and Billy Bibit PC, and Maj Abraham Purugganan PA. All of them, except Bibit, were implicated in previous coup attempts. The members of this core group are representative of the four major service commands of the AFP. All are graduates of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), Classes '65 – '78.

The involvement of Honasan, Batac, Kapunan, Lucas, Legaspi, and Turingan is traceable to February 1986. They were also involved in the November 1986 “God Save The Queen” plot and the 28 August 1987 coup attempt.¹² Honasan, Batac, Kapunan, Lucas, Legaspi, and Turingan had spent the major part of their military service with the Ministry (now Department) of National Defense (MND) under then Minister Juan Ponce Enrile.¹³ Three years after his graduation from the PMA, Honasan was detailed to the MND beginning 1 September 1974 until Enrile was removed from his position in November 1986. By then, Honasan was Enrile’s Special Assistant on Security Matters.

Batac, Kapunan, and Turingan started their assignment at the MND in 1979. By September 1986, Kapunan was a member of the security group at the Office of the Minister. Turingan, on the other hand, was Chief of the Information Management Office (IMO) and Legaspi was Senior Aide-de-Camp to Minister Enrile.

Other major players in the last coup who are identified with the RAM-HF are Honasan’s other classmates, Lt Cols Tiburcio Fusilero (who also served at the MND) and Marcelino Malajacan. Lt Col Ericson Aurelio, Col Alexander Noble, and Cmdr Proceso Maligalig also featured prominently in the last attempt. Aurelio, while at the MND from November 1984 to April 1986, was also consultant on security and police matters of the Export Processing Zone Authority under Atty Renato Cayetano, who was then Deputy Minister for Trade and Industry and now a law partner of Enrile. Maligalig was also assigned to MND during Enrile’s incumbency. Enrile paid for his tuition fees at AIM where he graduated in 1982.¹⁴ Maligalig and Noble belong to PMA Class '69.

Other officers in the MPPI list who served at the MND during Enrile’s incumbency are Lt Col Reynaldo Rivera, ex-Lt Andy Gauran, Navy Capt Jesus Durian, and Lt Rolando Cal.¹⁵

Batac, Honasan, Kapunan, and Legaspi were classmates at the PMA (Class '71). Except for Legaspi, these PMAers are also graduates of the Asian Institute of Management (AIM).

The other classmates of Honasan in the MPPI list are Lt Cols Levy Zamora, Diosdado Tabamo, Teodorico Viduya, Reynaldo Rivera, Eduardo Matillano, Neon Ebuena, and Rafael Galvez.

Bibit and Aurelio were classmates at the PMA (Class '72). Their other classmates who were involved in the last coup are ex-Lt Col Rodolfo Aguinaldo and Maj Alfredo Oliveros, Rodolfo Tor, and Leuvino Valencia. The latter could be the link with the 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion which took over the Legaspi Airport as this unit was under him from February 1987 to September 1989, as was Capt Jaime Junio of the 14th Scout Ranger Company who led the attack against the PAF Repeater Station in Tagaytay City.

Purugganan's links with Honasan may have begun when the former was the commanding officer (CO) of the 7th Scout Ranger Company stationed in Isabela and the latter was the CO of the Special Operations School of the Philippine Army Training Command (SOS PA TRACOM) at Port Magsaysay in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija. Both were at Camp Vinaldo during the August 1987 coup attempt. Honasan made full use of his SOS position. Also implicated in the last coup were Capts Edmundo Malabanjot, Fidel Legiralde, and Dominador Lina, all reservists. The three were course directors of Scout Ranger Training Classes at the SOS.¹⁶

D.2. Honasan/GCFI Network

There can be no doubt that some members of the Guardian Centre Foundation, Inc (GCFI) were used by Honasan during the December 1989 coup attempt.

Honasan leads the list of the incorporators of the Foundation.¹⁷ Rodolfo Morit, Jr is the second in the list. Three other incorporators – SSgt Nicanor Cagurangan, MSgt Rogelio Attunaga, and MSgt Leovides Montehermoso – were with Honasan at the MND Security Group during Enrile's incumbency as Minister of National Defense.

It may be recalled that Honasan signed as an instrumental witness to the Articles of Incorporation of the Guardians Brotherhood, Inc (GBI).¹⁸

During the December 1989 coup, Morit met his brother-Guardians at the Bureau of Corrections in Muntinlupa. In the evening of 30 November, he brought 26 prison guards (all Guardians) and four civilians to the Baltao Subdivision in Parañaque. In the early morning of 1 December, they were picked up by Gamos, Vice President Laurel's Chief of Security, and brought to the Velayo Sports Complex fronting the Manila Domestic Airport terminal where they were to be provided with firearms.

In the morning of 30 November, 30 to 40 GCFI members from Baguio City led by the chapter president, Assistant City Prosecutor Elmer Sagsago, went to the North Harbor, allegedly to attend a GCFI conference. At the same meeting were some 40 heavily armed men in military uniform and others in civilian attire. These men reportedly asked Sagsago and his group to join in the coup activity. Sagsago, however, claimed that they refused to do so and that he and the rest of the GCFI-Baguio Chapter members left in groups of two or three. The leader of the armed group was ex-Capt Dante Pimentel, also a GCFI member.

P/Capt Job Gavino, Station Commander (STACOM) of the North Harbor Port Police was contacted by RAM-HF core group member Bibit at 7:30 a.m. of 30 November. In his testimony before the Commission, Job Gavino admitted that he is a member of the GCFI.

The rebels who attacked and ransacked the Civil Relations Service (CRS) office of the late CRS Chief BGen Oscar Florendo in the early morning of 1 December were also Guardians. They were led by Dante Pimentel who used to be the Finance Officer of CRS. He has resigned his commission.¹⁹

D.3. The Loyalists

The Loyalist rebels who played prominent and visible roles and listed in the MPPI were, at one time or another, assigned to the Presidential Security Command (PSC) and/or the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) under Gen Fabian Ver. They include Zumel, Cols Anselmo Avenido, and Luisito Sanchez, Navy Capt Danilo Pizarro, Lt Cols Arsenio Tecson, Rafael Galvez, Jacinto Ligot, Jerry Albano, Romelino Gojo, and Maj Alfredo Oliveros. Tecson and Gojo are both classmates of Col Irwin Ver, son of Gen Ver, at the PMA.

Pizarro was at one time the commanding officer of *Ang Pangulo*, former President Marcos's presidential yacht. LCmdr Perfecto Pascual was already assigned to the PSC when Pizarro joined the unit.

Capt Danilo Lim, on the other hand, used to be Zumel's aide-de-camp when the latter was the PMA Superintendent.

Thus, while they were linked to Ver and Marcos, Oliveros, Galvez, and Gojo also have special links with Honasan. Galvez and Albano were Honasan's classmates at the PMA. Oliveros was in the batch behind Honasan's class and Gojo is a Honasan kin.

D.4. Abenina – The Middleman

Although there were indications of possible collaboration in past coup attempts between the Honasan group and the Loyalists, there was, for the December 1989 coup, a need for a more effective alliance. Both groups had the same objective — to remove President Aquino from power. Considering, however, that they were opposing forces during the EDSA Revolt, someone had to act as middleman. That role was tailor-made for BGen Edgardo Abenina, a known supporter of the rightist movement who was implicated and charged for involvement in the 28 August 1987 attempt.²⁰ BGens Abenina and Zumel were classmates at the PMA (Class '58). Abenina was Regional Command (RECOM) 7 commander during the August 1987 attempt, when he revealed his support for the rebels by inverting the Philippine flag at his headquarters. Charged with him were Avenido, Fusilero, and Tor.

D.5. BGens Comendador and Blando and Commo Calajate

A surprise to the AFP was the participation of BGen Jose Comendador, Commander 2nd Air Division, BGen Marcelo Blando, Commanding General (CG) 7 ID, and Commo Domingo Calajate, Commander AFP Logistics Command (LOGCOM). According to Chief of Staff Gen Renato de Villa, Comendador could have been recruited by Fusilero. Blando's pro-rebel stand was not known until he was at Greenhills Commercial Center, although the rebel Rangers at Fort Bonifacio expected his arrival there as early as 1 December. Blando used to be the CG of the FSRR. It must be noted that in a meeting with de Villa on the Monday preceding the coup, Blando pledged his loyalty to him. Calajate, in turn, attended the Command Conference called by de Villa at 5:30 p.m. on 30 November at the headquarters of the Intelligence Service of the AFP (ISAFP).

D.6. Other Major Participants

The details of the activities of the other major participants in the December 1989 coup attempt like Fusilero, Bibit, Noble, and the officers of the various units which moved against the government are discussed in Chapter V and their names, category of involvement, and nature of participation are shown in Appendix J.

The following military officers are presently facing general court-martial proceedings:

	NAME	
1.	BGen Jose Comendador	0-4392 AFP
2.	BGen Marcelo Blando	0-4522 AFP
3.	Capt Danilo Pizarro	0-4747 PN (GSC)
4.	Capt Manuel Ison	0-4826 PN (GSC)
5.	Col Luisito Sanchez	0-5311 PA (GSC)
6.	Lt Col Romelino Gojo	0-5609 PN (M)
7.	Lt Col Tiburcio Fusilero	0-5834 PC
8.	Lt Col Jacinto Ligot	0-5639 PA
9.	Lt Col Arsenio Tecson	0-5641 PA
	NAME	
10.	Lt Col Rafael Galvez	0-5870 PA
11.	Lt Col Ericson Aurelio	0-6258 PA
12.	Lt Col Franklin Brawner	0-5836 PA
13.	Maj Alfredo Oliveros	0-6250 PA
14.	Maj Leuvino Valencia	0-6248 PA
15.	Maj Cesar de la Pefia	0-6878 PN (M)
16.	Capt Danilo Lim	0-7667 PA
17.	Capt Elmer Amon	0-8406 PAF

18.	Capt Vergel Nacino	0-8413 PAF
19.	Capt Florencio Flores	0-106045 PA
20.	Capt Benigno Junio	0-109991 PA
21.	1Lt Joey Sarroza	0-8758 PAF

D.7. Enlisted Personnel

A total of 2,372 enlisted personnel were involved in the failed December coup and the category of their involvement is listed in Appendix K.

D.8. Civilian Participants

While a coup is primarily a military operation, the task of the Commission is to examine all the involvements in the December 1989 attempt including those of civilians. Thus, the Commission followed up on several leads about possible civilian participation.

The DND Special Investigation Committee (DND SIC) in its Third Egress Report²¹ mentioned foreigners as allegedly involved in the coup. One name mentioned was Eito Eikiuchi, who was described as a “likely coup supporter/participant.”

The Commission took note of the sworn statements of former CG Southern Luzon Command BGen Alejandro Galido which named several civilians, including Homobono Adaza, Baby Asistio, Rafael Ayoste (deceased), Cherry Cobarrubias, Enrique “Henry” Cojuangco, Senator Juan Ponce Enrile, Eduardo Figueras, retired BGen Romeo Gatan, Lito Gorospe, Cesar Lopez, former First Lady Mrs Imelda Marcos, Rico Mendoza (alleged friend of Eduardo “Danding” Cojuangco, Jr), Luis Tabuena, Joaquin Venus, Jr, and a certain Mel Verano.²²

D.8.a. Cases Filed Before the DOJ

The Commission, likewise, obtained copies of the complaints or charges, and the supporting documents, filed with the Department of Justice against civilians allegedly involved in the coup attempt. Classified among civilians are retired, resigned or dismissed military officers. As of 29 August 1990 the following civilians have been charged before the DOJ²³

Abenina, Edgardo Jr.	Adaza, Homobono	Arillo, Cecilio	Henson, Chito	Magsa
Balweg, Crisostomo			Panlilio, Rebecca	
Canoy, Reuben			Pestano, Medardo	
Castro, Edgardo			Puyat, Vicente	
Cepe, Bienvenido			Recto, Rafael	
Cruz, Danilo			Rodriguez, Joaquin	
Dee, Pablo Jr			Serrano, Audie	
Enrile, Juan Ponce			Uyson, Harry	
Garcia, Arthur			Venus, Joaquin Jr	

Gracia, Rolando de	Verano, Crismel
Gorospe, Lito	Veroy, Leopoldo and
Gavino, Job with: Abundo, Ronnie Arriola, Antonio	Navarro, Arturo Pilap
Coching, Manuel	Tamayao, Francisco
Domingo Ernesto	Villanueva, Renato
Manuel, Armando	Lt Col Oscar Legaspi
Lt Col Rodolfo Aguinaldo	LCmdr Jaime Lucas
Lt Col Dante Bernarte	Capt Roque Maranon
Lt Col Billy Bibit	Lt Col Eduardo Mati
Sgt Lambino Bicos	Lt Col Rodolfo Tor
BGen Felix Brawner	Maj Lyle Tugbang
Capt Antonio de la Cruz	Capt Felix Turingan
BGen Jaime Echeverria	
Lt Col Gregorio Honasan	

Matillano, Tor and de la Cruz were charged with Rolando de Gracia, Chito Henson, Pablo Dee, Jr, Harry Uyson, and John Does for illegal possession of ammunitions and explosives in furtherance of rebellion.²⁴ The Department of Justice dismissed the cases against Uyson, Dee, and de la Cruz and referred the case of Matillano to the military authorities for appropriate action. The President waived court-martial jurisdiction over Tor and de la Cruz. In its Resolution in the case against Recto, et al,²⁵ the DOJ excluded/absolved Edgardo Castro and Joaquin Rodriguez for insufficiency of evidence.

The cases against Job Gavino, Antonio Arriola, Matias Tamayo, Manuel Coching, Ronnie Abundo, Francisco Tamayao, Augusto Pilapil, Renato Villanueva, Ernesto Domingo, Arturo Navarro, and Armando Manuel were dismissed by DOJ, without prejudice, for lack of evidence.²⁶

The case against BGen (Ret) Jaime Echeverria was similarly dismissed by DOJ.

As of 29 August 1990, the DOJ had filed the following information

1. *People of the Philippines vs Senator Juan Ponce Enrile, Gregorio Honasan, Rebecca Panlilio and Erlinda Panlilio* (Criminal Case No. Q-90-10941, RTC, Quezon City) for Rebellion with Murder and Frustrated Murder, filed on 15 February 1990²⁷,
2. *People of the Philippines vs Senator Juan Ponce Enrile* (Criminal Case No. 90-777, RTC, Makati) for violation of PD No. 1829, filed on 15 February 1990²⁸
3. *People of the Philippines vs Felix Brawner, Jr* (Criminal Case No. Q-90-10944, RTC, Quezon City) for Rebellion with Murder and Multiple Frustrated Murder, filed on 22 February 1990²⁹

4. *People of the Philippines vs Rodolfo Aguinaldo* (Criminal Case No. Q-90-10942, RTC, Quezon City) for Rebellion with Murder and Frustrated Murder, filed on 21 February 1990³⁰

5. *People of the Philippines vs Rafael Recto, Lito Gorospe and Cecilio T. Arillo* for Rebellion with Murder and Multiple Frustrated Murder, filed on 16 April 1990³¹

6. *People of the Philippines vs Felix Turingan, Oscar Legaspi and Jaime Lucas* (Criminal Case No. Q-90-11239, RTC, Quezon City) for Rebellion with Murder and Frustrated Murder³²

7. *People of the Philippines vs Dante Bernarte* (Criminal Case No. Q-90-11670, RTC, Quezon City) for Rebellion with Murder and Multiple Frustrated Murder, filed on 3 April 1990³³

8. *People of the Philippines vs Medardo Pestano, Jose Ma Carlos de Leon Zumel, Crismel Verano, Joaquin Venus, Jr, Homobono Adaza, and Edgardo Abenina, Jr* (Criminal Case No. Q-90-11855, RTC, Quezon City), for Rebellion with Murder and Frustrated Murder, filed on 19 April 1990³⁴

9. *People of the Philippines vs Vicente Puyat* (Criminal Case No. 851-M-90, RTC, Malolos) for Illegal Possession of Firearms and Explosives in furtherance of Rebellion, filed on 24 April 1990³⁵

10. *People of the Philippines vs Lyle Tugbang* (Criminal Case No. Q- 90-12209, RTC, Quezon City) for Rebellion with Murder and Frustrated Murder, filed on 2 May 1990³⁶

11. *People of the Philippines vs Danilo Cruz* (Criminal Case No. Q- 90-12595, RTC, Quezon City) for Rebellion, filed on 8 June 1990³⁷

12. *People of the Philippines vs Billy Bibit, Arthur Garcia, Audie Serrano, Crisostomo Balneg, and Bienvenido Cepe* (Criminal Case No. Q-90-10943, RTC, Quezon City) for Rebellion with Murder and Frustrated Murder, filed on 27 February 1990³⁸

13. *People of the Philippines vs Rolando de Gracia, Chito Henson, and John Does* (Criminal Case No. Q-90-11755, RTC, Quezon City) for Illegal Possession of Ammunition and Explosives in Furtherance of Rebellion filed on 6 April 1990³⁹

14. *People of the Philippines vs Rolando de Gracia, Chito Henson, Lamberto Bicos, Rodolfo Tor, and John Does* (Criminal Case No. Q-90-11756, RTC, Quezon City) for Attempted Homicide, filed on 6 April 1990⁴⁰

15. *People vs Roque Maranon* (Criminal Case No. 5305, RTC, San Fernando, Pampanga) for Rebellion – in connection with the 28 August 1987 attempted coup – filed on 14 May 1990⁴¹

16. *People of the Philippines vs Reynaldo Cabauatan, Jose Maria Zumel and Gregorio Honasan* (Criminal Case No. Q-90-12993, RTC, Quezon City) for Rebellion – in connection with the 28 August 1987 coup – filed on 18 June 1990⁴²

17. *People of the Philippines vs Reynaldo Cabauatan and William Quitolvo* (Criminal Case No. Q-90-12994, RTC, Quezon City) for Rebellion – in connection with the 27 January 1987 coup attempt – filed on 18 June 1990⁴³

18. *People of the Philippines vs Reynaldo Cabauatan* (Criminal Case No. 90-8491, RTC, Manila) for Rebellion – in connection with the July 1986 coup – filed on 18 June 1990.⁴⁴

As regards the others, the Commission pursued some leads to gather evidence. Some “informants” who wrote letters could not be contacted at the addresses given; others who appeared to testify before the Commission denied any role in the coup. “Eikiuchi”, the Japanese mentioned in the DND SIC Report, is actually Eito Ikeuchi, a Filipino citizen

(with a Filipina mother and a Japanese father) who was born in the Philippines. Ikeuchi is a martial arts instructor at the PMA and a member of the GCFI, Baguio Chapter.

D.8.b. Eduardo (Danding) Cojuangco, Jr.

Being the estranged cousin of President Aquino and one of the Twelve Disciples, Twelve Apostles or the Rolex 12 of former President Marcos, and having left with the Marcoses at the height of the EDSA Revolt, it was inevitable that there would be speculation as to Eduardo (Danding) Cojuangco's possible involvement in the coup.

Although the Commission did not uncover any direct evidence that Danding was a plotter or participant, the staging of the coup a few days after his mystery-shrouded arrival, in the light of some facts which surfaced during the hearings or which were unearthed through *subpoenas duces tecum*, raises reasonable ground to believe that he had prior knowledge of the staging of the coup.

In addition to the detailed discussions on the probability of his arrival on 23 November 1989 in Malita, Davao del Sur from Kota Kinabalu in Chapter V, the following facts further aid reasonable minds to such conclusion:

1. Danding got his passport when his counsel inquired from the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) whether or not the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) had lifted the hold order on him. The DFA checked with PCGG. The letter of inquiry was drafted by Edgardo Castro, then Acting Director of the Passport Division. The first and second letters to PCGG went unanswered. He persevered with a third letter which was answered in the affirmative. The telex to the Philippine Consulate in Los Angeles with instructions to issue the passport was again drafted by Edgardo Castro.⁴⁵

Incidentally, the same Castro did not report to his office on 1 December; instead, after lunch, he went with a group headed by Rafael Recto to PTV-4. He testified that he had been listening to the radio that morning. Therefore, he clearly knew that PTV-4 was held by the rebels. His excuse for going there was to help look for Recto's daughter, Plinky. He knew Plinky worked for ABS-CBN, not PTV-4, but during their stay at the ABS-CBN/PTV-4 complex, not one in their group went to ABS-CBN to look for Plinky. Not one in their group asked any of the persons they met for the whereabouts of Plinky. None in their group even looked at the parking lot of Channel 2 to see if Plinky's car was there. On the other hand, witness Orlando Fontanilla swore that he overheard Recto asking about a press conference in PTV-4.

2. In his sworn statement, Galido declared that he had a meeting with Henry Cojuangco where the participation of Danding in the planned coup was discussed.

3. Danding is close to BGen Zumel as they both served under or were close to Marcos.

4. As to when and where he landed when he returned home was never disclosed by him. Although he was given the fullest opportunity when he testified before the Commission on 11 May 1990 to make such a disclosure if only to end speculations and unravel the mystery surrounding his arrival, he deliberately refused to do so. Although he has the opportunity to deny the imputations made against him in the sworn statement of Galido, the Commission is not aware that he has publicly done so.

5. Since he was given a proper Philippine passport, it is difficult to understand why he had to enter the country covertly, particularly since as a political and public figure, he presumably would want to rally his followers to his side.

D.8.c. Vice President Salvador Laurel

The actions of Vice President Laurel are discussed in Chapter VII.

D.8.d. Other Civilian Participants

The Commission finds reasonable ground to believe that in addition to those charged before the DOJ, or whose cases had been dismissed by the DOJ, the civilians named below may also be liable for offenses in connection with the failed December 1989 coup.

1. Diane Aguas

she is linked to one Franco Sanchijo and Cherry Cobarrubias,⁴⁶

2. Roger Borja

one of the four civilians who, with 26 prison guards (members of the Guardians) of the Bureau of Corrections in Muntinlupa, were brought by Rodolfo Morit, Jr in the evening of 30 November 1989 to the Baltao Subdivision, Parañaque, from where they were picked up by Gamos in the early morning of 1 December and brought to the Velayo Sports Complex near the Manila Domestic Airport terminal where they were to be provided with firearms by the group of Gamos,⁴⁷

3. Nicanor Cagurangan

the Founder Barorot of GCFI, per sworn testimony of Elmer Sagsago given on 5 May 1990, who was expected to meet the GCFI members gathered at the PPA, North Harbor, in the evening of 30 November 1989; an incorporator of GCFI with Honasan and Morit,⁴⁸

4. Francisco Casio

he was among those who barricaded the Moriones and the Zaragoza gates of the North Harbor and was seen in the company of rebel soldiers,⁴⁹

5. Edgardo Castro

he was Acting Director of the Passport Division at the DFA when Danding Cojuangco's application for a passport was approved; did not report to his office on 1 December; went with Rafael Recto to PTV-4 which he knew was occupied by rebels ostensibly to look for Recto's daughter Plinky,

6. Cherry Cobarrubias or Serafia C. Cobarrubias

she is implicated in the sworn statement of Galido; she arranged an overseas call between Mrs Marcos and BGen Galido; per the testimony of Luis Tabuena, she is very close to the Marcoses and she also arranged his meeting with Galido at the Mandarin Hotel on 6 September 1989; per admission of BGen Tadiar, she attended the meeting at a house in Times Street, Quezon City between Tadiar, Galido and Cesar Lopez; and on 29 November 1989, she checked in at the Philippine Village Hotel, although she has a house in Quezon City and at Greenhills, Mandaluyong,

7. Gabriel Cruz

president of the Odessa Fishing and Trading Corp, of Navotas, Metro Manila, together with Rufino Tiangco, majority stockholder and chairman of Odessa, one Artemio Tan, and one Rudy Jimenez. He provided a fishing vessel of the corporation, the Lady-Vi-T-1, to ferry the rebel troops of the 24 IB and the 68 IB under rebel officers, Maj Oliveros and Lt Col Tecson, respectively, from Limay, Bataan, to Sangley Point and back to Bataan on 1 December 1989,⁵⁰

8. Pepito Dalivenancio

captain of the fishing vessel Lady Vi-T-1, for piloting the same to ferry the above rebel troops from Limay, Bataan, to Sangley, Point, and back to Bataan,

9. Danny Fonbuena

he was among those who barricaded the Moriones and Zaragoza Gates of the North Harbor with container vans and cargo trucks,⁵¹

10. Eduardo Franco

one of the four civilians who, with 26 prison guards (who are members of the Guardians) left the Bureau of Corrections, Muntinlupa, in the evening of 30 November 1989, and were brought by Morit, Jr to the Baltao Subdivision, Parañaque, Metro Manila, from where they were picked up by Gamos early morning of 1 December and thereafter brought to the Velayo Sports Complex near the Manila Domestic Airport Terminal, where they were to be provided with firearms by the group of Gamos,⁵²

11. Manuel Garces, Jr

Founder of the Guardians Chapter at the Bureau of Corrections, Muntinlupa, who headed the 26 prison guards of the Bureau of Corrections and four civilians who were brought by Morit, Jr to the Baltao Subdivision in Parañaque,

12. Jun Hizon

a gun club member who participated in the coup; photo and TV footages show that he was, with others, among heavily armed civilians at the Coastal Road during the coup,

13. Don Honasan

brother of Gregorio Honasan, someone answering to his description was identified by a CIS officer on a TV footage taken at the vicinity of the Manila Domestic Airport terminal during the coup; a friend of Rufino Tiangco,

14. Eito Ikeuchi

an instructor of the PMA, a member of the GCFI, Baguio chapter, who came all the way from Baguio City on 30 November 1989 to attend an alleged meeting of the Guardians at the PPA Building at North Harbor, Manila, at which occasion the participants were given firearms,

15. Rudy Jimenez

with Rufino Tiangco, Gabriel Cruz, and Artemio Tan, he, acting as alleged *encargado* of Artemio Tan and introduced as such to the captain of the fishing vessel by Tiangco, provided the fishing vessel Lady-Vi-T-1 which ferried the rebel troops of the 24 IB and the 68 IB from Limay, Bataan to Sangley Point and then back to Bataan,

16. Cesar Lopez

mentioned by Galido in his sworn statement (confirmed by Tadiar and Mapalo in their sworn statements before the Commission) as having been present at the meeting of Tadiar and Galido at a house in Times Street, Quezon City, which was likewise attended by Cherry Cobarrubias,

17. Rodolfo Morit, Jr

one of the incorporators, with Gregorio Honasan, of the GCFI,⁵³ he also contacted and brought the 26 prison guards of the Bureau of Corrections, Muntinlupa, who are members of the Guardians, and four civilians to the Baltao Subdivision, Parañaque, Metro Manila in the evening of 30 November 1989 from where, early morning of 1 December, they were picked up by Gamos and brought to the Velayo Sports Complex near the Manila Domestic Airport Terminal where they were to be provided with firearms;⁵⁴ per testimony of Elmer Sagsago, Morit is known as the Magic Hermes of GCFI who was also expected by the GCFI members at the PPA office, North Harbor, in the evening of 30 November,

18. Isidro Mutya

a former PAF Major who was with Lt Col Neon Ebuena at MAB in the morning of 1 December 1989,⁵⁵

19. Rolando Pascual

one of the four civilians who were brought by Morit, Jr with 26 prison guards of the Bureau of Corrections, Muntinlupa to the Baltao Subdivision, Parañaque, in the evening of 30 November 1989,⁵⁶

20. Romeo Rivera

a friend of Rufino Tiangco; incumbent president of the Philippine Rifle and Shotgun Association where Jackie Enrile is chairman; a friend of Honasan since 1979; a godfather of one of Honasan's children; in turn, Honasan is the godfather of one of Rivera's children; arms, ammunitions, and communications equipment were found by the military in his house during a raid after the coup; reportedly spotted with rebel troops in Sta Mesa, Manila during the coup,

21. Buggy Sacco

one of the four civilians brought by Morit, Jr, together with 26 prison guards of the Bureau of Corrections, Muntinlupa to the Baltao Subdivision, Parañaque in the evening of 30 November 1989,⁵⁷

22. Elmer Sagsago

an Assistant Prosecutor of the City of Baguio, President of Baguio Chapter of GCFI who, with Ikeuchi and Sgts Ocon and Mendez, left Baguio City in the morning of 30 November 1989 to attend an alleged meeting of GCFI members at the PPA Building, North Harbor, in the evening of the said date at which meeting the participants were provided with firearms; before the meeting, he met 30 to 34 GCFI members from the PMA among whom were Sgts Jaime Camacho and Alimbuyao,⁵⁸

23. Luig Tabuena

implicated by Galido; he admitted that he met Galido and Cherry Cobarrubias at a room in Mandarin Hotel on 6 September 1989 and that he is close to Imelda Marcos,

24. Artemio Tan

with Rufino Tiangco, Gabriel Cruz, Rudy Jimenez, and Capt Pepito Dalivenancio, he provided the fishing vessel Lady Vi-T-1 which ferried the rebel troops of the 24 IB and 68 IB from Limay, Bataan to Sangley Point and back to Bataan on 1 December 1989,

25. Rufino Tiangco

chairman and majority stockholder of the Odessa Fishing and Trading Corp, who, with Artemio Tan, Gabriel Cruz, Rudy Jimenez and Dalivenancio, provided and facilitated the use of the fishing vessel Lady Vi-T-1 to ferry the rebel troops of the 24 IB and the 68 IB from Limay, Bataan to Sangley Point and back to Bataan on 1 December 1989; he knows Gregorio Honasan; is a friend of his brother, Don, with whom he continues to have dealings in the cement business; he was the one approached by Artemio Tan for the charter of Lady Vi-T-1 and the one who introduced, in a note, to Capt Dalivenancio that Rudy Jimenez is the *encargado* of Tan; he is also a friend of Romeo Rivera,⁵⁹

26. Jesus Toloso

among those who barricaded the Moriones and Zaragosa gates of the North Harbor;⁶⁰

27. George Yap

a member of the PC Regional Security Unit 6, Bacolod City, who was called twice from Room 1701 of the Holiday Inn during the time that Bibit occupied the same from 28 November 1989; he went into hiding after the coup,

28. Job Gavino with

Ronnie Abundo, Manuel Coching, Ernesto Domingo, Armando Manuel, Augusto Pilapil (ex-Capt Dante Pimentel), Renato Villanueva, Matias Tamayo, and Francisco Tamayao

he was contacted by Billy Bibit at 7:30 a.m. of 30 November but did not report it until much later and he was seen with rebels; the rest were seen by witnesses with rebel soldiers barricading the Moriones and Zaragosa Gates of the North Harbor, and

29. The 25 other prison guards

of the Bureau of Corrections of Muntinlupa who were with Manuel Garces, Jr and Morit, Jr and four civilians in the evening of 30 November 1989 whose investigation by the Department of Justice had been recommended by the Commission per its Resolution No. 089 promulgated on 4 July

The Commission recommends to the DOJ for investigation the civilians below.

1. Mrs Angelina Isip Abenina

wife of BGen Edgardo Abenina who, on 1 September 1989, purchased from the Riviera Filipina, Inc a 257-square meter lot (Lot 5-A, Block 19) at Loyola Heights, Quezon City for P1.5 million.⁶¹ A house with a Tax Declaration for a fair market value of P441,600 is located on this lot. It appears, however, that on 15 September 1989, BGen Abenina sold for P1 million a lot at Masikap Street, Diliman, Quezon City,⁶²

2. Enrique (Henry) Cojuangco

in the sworn statement of BGen Galido, he represented his brother, Eduardo Cojuangco, Jr, who, according to Galido, wanted to return and support a takeover of the government; he was on board aircraft RP-410, piloted by Capt Jose Castillo (who had piloted Cojuangco, Jr several times in the past) which landed at the Malita airstrip of the Cojuangcos in Davao del Sur in the afternoon of 22 November 1989 from Bacolod City. This plane left for Manila at 4:33 p.m. the following day at about the same time another aircraft, CRP-585, piloted by Capt Morales and Capt Vergiere, was coming from Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia,

3. Doroteo Gaerlan

original owner of the barge Ray Patrick G-V, which was used to bring the rebel troops of the 24 IB and the 68 IB from the Marsteel wharf in Limay, Bataan to the waiting fishing vessel Lady Vi-T-1 on 1 December 1989,⁶³

4. Rico Mendoza

mentioned by Galido in his sworn statement, a close friend of Eduardo Cojuangco, Jr,

5. Mabel Imperial Tecson

wife of Lt Col Arsenio Tecson; deposited P200,000 with the Union Bank (Cubao, Quezon City Branch) on 5 December 1989; she explained that the money represents proceeds of the sale of a condominium unit; it turned out, however, that there was no sale made by her as the unit belonged to Urban Planners and Development Inc which sold it to Edgardo Mangahas for P330,000 on 24 August 1989,⁶⁴

6. Amaro Ungotan

the patron of the barge Ray Patrick G-V which was used to bring the rebel troops of 24 IB and 68 IB from the Marsteel wharf of Limay, Bataan to the fishing vessel Lady Vi-T-1 on 1 December 1989,

7. Lourdes G. Unson

daughter of Doroteo Gaerlan and vice president of MGG Marine Services Inc, operator of the barge Ray Patrick G-V, which was used to bring the rebel troops of the 24 IB and 68 IB from the Marsteel wharf at Limay, Bataan to the waiting vessel, Lady Vi-T-1,⁶⁵

8. Ruben Reyes

operations coordinator of MGG Marine Services, Inc.

E. Let Justice Be Done

Quoting the Explanatory Note of House Bill No. 30233, the Commission stated on page 32 of its Interim Report No. 3 thus

... a coup d'etat is reprehensible because "its key leaders, contrary to their oath of office, take undue advantage of their key positions within the establishment to overthrow the very government they had pledged to uphold, protect and defend. In the case of the military, they draw their pay from the government and they enjoy the legal monopoly of the gun and other instruments of mass violence. In the case of civilian officials, they occupy positions of leadership which enable them to usurp the powers of government."

Because of the failed December 1989 coup, 99 were killed and 570 were wounded in action; and combined financial losses would be in the order of P800 million to P1 billion.

However, as stated in the preceding chapter, loss of lives, loss of confidence, and damage to our international image are worth far more than the financial losses.

The basic principles of justice then demand that those responsible for the coup answer for the consequences of their acts.

Accordingly, all military personnel which moved against the government in the failed coup of December 1989 must be prosecuted for violations of the appropriate provisions of the Articles of War as amended (CA No. 408 as

amended), such as Articles 67, 68, 84, 94, 96 or 97, and should be imposed the commensurate penalty, taking into account the following considerations

- (a) whether the personnel was involved in the planning or plotting of the coup,
- (b) whether the personnel is a repeater, in the sense that he was involved in one or more previous coups,
- (c) the extent of the damage inflicted or caused by the illegal move,
- (d) the length of time the personnel resisted the government forces, and
- (e) in respect to junior officers and the enlisted personnel, the defense that they merely followed the orders of their commander should not be taken at face value and, where the movement of the unit appeared to be clearly illegal from the beginning, such as the attack on Malacañang or Camp Aguinaldo, or where such movement to another zone or area followed an attack of a camp and at a time when the coup was already known, such a defense should not be accepted. To illustrate, troops of the MBLT 4 which left Fort Bonifacio to attack Villamor Air Base (VAB) in the midnight of 30 November 1989 and who, after taking control of VAB, proceeded to attack Camp Aguinaldo or the PTV-4 complex should not be heard to plead innocence on the theory that they merely followed the orders of their commanders. The same rule should apply to rebels who did not offer to surrender even if they already knew that their movements were unauthorized and were directed against the government. The same rule should apply to the Rangers who went to Makati after having the opportunity to surrender in the morning of 2 December.

As to civilians against whom the Commission finds reasonable ground to believe that they are probably liable for offenses in connection with the failed coup, or those whom the Commission endorses for further investigation, the latter recommends to the Department of Justice their immediate investigation and prosecution should the requisite quantum of evidence be gathered. The evidence already obtained by the Commission against them would, pursuant to Section 1 (c) of RA No. 6832, be turned over to the Department.

ENDNOTES

- (1) Article of War 71: Action Upon Charges – A thorough and impartial investigation shall be made before any charge is referred to a general court-martial for trial, in A Manual for Courts-Martial, Armed Forces of the Philippines (Published by the authority of the President of the Philippines, 1987), p. 253.
- (2) Section 35(a): Investigation of Charges – Aside from what is provided in AW 71, this provision also indicates the proper procedure in investigating cases, in Ibid, p. 26.
- (3) Article of War 67: Mutiny or Sedition – Any person subject to military law who attempts to create or who begins, excites, causes, or joins in any mutiny or sedition in any company, party, post, camp, detachment, guard, or another command shall suffer death or such other punishment as a court-martial may direct, Ibid, p. 234.
- (4) Article of War 94: Various Crimes -Any person subject to military law who commits any felony, crime, breach of law or violation of municipal ordinance which is recognized as an offense of penal nature and is punishable under the penal laws of the Philippines or under municipal ordinances, (a) inside a reservation of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, or (b) outside any such reservation when the offended party (and each one of the offended parties if there be more than one) is a person subject to military law, shall be punished as a court-martial may direct. In imposing penalties for offenses falling within this article, the penalties for such offenses provided in the penal laws of the Philippines or in such municipal ordinances shall be taken into consideration (As amended by Presidential Decree 11660), in Ibid, p. 240.
- (5) Article of War 96: Conduct Unbecoming an Officer and Gentleman – Any officer, cadet, flying cadet or probationary second lieutenant, who is convicted of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman shall be dismissed from the service (As amended by Republic Acts 242 and 516), in Ibid, p. 242.

(6) Section 108 a(l) and b(4): Punishments – Forfeiture of pay of not more than one half of one month’s base pay per month for three months, in Ibid, p. 121.

(7) Seventh Progress Report on the Failed December 1989 Coup d’Etat from the AFP Special Investigating Committee to the Acting CSAFP, dated 30 April 1990, and its attachments, Exh. “N-AFPSIC”.

(8) Fact-Finding Commission (FFC), Observations and Recommendations on Military Justice as Related to Coups, Interim Report No. 1, 12 May 1990, p. 20. A total of 1,681 military personnel were allegedly involved in the August 1987 attempt, 418 of whom were cleared.

(9) Ibid.

(10) Ibid.

(11) NARAA, “The Philippine Coup d’Etat and NARAA Resolution No. 7” (Metro Manila: NARAA, 21 February 1989).

(12) First Progress Report of the Department of National Defense (DND) Special Investigating Committee, dated 26 December 1989, Exh. “B-DND”.

(13) List of Military Officers on Detached Service With the Ministry of National Defense from 1970 to 1986, Exh. “MMMMM-Commission”. Hereinafter referred to MND List from 1970 to 1986.

(14) Sworn Testimony of Cmdr Proceso Maligalig before the FFC, 12 March 1990.

(15) MND List from 1970 to 1986, op. cit.

(16) Report on Camp Aguinaldo Incident during the August 1987 Coup Attempt, dated 8 February 1990, Exh. “000-5-A”-Commission.

(17) Securities and Exchange Commission, SEC Reg. No. 132118, Articles of Incorporation of the Guardian Centre Foundation, Inc, dated 15 April 1986, Exh. “B-I-Guardians”. Hereinafter referred” to as GCFI Articles of Incorporation.

(18) Securities and Exchange Commission, SEC Reg. No. 123899, Articles of Incorporation of the Guardians Brotherhood, Inc, dated 10 December 1984, Exh. “A-Guardians”.

(19) CRSAFP Command Report on December 1989 Coup, submitted by BGen Oscar Florendo, dated 6 February 1990, Exh. “A-Florendo”.

(20) Sworn Testimony of Gen Renato S. de Villa, CSAFP before the FFC, 7 April 1990.

(21) Third Progress Report of the Department of National Defense Special Investigating Committee submitted by Undersecretary Leonardo Quisumbing, dated 26 December 1989, Exh. “D-DND”.

(22) Sworn Statement of BGen Alejandro Galido, former CG SOLCOM AFP, given before Col Benjamin Libarnes PC of AFP CIC, Exh. KKKKKK-2”-Commission.

(23) Progress Report on the Status of Rebellion Cases submitted to the FFC by Silvestre H. Bello III, Undersecretary of Justice, dated 4 September 1990, Exh. “E-1-DOJ”.

(24) Department of Justice Resolution in the Case Sgt Sagario and AFP vs Lt Col Matillano, et al, IS No. DOJ-SC-90-002, dated 17 April 1990, Exh. "U-DOJ"

(25) Department of Justice Resolution in the Case NBI vs Rafael Recto, et al, IS No. DO J-SC-90-005, dated 17 April 1990, Exh. "C-J Rodriguez".

(26) Department of Justice Resolution in the Case Philippine Ports Authority vs JobGavino, et al, IS No. DOJ-SC-90-007, dated 7 March 1990, Exh. "E-Salialam". Hereinafter referred to as Gavino Case.

(27) Marked as FFC Exh. "F-DOJ".

(28) Marked as FFC Exh. "F-1-DOJ".

(29) Marked as FFC Exh. "G-DOJ".

(30) Marked as FFC Exh. "H-DOJ".

(31) Marked as FFC Exh. "I-DOJ".

(32) Marked as FFC, Exh. "J-DOJ".

(33) Marked as FFC Exh. "K-DOJ".

(34) Marked as FFC Exh. "L-DOJ".

(35) Marked as FFC Exh. "M-DOJ".

(36) Marked as FFC Exh. "N-DOJ".

(37) Marked as FFC Exh. "O-DOJ".

(38) Marked as FFC Exh. T-DOJ".

(39) Marked as FFC Exh. "U-1-DOJ".

(40) Marked as FFC Exh. "U-2-DOJ".

(41) Marked as FFC Exh. "P-DOJ".

(42) Marked as FFC Exh. "Q-DOJ".

(43) Marked as FFC Exh. "R-DOJ".

(44) Marked as FFC Exh. "S-DOJ".

(45) Sworn Testimony of Edgardo Castro before the FFC, 25 April 1990.

(46) Various documents marked as FFC Exhs. "B-Aguas" to "P-Aguas", inclusive.

(47) Sworn Testimonies before the FFC of Director Meliton Goyena, Bureau of Corrections, 25 June 1990; and Manuel Garces, Jr, 10 July 1990.

(48) GCFI Articles of Incorporation, op. cit.

(49) Report on the North Harbor Incident submitted by the Station Commander, Coast Guard Station Manila to the Commandant, Philippine Coast Guard, dated 4 December 1989, Exh. "B-3- Garrido". Hereinafter referred to as North Harbor Incident Report. Gavino Case, op. cit.

(50) Various documents marked as FFC Exhs. "A-Rufino Tiangco" to "I-Rufino Tiangco", inclusive. Hereinafter referred to as Tiangco Exhibits.

(51) North Harbor Incident Report, op. cit.; Gavino Case, op. cit.

(52) Goyena Testimony, op.cit.; Garces Testimony, op. cit.

(53) GCFI Articles of Incorporation, op. cit.

(54) Garces Testimony, op. cit.

(55) Sworn Statement of AM Dominino Recla before the FFC, 4 June 1990.

(56) Goyena Testimony, op. cit.; Garces Testimony, op. cit.

(57) Sworn Testimonies given before the FFC of Elmer Sagsago, Assistant Prosecutor, Baguio City, 5 May 1990; Eito Ikeuchi, 17 April 1990; Sgt Rodolfo Ocon, 31 May 1990; Sgt Rodolfo Mendez, 31 May 1990.

(58) Sagsago Testimony, op. cit.; Ikeuchi Testimony, op. cit.; Ocon Testimony, op. cit.; Mendez Testimony, op. cit.

(59) Tiangco Exhibits, op. cit.; Sworn Testimonies before the FFC of Rufino Tiangco, 10 August 1990; Gabriel Cruz, 20 August 1990; Pepito Dalivenancio, 16 August 1990.

(60) North Harbor Incident Report, op. cit.; Gavino Case, op. cit.

(61) Copy of the Second Page of the Deed of Absolute Sale of Property between Riviera Filipina, Inc and Angelina Abenina, dated 1 September 1989, Exh. "HHHHH-9"-Commission.

(62) Copy of the Deed of Absolute Sale of Property between Edgardo M. Abenina and Dante Lantin, dated 15 September 1989, Exh. "HHHH-1"-Commission.

(63) Sworn Statement of Ruben Reyes, Operations Coordinator, MGG Marine Services, Inc, before the FFC 19 September 1990, Exh. "A-Gaerlan Shipping"; Sworn Statement of Atty Renato Unson before the FFC 24 September 1990, Exh. "B-Gaerlan Shipping". Hereinafter referred to as Unson Statement.

(64) Various documents marked as FFC Exhs. "D-Puyat" to "G-Puyat", inclusive; North Harbor Incident Report, op. cit.; Gavino Case, op. cit.

(65) Unson Statement, op. cit.

